Changing diversity, social justice perspective and adult learning –

the case of a technical vocational education and training (TVET) college

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Abstract

The National Certificate Vocational (NCV) programme was designed with multiple agendas, among which was to address the high unemployment among the South African youth, to produce students with an employable skills set as well as it being a vehicle of redress. Managing diversity within education speaks to this agenda of redress. This study investigated diversity within a technical vocational education and training (TVET) college, by exploring the teaching and learning challenges Life Orientation college lecturers face when teaching a diverse student population.

It considered the background to the TVET sector as well as the learning programme, the NCV, that provided the context for the study. Various literature on diversity was reviewed as well as literature on teaching a diverse cohort of students. The investigation was approached from a social justice perspective. The data revealed a number of themes, the first of which was *Conceptions of Diversity* as articulated by the participants. This was followed by the range of *Student Diversity within the TVET college context* as well as *Lecturer Strategies to cope with this student diversity.* Not all lecturer strategies were successful in dealing with diversity-related tensions; this led to the theme *Issues and Incidents related to Student Diversity.* The concluding theme was participant suggestions for *Lecturer Preparation to deal with issues of Diversity.* In turn, these themes informed the recommendations which include all three key elements in the education process, i.e policy and curriculum, lecturer training and development, and equally important, the student involvement in diversity programmes and strategies within the TVET college.

(25 707 words)

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Bismillaahir rahmaanir raheem... In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All praise and thanks to the Almighty who has guided me towards completion of this research paper. It is purely through His Grace and innumerable Blessings that I am enabled, and it is to Him that is my ultimate return.

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To everyone who had a role in my study programme, *Jazāk Allāhu khayran…*may Allah reward you with goodness for your efforts.

Salma Emjedi

Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master in Adult Education and Global Change at the University of the Western Cape.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any university. All the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.
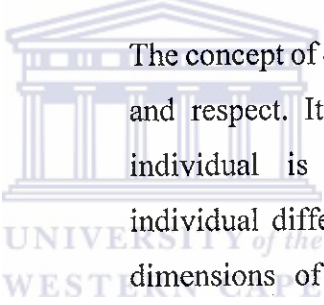
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Signed: ....

June 2016

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Glossary of terms

FET   Further Education and Training

NQF   National Qualifications Framework

TVET   Technical Vocational and Educational Training

Social justice   As a normative term, social justice refers to the extension of principles, enshrined in our Constitution, of human dignity, equity, and freedom to participate in all of the political, socio-economic and cultural spheres of society.

(http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/docs/pcsa/social/social/part1.pdf)

Diversity   The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual

(http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~asuomca/diversityinit/definition.html)

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Race: even more relevant on today's TVET campus than a decade ago

As my research reveals, several incidents of racism, cultural discrimination and religious intolerance occur at Namhlanje TVET College. A participant shared one such incident. The participant, Jerome, described a situation which he thought he had dealt with adequately, only to learn later that it had flared up again outside of class, to such an extent that it was reported in the local media.

It is this kind of incident that prompted my interest to investigate how Life Orientation lecturers experience diversity at a TVET college. However, it is critical to declare that this incident occurred in a context of diversity which is characterised by a multiplicity of races, religions, ethnicities and languages. Participant responses reveal this fascinating diversity.

Background

The TVET sector and National Certificate Vocational (NCV) as the context for the research

1994 was a watershed year in the history of South Africa with the first democratic elections in the country leading to the inauguration of the first democratic South African government. That year is seen as the advent of democracy for the South African nation. However, the government inherited many 'legacies from apartheid', including a separatist educational system; amongst others, it inherited the technical college system. The Further Education and Training (FET) Act of 2006 entrenched the restructuring of these colleges and the establishment of FET/ TVET[1] colleges nationally (DoE, 2006). Other legislation that underpins the TVET college mandate includes the Skills Development Act (DoL, 1998) and Employment Equity Act (DoL, 1998). These Acts have an agenda of redress, in other words, working towards the eradication of the discrepancies between the different racial groups of SA that resulted as a consequence of the apartheid policies of the previous government. To this end, further education[2] in South Africa, and specifically TVET colleges too, very much has an agenda of redress. The mandate of the TVET colleges, mentioned prominently every year in the State President's 'State of the Nation Address', includes delivering students with an employable skills set. This mandate speaks directly to the skills development imperatives of the government which aims to address the high unemployment levels among the youth. And the college programme that was designed

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[1] Renamed Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in 2014
[2] Referred to as post school system as of 2014

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specifically to feed into this imperative is the National Certificate: Vocational (NCV) programme.

Twenty years on from the onset of the democratic SA (1994-2014), issues of redress remain a key focus in education. This is stated in the DHET White Paper For Post-School Education and Training of 2013 (p. 4) and are being supported by further policy documents. These issues of redress are described as "transformation priorities" by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, in the Draft Social Inclusion Policy Framework (2014). This draft policy framework references the National Development Plan, Vision 2030 which describes the country as a "divided society" and emphasises the education system as the "key driver in addressing poverty and inequality in society" (p. 7). In spite of the many national strategies of the past twenty years, the next two decades (2014 – 2030) will continue to see redress and transformation as national imperatives, thus placing issues of Diversity firmly on the national agenda.

National Qualifications Framework

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a set of principles and guidelines which facilitate the registration of qualifications. Its purpose is to give national recognition to those who have acquired certain skills and knowledge and, in so doing, ensure an integrated system that encourages lifelong learning (Educor, 2007, p. 1). The NQF integrates "education and training in one system, within a credit-based qualifications framework" (Hoppers, 2000, p. 7) creating an opportunity for all citizens to develop their capacities. As spelt out in the National Qualification Act, 2008 (p. 6) the NQF itself is a vehicle for redressing the "past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities".

FET Band

The NQF recognises three broad bands of education, namely, General Education and Training, Further Education and Training and Higher Education. The FET Band is located between the post compulsory school phase (GET) and Higher Education learning institutions. The Further Education and Training phase is divided into three sectors, namely:

- The General pathway offered at schools lead to an exit level qualification and will also provide articulation with other learning pathways.

- The Vocational pathway offered at TVET colleges and specialised high schools positioned at NQF Levels 2-4. This is a career-focussed pathway that guides students along a very specific career path.

- The Trade, Occupational and Professional (TOP) pathway allow learners to make specific career choices. Learning will take place at a learning site or a simulated workplace/ learning site (college workshop) where the necessary skills and competencies will be taught as required by the relevant professional bodies.

College landscape

South African colleges function within a dynamic landscape and need to be responsive to national imperatives. While the mandate of the FET Act of 2006 is still operational, the colleges are being repositioned as a sub-system of the Post Schools Education and Training System. Colleges are referred to as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges (p. 13) since 2014, as spelt out in the White Paper on Post School System of the DHET (2013). The Draft Social Inclusion Policy Framework 2014, spells out that, as part of the Post School Education and Training System, colleges need to contribute to a "culture of human rights... (by) strengthening human rights, values and citizenship education in TVET colleges" (DHET, 2014, p. 10).

National Certificate Vocational (NCV)

The NCV was a new programme implemented nationally in South Africa in 2007 at TVET colleges. The programme has three qualification levels (L), i.e. L2, L3 and L4, which corresponds with the NQF 2, 3, and 4 in terms of the NQF. This positions the college sector in the FET band. The issues of diversity, social justice and redress are not only implied in the NCV policy documents (DoE, 2006), but form part of the principles and curriculum outcomes of Life Orientation, one of the compulsory NCV subjects. Hence, with the NCV programmes as a vehicle, colleges have to prepare students to deal with issues of diversity, not only in life in general, but specifically in the world of work as well. With Life Orientation (LO) as a compulsory subject, the intention is the holistic development of the student. To this end, the NCV is intended to produce a student with knowledge and skills not only in terms of his chosen career path, but also with an integrated skills set that will result in a student who is well adjusted as a productive citizen of our country.

Research problem and rationale

As a college lecturer who has worked at various campuses for more than a decade, I have worked with the NCV programmes since its implementation in 2007, and have thus been part of the transformation of the college landscape. During this time, I have observed that issues of diversity are not consistently addressed or implemented. It is not integrated within the NCV curriculum in a holistic way, neither practiced nor nurtured in the day to day work of the college lecturer. Addressing issues of diversity is happening on a limited scale and with limited success. With the focus on the delivery of the curriculum, matters of diversity may be the last thing on the mind of the college lecturer. It is only when it is part of her subject content, and better yet, her personal ethos, that it will find advocacy in the working space of the college lecturer. Embracing diversity management as a vehicle towards the national skills development and redress agenda by preparing their students for the diversity in the workplace, is an agenda that is yet to find urgency with TVET college lecturers. Whether lecturers are fully or marginally immersed in a diversity agenda or not, tensions among students on TVET campuses do arise. It was one such incident reported in a local newspaper that affirmed the merit of my study on diversity.

The focus of this study then was specific to issues of diversity within the TVET classroom from a social justice perspective: 1) Life Orientation lecturer preparation to manage diversity of their students; 2) the ways in which LO college lecturers manage and support the diversity of students in their classrooms and simulated work environments.

The research problem that has been investigated is the following:

Life Orientation lecturers who teach a diverse student population in a TVET college, are faced with a number of teaching and learning challenges related to diversity. They work with students who have different mother tongues, across a range of ages and with different academic abilities.

Research aims

To investigate Life Orientation lecturers' experiences of diversity at a TVET college.

Research questions

Main research question

- How are Life Orientation lecturers experiencing diversity in their classroom?

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Sub-questions

- How are Life Orientation lecturers coping with their experience of diversity?

- What kind of preparation have Life Orientation lecturers received to cope with diversity?

- How should they be prepared to cope with diversity?

Anticipated findings

The anticipated outcome of this study were the following: not all lecturers have been trained in diversity management; only some respond to the diversity of their students; and that others remain oblivious to the ways their support for their students' diversity challenges may impact the learning of both lecturer and student.

Furthermore, the degree to which participants embrace and support diversity in their learning spaces would demonstrate a constructivist underpinning as they will exhibit varying levels of expertise, as categorised by Winn, W. D. and Snyder, D. (1996). It was anticipated that the findings would demonstrate that "Managing diversity within the South African context" as a curriculum outcome constitutes a marginal percentage of the total curriculum credit of the NCV programme.

The Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2013, speaks to situational learning as a vehicle for lecturer development. As part of their "Situational Learning" lecturers are expected to engage with the diverse challenges of their learners, and a wide range of issues that lecturers should deal with, diversity included, are listed here (DHET, 2013, p. 10).

SECTION 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW/ CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Literature review

The South African context may appear unique in terms of its complex demographic with regards to the indigenous racial groups and its different mother tongues and official languages, yet many other countries face similar challenges. These countries span from Australia in the east to the UK and Norway in the north and the Americas in the west. One of the common challenges facing these countries, are issues of diversity education. What is referred to as multicultural education in the United States, is known as intercultural education in Europe, antiracist education in the UK and non-racial education in South Africa (Nieto, 2009). Hence diversity within the educational sector, as well as in the world of work, is a widely published research topic.

My research theme of how educators have been prepared for the diversity they may encounter in their world of work, has brought me to a number of readings whose authors approach diversity education through different lenses and within different contexts. So too do agents for diversity approach it differently. Some have woven it into the subject content of the curriculum, others present it as once –off interventions in the form of workshops; yet others have immersed their organizational ethos/ culture into the diversity agenda. For most, a diversity or redress agenda has been built into policy documents. In relation to diversity education then, there are tremendous differences in context, condition and history of each grouping or society.

Relative to my research question, I have considered the literature from different, yet interlinked angles. In the next section I discuss the conceptions of diversity as posited by the various authors, followed by the different approaches to the training of pre-service and in-service teachers/ lecturers.

Diversity, Social Justice and Approaches to Teacher Preparation for Diversity

Conceptions of Diversity

While the word *Diversity* implies difference, the concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect of a person as being a unique individual, with differences along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies (D'Cruz (2007); Lumby (2005); McEwan

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et al (2008); Nieto (2009); Paul (2005)). Multiple understandings and definitions of diversity exist. 'Diversity' in common usage denotes a range of differences. More specific definitions of what the differences and their implications may be, immediately 'transform a neutral description to a contested and political domain' (Lumby, 2005, p. 35). Most authors start with the 'traditional' and then expand on it relative to the context of their study, with their lens focused on the professional practice of the participants of their study.

The literature on diversity spans across the disciplines and sectors, as well as a range of publications, from policy documents to books to journal articles. As I read through the texts on diversity, I was drawn to D'Cruz (2007) who asserts that the varying "approaches to diversity may be located in different philosophies, theories about diversity, aims, target groups and methodologies (curriculum design and delivery)" (p. 36). According to D'Cruz, these approaches are informed mainly by structuralist theories about difference and inequality, which conceptualize power as a 'thing' that is wielded by one group against another. These social groups are regarded as homogeneous, where 'privileged' or 'dominant' groups are seen to be oppressive towards 'marginalized' groups. These groups may be referred to a 'minority' in terms of number (Paul, 2005), or 'immigrant/ indigenous populations' (D'Cruz, 2007). Conversely, 'minorities' may experience some stigma because gains or achievements are associated with redressing deficiencies. So too, when diversity is equated with difference, the 'intervention' may become 'socially divisive and a barrier to social cohesion' (D'Cruz, 2007, p. 37).

Traditional Views on Diversity

The website Workinfo.com[3] acknowledges the importance of defining the term diversity. In their article "Measuring Diversity Part 1: get the definition right and it is easy to measure" the elements of diversity are separated in two categories, namely "primary dimensions and secondary dimensions". According to the website, primary dimensions are mostly unalterable and have a major bearing on how individuals are perceived. Primary Dimensions of Diversity listed, include: Age; Ethnicity/colour/race; Gender; Physical ability; Sexual Orientation. Secondary Dimensions of Diversity include: Geographic location (where you were born/currently live); Income; Parental status; Marital status; Political affiliations and beliefs; Religious beliefs; Work experience. While the secondary dimensions are significant in shaping

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[3] It is the mandate of TVET colleges to prepare their students for the world of work. To this end, it is relevant to note how diversity is being defined and addressed in the workplace.

us, they are to some extent shapeable in return, because we have some measure of control over them. Research has shown that the top most important things about people noticed by society are the following (in order of importance): Skin colour; Gender; Age; Appearance/style of dress; Facial expression/accent; Eye contact; Movement/mannerisms; Personal space; Touch. When individuals engage with others, we notice, we make assessments, and make decisions about how to interact with one another based on these nine factors. These items are extremely powerful in 'determining' our life situation - from where we live and work, to whom we socialise with at work, to how much we earn.

These categories and descriptors as described by Workinfo.com are well aligned with academic scholars, some of whom include them in their discussions (Lumby (2005); Paul (2003)), and others who add to and develop them further (McEwan et al (2008); (D'Cruz (2003)). This is elaborated in the following discussions.

Lumby (2005) groups diversity descriptors in two as well. He cites Wentling who states that there are 'broad and narrow definitions of the dimensions of difference which constitute diversity' (2005, p. 35). Broad definitions incorporate a wide range of criteria, including age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, values, ethnic culture, national origin, education, lifestyle, beliefs, physical appearance, social class and economic status while narrow definitions focus on those characteristics which are most likely to disadvantage an individual, such as race, gender and disability.

In her paper on diversity policies, procedures and practices of a higher education institution, MJ Paul (2003) states that "Gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and disability continue to be the primary defining factors of whether or not a student can contribute to diversity on a college campus."(2003, p. 44). Beyond this, she posits that geographical location and family make-up should be considered when broadening the traditional definitions of diversity (e.g. white female from a rural state coming from a single parent labourer family) and that the notions of a diverse campus and who constitutes a minority, needs continued analysis. Paul (2003, p. 41) quotes Judge Stanley Marcus as follows:

> Racial diversity may be one component of a diverse student body, [but] it is not the only component. To take a few obvious examples, a White applicant from a disadvantaged rural area in Appalachia may well have more to offer a Georgia public university such as UGA - from the standpoint of diversity - than a non-White applicant from an affluent family and a suburban Atlanta high school (Savage, 2001).

In the context of an educational institution, the intended outcome of multi-cultural or diversity initiatives is purported to be "the reduction of prejudice, discrimination, and bias against persons of various races, classes, ethnicities, and other underrepresented groups" (2003, p. 40). Such outcomes are currently sought by increasing the populations of persons of colour and offering them the equal representation they have historically been denied. However, Paul citing Argyris, cautions against race-based admission policies that promote a sense of entitlement based on skin colour: "unless underlying values are identified and addressed, and the inherent flaws in the educational system that keep minority applicants at a disadvantage are critically examined, attempts to achieve intended outcomes will ultimately fail, even if they give the appearance of being successful" (2003, p. 41). Geographical location as a dimension of diversity is also included in South Africa's Draft Social Inclusion Policy Framework (2014). Additionally, the policy includes wellness, with HIV and AIDS, listed as factors as well (DHET, 2014, p. 12).

In their study of how diversity is addressed in Masters' level courses[4], McEwan et al (2008, p. 107) scaffolds on to the 'cultural and bodily' aspects of diversity and includes factors relative to students studying at Masters' level: students' background, prior knowledge and experience, course expectations and future goals; prior experience of different teaching models; teaching methods/approaches/learning environments experienced; programme styles experienced; the scale and imperatives of the institution of previous study; the extent, character and demands of previous work experience.

In my view, recognising the diversity among the participants of diversity training programmes has the potential to enhance their learning experience. In this regard, McEwan et al "advocate bringing diversity positively and explicitly into the learning design to enable students to engage with and learn from each other in ways that benefit both students and staff/faculty members" (2008, p. 116).

Diversity-beyond-culture / Identity

Drawing from her literature search, D'Cruz (2007, p. 36) states that the predominant feature of most diversity training programmes is the apparent interchangeability between the concepts and meanings of 'culture' and 'diversity'. The term 'culture' seems to subsume 'race',

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[4] While the focus of my paper is the diversity of students at post school level, these extended dimensions of diversity may well be appropriate considerations for the training of college lecturers, many of whom have a higher education qualification.

'ethnicity', 'language' and 'religion'. Hence, according to D'Cruz, the concept of 'diversity' has come to represent cultural, ethnic, racial and religious differences between the 'dominant group' and immigrant and indigenous populations. Drawing from various authors, D'Cruz posits that diversity is understood from post-structural, post-modern and post-colonial perspectives as encapsulating 'identity' and 'difference' (D'Cruz, 2007, p. 37). However, she argues that while culture relates to race, ethnicity, language and religion, and is closely interwoven with the other formal categories of identity such as gender, age, social class, sexual orientation and disability, identity is far more complex than 'just culture'. She proposes a notion of "Diversity-beyond-culture" (2007, p. 38) which looks at how 'the self' and 'the Other' are understood as identities that are only meaningful and generated in/by relationships between 'the self' and 'the Other'. Identity of 'the self' is related to a recognition of difference from 'the Other', and is not unitary, fixed, stable; rather, it is 'unstable, fluid, fragmentary and processual'. This view is aligned with Nieto's (2009), who refers to 'multiple identities' and 'cultural fusions', and coins the term 'hybridity" to describe the blend of various cultures to form new, distinct, and ever-changing identities (2009, p. 18). In this regard, D'Cruz (2007) cites Grossberg, Fraser and Ang, and asserts that approaches to diversity must take account of 'difference' between 'the self' and 'the Other', as offering the potential for a) perceiving abnormality and danger, and b) opportunities for engagement, celebration and emancipation (2007, p. 40).

Premised on various theoretical features, and making a number of assumptions relative to the 'Self and 'the Other' D'Cruz (2007) proposes four principles relative to diversity:

> First, 'diversity' is more than cultural or ethnic difference. Second, each of us embodies and represents difference. Third, 'identities' are multiple and include age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability and social class, and different histories and biographies. Fourth, diversity as difference is valued in relation to complementarity rather than sameness, and that one can be different AND equal (2007, p. 41).

Diversity education and approaches to preparing teachers to address issues of diversity

Diversity education as 'Change' agenda approach

Many authors use as their starting point, with the traditional definition of diversity (Lumby (2005); McEwan et al (2008); Paul (2005)) and expand it relative to their approach, such as D'Cruz's Self and Other concept (2007). In contrast, Nieto (2009) starts with race, then

expands to include the traditional factors, continues by including the 'Self' dimension, then finally pulls it through to policy and the responsibility of the state.

Nieto (2009) cites the work of Ashton-Warner with Maori children in the 60's and Freire's (1970) literacy work with Brazilian peasants as the pioneers of diversity education. Even though they did not use the term diversity education, their education agenda were based on principles of social justice and critical pedagogy. According to Nieto (2009), diversity education started with race, and was later expanded to include the various factors of diversity – ethnicity, gender, social class, language, sexual orientation, ability and other difference .

Like D'Cruz (2007), Nieto (2009) agrees that social identity should be factored into diversity education. Nieto acknowledges the many definitions and parameters of diversity, and quotes Soudien, Carrim and Sayed (2004) who argue that:

> one size does not fit all because citizens are not located in homogenous, symmetrical and stable social, economic and political positions. How one addresses the differences and different kinds of inequalities .... is a strategic matter.

Having elaborated on the nuanced meanings of diversity, Nieto (2009) positions her approach to diversity education to mean 'multiculturalism as policy', and as such, highlights the role of the state in diversity education. She argues that "used this way, (diversity education) acknowledges that structural inequalities in society impede equitable outcomes in education, ... and recognises the role of the state in addressing such inequalities" (2009, p. 19).

Multicultural Approach and Critical Multicultural Approach

Hemson's research (2006) looks at how three South African higher education institutions train their students relative to diversity, using the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education programme (PGCE), a one-year programme for students who have already completed an undergraduate degree.

Hemson found that in their PGCE programme, Higher Education Institution A applied a multicultural approach to the issues of diversity. He discovered that the university was created during the apartheid era to serve a particular community, but since the democratic government was elected in 1994, there was very little engagement with schools in other communities. Within the PGCE programme at Higher Education Institution A there was not a singular framework in place to address diversity (Hemson, 2006, p. 16) but a strong cultural framing

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towards language was present. Students were not implicitly neither explicitly taught or guided to deal with diversity in school. Other than curriculum topics such as in Life Orientation, very little attention was given to diversity. Lecturers and student were aware that they may have to work with people from other races, but this awareness comes across as an "out-there approach" (Hemson, 2006, p. 19). Despite the institution being a 'black' institution "there is not a coherent response to inform how students analyse and respond to diversity". Hemson claims that there is very little sense from PGCE students or staff of a positive approach to diversity. He argues that "If anything, diversity is seen as a problem to be avoided rather than to be explored, contested, or drawn into the curriculum" (2006, p. 23).

Hemson said that Higher Education Institution B is seen as an urban liberal institution with a history of resistance to apartheid. It was very different to Higher Education Institution A, because specific competencies beyond curriculum were developed that would make students 'aware of and able to address relations of power, class, gender, sexuality within the discipline' and to 'know how to use multilingual, multicultural knowledge' in their teaching (Hemson, 2006, p. 26). With an emphasis on inequalities of power, Hemson found that Higher Education Institution B has a critical multicultural approach to diversity in its PGCE programme. Hemson citing Kumashiro (2000, pp. 40-47), describes this approach as "…'education that changes students and society' – the intention is to unsettle taken-for-granted assumptions of the relationship of social groups to each other, as well as to raise issues of power within education" (Hemson, 2006, p. 27). He also discussed that both lecturer practice as well as the curriculum is strongly aligned with the espoused framework of the institution, which intends to challenge students to critical questioning and reflection. Despite its privileged context (or perhaps because of it) the institution seems to give prominence to issues of diversity. This approach is aligned to a critical multicultural framework.

With this comparative analysis, Hemson draws a number of conclusions. He highlights that "most education staff are not familiar with current debates about diversity" and that "teaching practice is a key opportunity for change" (Hemson, 2006, p. 41). However, while national policy is implemented at the institutions, it is the institutional history and other internal factors that have a greater bearing on how issues of diversity are being approached. Keeping in mind that these two institutions are places of learning of our current teachers, it would be interesting to explore how teachers respond to their culturally diverse students in their professional practice, when they are employed.

Culture Specific Pedagogy Approach

Also referred to as 'culture relevant' or culture responsive pedagogy, Culture Specific Pedagogy aims to identify the optimal teaching and learning context that is suitable for a diversity of learners. Introducing workable strategies that promote a closer alignment and sense of understanding among teachers and students who bring varying and often conflicting cultures and worldviews into the classroom, are good theoretical points of departure to enhance the teaching and learning context. Marbley et al (2007) citing Gay (2000) suggests that culture relevant pedagogy uses "the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective …. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students; it is culturally validating and affirming" (Marbley et al, 2007, p. 29). Thus, 'culture relevant pedagogy' draws from both the content and process aspects of the teaching and learning paradigm, an aspect that is critical to the success of all students, and especially to the success of students of colour.

Marbley et al (2007) present different diversity training models. As a springboard to their proposed model, which they describe as a "work in progress" (2007, p. 15), Marbley et al cite Kiselica and Mabe's (1999) findings on the effectiveness of multicultural education, which lists four major conclusions:

a) professionals who have completed diversity training perceive themselves as having consistently experienced positive changes in their biases towards people who are unlike themselves;

b) the etiology of prejudice reduction is unclear due to lack of reliable and valid measures of prejudice reported in the literature. However, significant improvements in attitudes toward homosexuality were found to exist after multicultural training;

c) the cause and effect relationship between the training and prejudice reduction cannot be determined due to the lack of experimental studies in the literature;

d) diversity training appears to have an effect on individuals' movement from lower to higher statuses of identity, which involves reduction of racial prejudice (Marbley et al, 2007, p. 13)

While there is agreement that a multicultural approach to training educators and practitioners is essential, there is little consensus within the academy as to which training components are

most effective. Furthermore, even fewer empirical data exist upon which programs may draw from to redesign their curriculum to be inclusive of multicultural initiatives (Marbley, 2007, p. 13). Marbley et al (2007) propose a Culture Specific Pedogogical (CSP) Counselling Model. Drawing on research, the authors note that "too often White students leave diversity or diversity-infused courses feeling angry". As a result they are not keen to work in low-income, urban schools with predominantly students of colour. For that reason, this CSP model was designed to provide "an outlet to process the didactic and experiential activities, events, and exercises pre-service teachers experience during their diversity-sensitive training in an academic setting" (Marbley et al, 2007, p. 13).

Marbley et al (2007, p. 12) provides an interesting approach to the actual planning of a diversity intervention, which includes Pederson's 5-stage process for planning a training activity. Pedersen (2003) asserts that a plan must be created that provides structure for the training activity before engaging in any training activity (as opposed to during the training activity). An example of a five-stage process for planning a training activity consists of: a) the creation of a needs assessment in order to determine the specific needs of the trainees and how they should be prioritized; b) the design of objectives for the training as designated by the data collected from the needs assessments; c) the design of a plan that explicitly states how the previously designated needs and objectives will be met; d) implementation of the training design; and e) evaluation of the knowledge, awareness, and skills of the trainees according to previously documented objectives (Marbley et al, 2007, p. 12).

Marbley et al contend that with their multidisciplinary approach which factors in "background and historical information on children of colour, counsellor education and teacher education diversity training models, culture specific and Black pedagogical theories, teachers and counsellors have a grasp of the basic tenets that underpin the CSP model" (2007, p. 12).

Social Justice Perspective approach

Using Cribb and Gewirtz' (2003) conceptual framework of social justice, Taysum & Gunter (2008) describe three forms of social justice through the lived experiences of their participants, namely – distributive justice, cultural justice and associational justice. *Distributive justice,* refers to economic justice, and may have three different aspects: 1) Exploitation - where gains made from human capital are distributed to others who were not part of the labour; 2) economic marginalization - access is restricted to poorly paid or no work; 3) deprivation - material standard of living is inadequate , and often illegal. *Cultural Justice* is present where there is a

recognition of cultures; and respect and tolerance for others. *Associational justice* is when those who are part of the dominant group are part of the decision making processes, and when they have equal rights and responsibilities in choices that affect their lives, one can claim a democratic structure.

Nieto develops a social justice perspective (2009). Questioning what changes are needed at both the macro and institutional level for diversity education to succeed, she considers diversity education across the continents, but with a strong references on the US and South African experience. Here the author considers the terminology used as context for addressing diversity, and contends that the terms 'multicultural', 'intercultural', 'antiracist', and 'non-racial' although quite similar remain different (Nieto, 2009, p. 18), depending on the lens through which diversity is considered. With diversity education being 'centrally about access and equity', Nieto develops a social justice perspective on diversity and diversity education. She recognizes the role of the state in addressing inequalities (2009, p. 19) and contends that diversity education must be aligned to the concept of social justice. Considering diversity and diversity education from a social justice perspective, Nieto presents four components of social justice in education. According to the author, a social justice approach: a) challenges, confronts and disrupts misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination; b) provides all students with resources necessary to learn to their full potential; c) draws on the talents and strengths the students bring to their education; d) creates a learning environment that promotes critical thinking and supports agency for social change (Nieto, 2009, p. 23).

These four components resonate with those put forth by Agarwal et al (2010) who positions the "historical" nature of inequalities in American education.

North (2006) interrogates the notion of a social justice discourse. Set in the US context, North's paper *More than words? Delving into the Substantive meaning of "social justice" in education* asserts that an exploration of social justice theories is warranted since it is presents "in teacher-education program discourses and policies, teacher-activist organization statements, educational conference programs, and scholarly articles and books" (North, 2006, p. 507). She critiques the views of many different authors, which she uses as a backdrop to her proposed Three Sphere Model of Social Justice.

Lalas's (2007) description of teaching for social justice as "providing students with a supportive learning environment that is just, fair, (and) democratic" (2007, p. 17) is aligned to

those of Nieto (2009) and Agarwal et al(2010), but has an added dimension of compassion. While Nieto emphasises the role of the state to champion a social justice approach to teaching and learning, Lallas emphasises the role of the educator. Lallas contends that an educator needs "to be aware of the demographic situation in urban areas and the social reality of isolation and poverty faced by its residents to make the connection how these conditions affect urban schools" (Lallas, 2007, p. 17). Beyond this awareness, educators need to understand "why there is a need to teach for social justice in an attempt to raise the students' identity, provide equitable access to appropriate curriculum and instruction, and remedy any existing harmful inequities" (Lallas, 2007, p. 17).

Lalas (2007) continues to emphasise the critical role of the classroom educators as 'the most essential element' (2007, p. 19) since they form the bridge between policy, curriculum and the student. Even though educators may not be able to turn around society's fundamental inequities, they can do much to raise the level of social awareness of their students and to guide the curriculum for social justice instruction. Furthermore, Lallas (2007) cites Cochran-Smith who similarly highlights the role of the educators, and contends that "teachers and teacher educators, to be effective, need 'to struggle to unlearn racism itself'" (2007, p. 19). Cochran-Smith suggests that, beyond transmitting knowledge, educators should guide students towards developing critical habits of mind, understanding and sorting out multiple perspectives, and learning to participate in and contribute to a democratic society by developing both the skill and the inclination for civic engagement" (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 159). This notion of Cochran-Smith reflects similarly to Nieto's (2009) four components of Social Justice in education.

Social Justice Perspective approach to issues of diversity in education

Agarwal et al (2010) posits the fact that American students of colour face inequalities is historical. They are often denied adequate educational resources within their school, are overrepresented within special education contexts, and are subject to harsher forms of punishment than their white peers. Given this history, teacher education programmes are committed to social justice, and to implement a social justice-oriented curriculum. Resonating strongly with Lallas (2007) and Nieto (2009), Agarwal et al places a large range of perspectives and practices under the social justice umbrella.

D'Cruz (2007) emphatically states that the programme Working With 'Diverse Bodies, Diverse Identities' is 'unashamedly positioned within a human rights and social justice agenda' (2007,

p. 52). The programme has three overall aims: firstly, to improve professional practice, as service provision and workplace relations, through critical reflection on and reflexive engagement with, socio-cultural and personal assumptions, stereotypes and images that both celebrate and oppress 'difference'. Secondly, to develop the skills of critical reflection and reflexive practice and social inquiry, which position each individual as an active participant in social processes in which they can 'make a difference'. Thirdly, to develop an alternative approach to achieving social justice by recognizing that inequality and oppression are lived experiences and is everyone's responsibility.

This programme differs from approaches that associate diversity solely with culture, race and ethnicity, and that provide 'information' on how particular groups are 'different from us' and what we must do to 'not offend them'. It also focuses on *processes* in which each of us daily interacts with others, each situation offering the potential to celebrate or oppress difference. Hence it minimizes the likelihood for expectations of techniques or packaged solutions that begin and end in the training session, and instead introduces participants to the idea of engaging with diversity and difference as an ongoing process of learning (2007, p. 41).

D'Cruz's programme consists of three modules which explores: a) Critical role of Language - represents and names assumptions/ categorizes and gives meaning/ device of power; b) Issues of Diversity - 'practical consciousness'/ 'linguistic communities'/ 'rhetorical devices' and c) Social Inquiry - critical reflection and reflexive engagement (2007, p. 42).

Lalas (2007) describes teaching for social justice as "a way of recognizing, respecting, and valuing differences in race, cultural beliefs, social norms, intellectual, flexibility, and personal perspectives and dispositions among students in a typically multicultural classroom in urban schools" (2007, p. 19). Many classroom teachers may believe that social justice can be cultivated in the classroom by appreciating diversity, promoting equity, advancing broad-mindedness, and encouraging voice and expression. Teaching for social justice can be also defined as a set of beliefs that emphasizes equity, ethical values, justice, care, and respect (Lallas, 2007). Practically, it is implementable by making the necessary instructional changes for diverse and special needs students to remedy any problem in them gaining equitable access to instruction and assessment for them.

While both Lalas (2007) and Nieto (2009) advocate a social justice approach, Lalas' focus is on the educator. Nieto on the other hand, emphasises the role of the state as the change agent;

she also highlights that the strengths of the students should be drawn upon, which is aligned with culture specific pedagogy.

Concluding comments

Given the expanded definitions posited by a range of authors (D'Cruz (2007); Lumby (2005); McEwan et al (2008); Nieto (2009); Paul (2003)) my literature search engaged from the traditional or 'bodily diversity' to 'diversity beyond culture' as well as 'diversity as change agent'. Various authors approach diversity through different theoretical lenses: some look at diversity from a race and culture perspective, i.e. Critical Race Theory, Black Pedagogy and Culture Specific Pedagogy, others focus on oppression and domination - Post-Colonial Theory, while the Social Justice Perspective approach considers the role of the policy and the state.

For the purpose of my investigation, I utilised my conceptual framework to conceptualise my investigation into 'Diversity' as an issue confronting lecturers teaching Life Orientation in the NCV programme as a TVET college. I limited my focus to diversity in the traditional sense, and considered only language, race and culture from a social justice perspective.

Situated Learning Theory (Lave and Wenger, 1990) suggests that learning is unintentional and situated within authentic activity, context, and culture. The DHET Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers (2013) also has an expectation of lecturers to develop through Situated Learning. Findings will be used as a measure to determine if lecturers without prior training had experienced learning about diversity as a result of social interaction within their working context.

Given the national imperatives of redress, managing issues of diversity remains a challenge affecting all spheres of life of South Africans. With the college sector in South Africa being in transition, and with the relative newness of the NCV programme (nine years), the combination of the sector and programme present a particularly lucrative site for research. My assertion is that 'diversity' does not receive the attention it deserves within the sector.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research questions

Main research question

- How are Life Orientation lecturers experiencing diversity in their classroom?

Sub-questions

- How are Life Orientation lecturers coping with their experience of diversity?

- What kind of preparation have Life Orientation lecturers received to cope with diversity?

- How should they be prepared to cope with diversity?

Research site

My research question speaks to LO college lecturers' experience of diversity at their college as well as how they cope with their experience. This predetermined my site to be within the TVET sector. TVET colleges were formed by merging smaller technical and other colleges into what is sometimes described as mega colleges in South Africa, and are mostly multi-campus institutions. These colleges offer a programme mix which includes post-matric, vocational and occupational programmes. There are more than fifty public TVET colleges nationally; I selected one college which consists of a multi-campus environment, with five campuses and a number of training sites off campus. The college is seen as semi-rural, in other words a few of the campuses are located close to the city, while the others are more rural. As the site for my research, I will select one urban campus of my identified college, which offers the NCV programme and where students come from a wide range of socio-economic suburbs and townships.

Research approach

Bryman (2012) claims a research design to be "a framework for the collection and analysis of data" (p. 46). Terre Blanche & Durrheim (1999, p. 44) argue that the purpose of a research design is to develop "an explicit plan for action" for how to deal with three basic activities, namely sampling, data collection, and analysis. It is the execution of the research design, or the "doing stage of research", that is often referred to as "fieldwork". Merriam (1998) notes that

qualitative research designs are followed in cases where "reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds" (Merriam, 1998, p. 6).

My study applied a qualitative research approach underpinned by an interpretivist epistemology. College lecturers' working context reflects "social interaction that cannot be researched using standard research methods that are typical of the natural sciences", suggesting that an interpretivist approach, which allows for the "(emphatic) understanding of human behaviour" (Bryman, 2008, p. 15), is appropriate.

Ontologically, I approached my study from a constructionist perspective. Constructionism, also referred to as constructivism, "asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors. It implies that social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant state of revision" (Bryman, 2008, p. 19). Furthermore, Bryman states that "the categories that people employ in helping them to understand the natural and social world are in fact social products" (Bryman, p. 20), thereby asserting that people are constructing meaning in and through interaction with each other. In their work environment, college lecturers are confronted with issues of diversity daily which elicits specific actions and reactions from them. These are influenced and informed by their students as well as their colleagues and campus management. How they respond to it can be shaped by prior training, situated learning or learning within their community of practice. Their learning then contributes to shaping their own reality.

Research instrument

I designed an interview schedule as my instrument for data collection. It relates to the main research question as well as the sub-questions. It consisted of close-ended and open-ended questions, grouped together in various sections that are informed by the research questions and framed by the literature. I used clear headings for each section to assist participants with the focus and flow of each section. Detailed numbering of each question helped with the data sorting, coding and analysis.

My instrument was written in English and included a personal profile of each participant, with biographical details including qualifications and training.

The interview schedule was used for semi-structured interviews and included closed-ended as well as open-ended questions. This allowed participants the space to give a more open and personal account of their experiences and attitudes which produced rich, detailed responses.

Methods of data-gathering

I selected semi-structured interviews as the research method of my study. According to Bryman (2008), semi-structured interviewing can also be referred to as "in-depth interviews or qualitative interviews" (p. 438). Qualitative interviewing is flexible and allows for departure from the interview schedule with the researcher asking follow-up or new questions. The researcher wants "rich, detailed answers" and the participant's point of view is sought (Bryman, 2008, p.437).

I conducted my interviews during the period December 2014 – March 2015. I scheduled interviews at times convenient to the participants, who also selected the meeting place for the interview. While I preferred a venue with limited noise and distractions, some places were quite noisy. Data gathered from my semi-structured interviews are supported by analyzing documents such as educational policy documents and curriculum documents for relevant information. I also sourced statistics on student demographics from the student administration department of the college and asked the HR training department for a list of lecturing training opportunities arranged by the college for its lecturers. These data-gathering methods allowed me some insights to how diversity is understood by college lecturers.

I reviewed policy documents such as the various Education Acts, policy frameworks relative to the college sector as well as the Life Orientation curriculum documents for references to a redress agenda, diversity and approaches to lecturer education and training. These documents framed the background , rationale and context for my research.

The statistics from the student administration department relative to the student demographics provided the following diversity indicators: age, home language, gender ethnicity. My request from the HR department for a list of training opportunities arranged/ approved by the HR training unit for the lecturers of the same campus (my site of research) was not wholly successful. The training unit was relatively new and did not have comprehensive lists of past training opportunities.

Research participants and selection

For my study, I applied a purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling is a strategic attempt to interview people who are relevant to the research questions (Bryman, 2008, p. 458). I approached the whole subject team, eleven (11) lecturers who teach NCV Life Orientation on my site research, a TVET college, with nine (9) of the eleven participating in my study.

As described in the 'Draft Framework for College Lecturer Development' presented by the South African Department of Education in 2009 (p. 16), college lecturers can broadly be divided into three categories based on their qualifications: a) lecturers who are suitably qualifies in one or more fundamentals subjects which are compulsory to the NCV; b) lecturers who are suitably qualified to teach the conceptual component in one or more of the vocational subjects offered in the vocational field of study; and c) lecturers who are suitably qualified to provide practical instruction in one or more of the vocational field of study.

Based on these categories, lecturers may then find themselves teaching across a number of academic programmes, or they may be restricted to one programme. Examples of this would be Language lecturers who teach both Business and Engineering students, while an Electrical lecturer will only teach students who are on the Electrical programme.

My sampling of Life Orientation lecturers was very purposive, and intended to include lecturers from: a) various categories of college lecturer qualifications; b) NCV programmes in both the Business and Engineering fields offered on the selected campus; c) Lecturers who trained pre and post 1994; d) all racial groupings represented on the campus; and e) fair balance between the genders.

I was initially concerned that the small size of the subject team (11 lecturers) would be a limitation, but other than Gender (see Appendix 6, Table 1), the nine lecturers who participated in my study met all the categories listed above.

Data-capturing

Interviews were scheduled, recorded and transcribed. Pseudonyms were used for all participants to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, as this was an assurance spelt out in my information letter. Participants agreed beforehand with their consent forms that the interviews may be recorded. Audio recordings were made with my mobile phone and then transcribed. The recording of the interviews limited distractions caused at times by note-taking, thereby allowing for eye-contact between participant and researcher. However, some 'process notes' were made. I added a few follow-on questions where there was a need for clarity, or if a response did not speak directly to the question. It was not necessary for further follow-up interviews or group responses.

Keeping in mind that data in the form of these audio recordings may get lost or corrupted, I stored the recordings in various formats, such as on computer, on memory stick as well as my online email account. This was done with the transcriptions as well.

SECTION 4 – DATA ANALYSIS

The aims of my study were to investigate Life Orientation lecturers' experiences of diversity at a TVET college, how they respond to issues related to diversity and how they are prepared to manage the latter. I conducted semi-structured interviews with my participants. Namhlanje TVET provided data on their student demographical information.

For the purpose of my analysis I will discuss the data under five major themes related to Diversity at Namhlanje TVET College. I colour coded the data manually and grouped them into emerging trends, from which I identified five different theme–related categories.

The first of these themes will be *Conceptions of Diversity* as articulated by the participants. This will be followed by the range of *Student Diversity within the TVET college context* (specific to Namhlanje TVET College as my site of research), as well as *Lecturer Strategies to cope with this student diversity*. As posited by the participants, not all strategies are successful in dealing with tensions related to diversity. My analysis will then continue with *Issues and Incidents related to Student Diversity* and will conclude with participant suggestions for *Lecturer Preparation to deal with issue of Diversity*.

Participant demographic information

I invited all eleven lecturers who teach NCV Life Orientation at my research site, a TVET college; nine agreed to participate in my study (see Appendix 6, Table 1 attached). Of these, six are female and three male. The participants selected a racial category for themselves as follow: one "mixed" female (her own descriptor); one black female; two coloured females and two coloured males; two white females and one white male. The majority practiced Christianity. All participants were bilingual or multilingual, and spoke English, Afrikaans and Xhosa.

The participants had a range of qualifications, with eight having two or more formal post matric qualifications. The range of qualifications include: advanced certificate (2), post graduate certificate (3), diploma (6), higher diploma (4), first degree (2) and honours degree (2). It is noteworthy that four of the nine participants completed their formal qualification prior to 1994, four completed the formal qualification after 1995, and one completed their formal qualification since 2000.

Regarding Life Orientation (LO) training, five participants had LO topics as part of their formal qualification while seven had one or other form of LO related continuing professional development.

When Nieto (2009) refers to 'multiple identities' and 'cultural fusions', and coins the term 'hybridity' to describe the blend of various cultures to form new and distinct identities (p.18), she may well have described some participants.

Student demographic information

The data that I received from Namhlanje TVET's student administration department placed their NCV students in four categories: age, home language, gender and ethnicity (see attached Table 2). During 2014, 380 students had registered for the NCV qualification across all three levels (L2, L3 and L4). These students were predominantly in the age group 20 – 24yrs (56%), female (55%), Xhosa speaking (55%) and black (60%). Comparing the student demographic with the lecturer demographic raises interesting questions about the match. The data has shown that this disparity greatly informed the responses from participants. For example, many participants were not knowledgeable about the cultural or religious practices of their students that affect the student's attendance; this lack of insight may have lead to intolerance and student-lecturer tensions.

Namhlanje TVET College as a diverse context

The literature positions the elements of diversity in two categories. The Workinfo.com website use the terms "primary and secondary dimensions" while Lumby (2005) cites Wentling who states that there are "broad and narrow definitions of difference which constitute diversity" (2005, p.35). Primary and Narrow definitions contain similar elements, while Secondary and Broad dimensions group similar elements.

Primary Dimensions: Race/Ethnicity/colour; Age; Gender; Physical ability; Sexual Orientation (Workinfo.com)

Narrow Dimensions: Race; Gender; Disability (Lumby, 2005)

Secondary Dimensions: Geographic location (where you were born/currently live); Income; Parental status; Marital status; Political affiliations and beliefs; Religious beliefs; Work experience (Workinfo.com)

Broad dimensions: Age; Disability; Religion; Sexual Orientation; Values; Ethnic Culture; National Origin; Education; Lifestyle; Beliefs; Physical Appearanc; Social Class; and Economic Status (Lumby, 2005)

Gauging from the data, participant responses are well aligned to these categories of conceptions of diversity.

Participant Conceptions of Diversity

D'Cruz asserts that "approaches to diversity may be located in different philosophies, theories about diversity, aims, target groups and methodologies (curriculum design and delivery)" (2007, p.36). According to D'Cruz, these approaches are informed mainly by theories about difference and inequality. Added to this, Lumby posits that by defining what diversity may be, one immediately 'transform(s) a neutral description to a contested and political domain' (2005, p.35). Participants responses were no different.

Diversity, Difference and Background

Almost all participants, as lecturers, associated diversity with *difference*. The responses ranged from personal reflection to community/ society as well as a national perspective, with one participant limiting her reply to her workplace. Busisiwe personalised her response about diversity:

> To me it means being different and having the ability to live with each other in spite of our differences. (Busisiwe)

Miriym and Jerome reflected on diversity in community and society with their responses:

> It is about being the same, despite how different we are and about the different walks of life we come from. It is not just about how diverse you are; it is about your background. (Miriym)

> The immediate thought that comes to mind is differences. Specifically with the different ethnic and cultural group of students that we have within the college. (Jerome)

Johanna positioned her reply within her work context, "It is about the differences in the students in your class" while Benita and Derick both presented a broader, more national perspective:

Being brought up in South Africa (SA) it has a lot of meaning if you think about different races, apartheid, the education system, and how it has transformed... the students you're working with, their backgrounds, their class, their financial backgrounds. (Benita)

It means being sensitised to differences within the South African context. (Derick)

Most of the participants who associated diversity with difference, also referred to 'background' as an indicator of diversity. Some participants, like Busisiwe and Miriym, gave personal reflections in their responses. Busiswe responded by saying the following, "Acknowledg(e) that we come from different backgrounds and interests.", while Miriym said "It is not just about how diverse you are it is about your background".

Another participant posited a group perspective:

Having people with different cultures and backgrounds in a group, either while working together or trying to work together. (Heather)

Diversity, Race/Ethnicity and Culture

Most of the participants included a reference to *race* in their responses. It is not surprising that a handful of participants substituted *skin colour* for race and others chose the more subtle alternative *ethnic*. Even the literature shows this trend. While there is a nuanced difference in meaning among these three terms, some literature do use it interchangeably (Workinfo.com) who include race/ color/ ethnicity as part of their primary dimensions of diversity. D'Cruz alludes to this interchangeability between the concepts and meanings of *culture* and *diversity* where the term *culture* seems to "subsume race, ethnicity, language and religion" (2007, p.36).

Participant responses display a flexibility with these terms, which seem to resonate with D'Cruz. Only one participant, Benita, was more explicit in her discussion with an almost political statement, while Derick and Pieter grouped race with other categories.

Being brought up in South Africa (SA) it has a lot of meaning if you think about different races, apartheid, the education system, and how it has transformed... You can take it back to the classrooms and the students you're working with. Their backgrounds, their class, their financial backgrounds. Just thinking of them travelling when coming to the college, communicating with them... these are all things I think of when it comes to diversity. (Benita)

It is about the different aspects of where different culture, race and things are concerned. (Derick)

I think it is about male and female and it is based on people's culture and religion and probably race as well. (Pieter)

Talking about her students, Johanna said:

To me it is not just about skin colour but also about some students being fast learners and others being a bit slower. (Johanna)

In their responses, both Maureen and Jerome used the word *ethnic* instead of race. As with a few of the participants who made reference to race as well as *culture* in their responses (see Derick and Pieter's quotes above), both Maureen and Jerome did so too:

When I hear the word diversity, I think of cultures, different ethnic groups, beliefs, religion. (Maureen)

(Diversity) relates not only to your ethnic groups or cultures but also age groups. (Jerome)

A couple of participants mentioned culture and background in their responses, but made no reference to race as a category of diversity at all. Miriym said:

It is not just about how diverse you are, it is about your background... It is not just about culture and religion, it is about diversity within diversity. (Miriym)

Heather suggested that diversity is:

Having people with different cultures and backgrounds in a group, either while working together or trying to work together. (Heather)

Other categories of Diversity

A small number of participants noted *religion* in their responses, while hardly anyone mentioned *gender*. Maureen connected diversity with a *belief* system:

When I hear the word diversity, I think of cultures, different ethnic groups, beliefs, religion. (Maureen)

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Not all participants positioned race dominantly. For example, Pieter mentioned gender and religion ahead of race:

> I think it is about male and female and it is based on people's culture and religion and probably race as well. (Pieter)

Other descriptors of diversity mentioned by individual participants were *financial background*, *class*, *Bornfrees* (referring to those students born in post-apartheid in SA, post-1994) and *age*. Notably though, given the number of official languages in our country, none of the participants referred to language as a category of diversity at all. However, this mirrors the literature which also do not focus on language as an element of diversity.

Student Diversity in Namhlanje TVET College

Regarding the diversity of their students, participants were more vociferous and used a range of descriptors, varying from two to five grouped together. Among these are: *race, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, age, education, disadvantaged vs privileged/those who do not have, economic status, gender* as well as *foreign nationals*. From this range of descriptors, language was the most prominent. It should be noted that while participants included language in their responses to describe the diversity of their students, the literature very seldom include language as an element of diversity. This is evident too from the participant responses to the conception of diversity (where no-one listed language) compared to their description of their student diversity (where language was the most prominent descriptor).

Student Diversity of Race, Culture, Religions and Foreigners

With race, cultural and religion together being the common descriptors used most frequently, race and language stood out as the categories participants grouped their students in. Race however, was the dominant descriptor. This is well aligned with the literature that puts a strong emphasis on race: Lumby (2005) – 'race, gender and disability'; Nieto (2009) – starts with race, then expands to other traditional factors); Paul (2003) – 'gender, class, race, ethnicity'.

Some participants identified race or colour as a problem or challenge.

> Race is a problem in my class, especially with the black students. (Johanna)

> It has changed a lot since the beginning of my teaching in 2003, I can see how the profiles have changed with regard to race and those days it was, I would say 95% of

students being white but now it has changed dramatically. We are mostly challenged with black students. (Derick)

As with Derick, other participants also mentioned different racial groups in their responses.

The smallest component is the white students and a 50/50 made up of coloured and

african students. (Pieter)

We have africans (per say) and then coloured groups and white groups and the challenge is around getting the students to work together. (Jerome)

My research shows that it is this "problematic" nature of race (as asserted by my participants) that gives rise to racial tension and flare-ups between different racial groupings on TVET campuses (as seen with the one incident at Namhlanje TVET that was reported in the news).

Of the participants who categorised their students by race, a small number combined it with culture, and with religion.

The age gaps, race, different education backgrounds...I would also say the cultural background has an impact. Some have a cultural focus, others not. (Busisiwe)

Within the classroom I have racial groups and cultures. Then different religions as well. (Heather)

Maureen and Derick mentioned that African foreign nationals have also enrolled at Namhlanje TVET College.

At the moment it would be all have different religions and speak different languages. I have a French speaking student from the Congo in my class for example. (Maureen)

..the different colours as we may know, whites and blacks and, not many, but over the years we have had foreigners as well. (Derick)

Diverse Languages among Students

While conceptions of diversity seldom include language as an element of diversity, many diversity programmes have a language component. D'Cruz's diversity programme include one module on the critical role of language as a tool that "categorizes and gives meaning" as well as it being a "device of power" (2007, p. 42). This critical role of language was evident in participant responses as well. Within the South African context, language in itself has been a

contested notion in the pre-democracy era of South Africa, where it was used by the apartheid government as a tool of exclusion and oppression.

Despite none of the participants having identified language in their conceptions of diversity, a large number made reference to the diverse languages of their students, some like Maureen having as many as five different languages in one class.

> At the moment it would be (that) all have different religions and speak different languages. I have a French speaking student from Congo in my for example. So yes, Afrikaans speaking, English speaking, students with Xhosa backgrounds and Zulu speaking students as well. Yes, it is quite an array of students. I even have a Rastafarian student as well. (Maureen)

During their responses, Heather and Jerome also made mention of the "different languages" of their students. There were a few participants who described language diversity as a "challenge/ difficulty/ struggle".

> The first time that I encountered that there is diversity within my classroom was during my first year of teaching. There were many challenges, but I think the one thing that stood out to me was that I was a bit irritated in my first year and I could not understand why. I had no background of education and I was busy studying ... I realized that they (the students) did not have an understanding of Basic English. (Benita)

> Race is a problem in my class, especially with the black students. Difficulty with the English language is also a struggle. (Johanna)

Economic Diversity of Students

Taysum & Gunter (2008) describes three forms of social justice, one of which is distributive/ economic justice. Deprivation, a subcategory of economic justice, describes a condition where the "material standard of living is inadequate". This description of Taysum & Gunter seems applicable to a number of the students of Namhlanje TVET.

Economic diversity is a category of diversity that participants grouped their students in which they didn't allude to in their descriptions of diversity as a concept. Grouped here too is the notion of the "don't haves" and "disadvantaged/ privileged". And by implication, these notions of economic status, "do have or don't have", and being "disadvantaged or privileged", in turn

would either support or hamper a student's learning; as Nieto asserts, "structural inequalities impeded equitable outcomes in education" (2009, p. 19).

> The age gaps, different learning backgrounds, some students come from a disadvantaged household where others have had privileges. (Busisiwe)

> The diversity in the classroom is we have mixture of race and economic status. Those who have and those who do not have, I can see that in the classroom. (Derick)

> They do not have computers at home and this makes my task more difficult when teaching them. (Johanna)

This awareness of their students' life circumstances demonstrated by participants, speaks to Lallas' description of the educator who teaches for social justice. Lallas (2007) views the educator as "the most essential element" (p.19), and contends that an educator needs

> to be aware of the demographic situation in urban areas and the social reality of isolation and poverty faced by its residents to make the connection how these conditions affect urban schools. (2007, p. 17)

Student Diversity as a Challenge

It is noticeable that when asked "What diversity do you encounter in your classroom?" participants invariably associated their students' diversity with the problems/ challenges/ difficulties they experience as TVET college lecturers.

An interesting point was raise by one participant who discussed the varied life experiences of her students. She described it as:

> (It is) a diversity that made you sick.... sick in the sense that you realise it is not going to reach everybody. (Miriym)

> I feel like I am not always geared enough as a Life Orientation lecturer to feed (teach) my students, especially teaching Life Orientation and working with engineering students. We deal with real life things. When I think about it, I am teaching to students who know more about things than I do. I teach sexual orientation; these kids have the backside of sexual orientation and have seen the ugly side (of it). (Miriym)

Lecturer Strategies to manage Diversity

Given the broad range of diversity the participants experience in their classrooms, their strategies to it ranges from small in scope to being extensive. Again, it is important to note that notwithstanding the strategies employed by participants, racial tensions and flare-ups still continue. The case of one participant, Jerome, is a good example of this, where, in his discussion, he mentioned the strategy he followed to address the racial tensions among two specific students in his class; notwithstanding all of these, the tensions continued outside his class and resulted in a fist fight (which ended up in the media).

Lecturer Difficulties with Diversity

The greatest difficulty with the diversity among their students mentioned most often by participants, is *language.* This is confirmed and supported by the numerous participant comments and responses that included language (see section under Language). A handful of participants added *age* and *socio-economic influences,* with once-off mention of *sensitive curriculum topics* (Miriym), *limited ICT knowledge* (Heather) and *stereotyping about student background* (Maureen).

One of the participants discussed how particularly difficult it was being close in age and younger than many of her students. This was very specific to Benita, the youngest of the participants. The older student often also had family responsibilities which hampered their progress as students.

> The number one difficulty is language and the second would be age. Me being in my twenties and most of them being a bit older or just a bit younger than me, or not knowing my age, thinking that they could be my peer or that they could be my mother *(laughs).* That is/ was my biggest challenge. I needed to constantly prove myself and show that I am superior and I am capable enough to teach them.... (A male student) would think that because he is a boy and I am a girl, I would be his girl. It could also be an older woman thinking I am disrespecting her when I am reprimanding her or teaching her, or even just telling her (the older women) not to approach a specific matter in a certain way. (Benita)

> "Over the last 5years we have seen that most student are 20 years and older. Many of them are students with national senior certificates that have failed and they want to try to obtain a national senior certificate in a different way, by doing the NCV. Then you

find students are bringing their social and home problems with them. So one has to listen to all their problems and try to guide and support them. Really be mother/father to them". (Pieter)

Lecturer strategies to make the curriculum[5] more accessible: topics, terminology and language

Lalas (2007, p. 17) describes the critical role of educators as "the most essential element" in teaching for social justice since they form the bridge between policy, curriculum and the student. Even though participants are unable to adapt the curriculum topics to cater for their diverse students, they described it in positive terms. All participants discussed the Life Orientation (LO) curriculum, with only Busisiwe and Jerome drawing on their Technical subjects as well. Some described it (the LO curriculum) as "straightforward" (Miriym), "fairly easy" (Heather) and "It is quite cast in stone" (Benita). Maureen, who has taught overseas for a few years, and Busisiwe had this to say:

> I think they have made an effort concerning the curriculum with South Africa being as diverse. In my opinion the themes for life orientation has been made universal. I think they focused on problems experienced globally, for example drugs. (Maureen)

> In terms of the curriculum, I would say the LO curriculum is more relevant as these are things the students deal with every day. So most of them can relate to what is listed in the curriculum. Like in LO for instance there are topics that they learn about, they experience it in their day-to-day lives and communities. (Busisiwe)

The participants' responses indicate that the curriculum content was challenging both to their students as well as some of the participants. The challenges and responses to it though are different for the two groups of participants. For the group who teaches the ICT component of LO on the one hand, the ICT jargon presents the bigger challenge. On the other hand, the Life Skills lecturers were challenged by the range, depth and currency of the curriculum topics. As with Derick and Maureen quoted below, some participants found their knowledge and experience to be too limited, and sought inputs and contributions from their students. They would then draw on their students' knowledge and lived experience as a complimentary source of information for the class to benefit from. This speaks to Lallas' (2007, p. 17) description of teaching for social justice as a way of recognizing, respecting and valuing differences in race,

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[5]LO consists of two components. Participants teach either the Life Skills or the ICT component as follow:
Life Skills: Maureen, Miriym, Busisiwe, Derick   ICT: Benita, Johanna, Heather, Pieter, Jerome

cultural beliefs, social norms, personal perspectives and dispositions among students in a multicultural classroom.

> There are instances where you do feel the curriculum can reflect more on (some) topics. It may be that they do not have enough information on how different cultures deal with a particular problem. I have had students who would explain their cultures to me about what the process is when they go into the manhood phase of life. (Maureen)

> This is where thorough preparation comes in. I know what is in the content of the curriculum beforehand. Wherever I feel there could be difficulties I interact with my students. Finding out what their stances on this and stances on that. I have learnt many lessons thus far. Simple things such as customs of the different religions and we find this is how we are different. So I have learnt a lot. (Derick)

Lecturer strategies to manage language diversity

With D'Cruz highlighting the critical role of language as being a "device of power" (2007, p. 42), and against the backdrop of language being used by the previous apartheid government as a tool of exclusion and oppression, language remains a contested terrain. The multilingual environment on TVET campuses adds to the complexity of the diversity challenges experienced by TVET college lecturers.

Currently all the NCV curriculum documents are published in English only (bar the isiXhosa Additional Language curriculum), as are most of the NCV textbooks. This in itself presents a myriad of challenges to the multilingual classroom, and is acknowledged as the primary enabling (or disabling) factor by most of my participants. Many participants explained that even before making meaning of the content of the curriculum, they find that they need to spend time simplifying terms and concepts for their students. Most lecturers go back to basics to ensure that all students understand the terminology. Miriym, a Life Skills lecturer, was in agreement with Jerome, Benita and Pieter, all ICT lecturers, who said the following:

> There are certain aspects, or certain functions and terminology that students would need to know first. Language is the first barrier that I concentrate on because I did the LOLT[6]

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[6] LOLT – Language Of Learning and Teaching, a short course which assists lecturers which strategies to cope with the weak English literacy competency of their students.

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training. I first ensure that they know the key terms and key (computer) functions; just small things to help them work with the rest of the class. (Benita)

About curriculum, we have Word and Excel we normally teach the students. So I would explain the concept and they have to practice it but in order for the students to understand it better I allow them to help each other and explain it as well. The African students have the ability to explain it better in their language than I can. (Pieter)

About curriculum content: if a lecture would contain complex terminology, which has been one of the most difficult things for me to deal with in bringing my point across when presenting the content. Therefore, in most cases, I try my best to accommodate the students but at times, it is difficult for the African languages. (Jerome)

Curriculum is straightforward; I introduce the concepts because they might not know what the terminology is and we will talk about it. (Miriym)

Pieter and Miriym acknowledged the limited vocabulary of their students during their responses. Pieter made mention that his students' "street English" was not accommodated while Miriym allows her students to use the slang words that they are familiar with.

We use textbooks and that is a barrier at times because of the language. The textbooks are transcribed in English and it is of a high standard, not "street" English. Therefore students do not always understand concepts as they are third (language) English and it is difficult for them. (Pieter)

I adapt to the learning material based on the knowledge the students bring with them. I still give them the content they are supposed to know. I realize I allow the students to use the swear words, not the (very vulgar and crude) "P and N" words, but they say this is what they do. The lipstick competition and things like that. (Miriym)

Jerome described the need to accommodate for the absence of certain complex terminology in the mother tongue of their students, especially in engineering subjects.

I also experience that many of the (Engineering) words and concepts in the African language do not exist and I then have to translate it into Afrikaans or English in order for them to understand. I'm not fluent in Xhosa or Zulu but what I do is to ask that the students teach me their (mother tongue) terminology so that I can teach them (in turn)

and they can understand. I then try to incorporate it into the curriculum to make it easier for the students. (Jerome)

Busisiwe and Heather described how they needed to allay their students' assumptions about the lecturer's mother tongue as an indicator of the language of learning and teaching in class.

> I try to also emphasise in my classes that we all use one language which is English. And sometimes my Xhosa students are finding it very difficult because they see me as a Xhosa lecturer and they find when they first see me, they think it's a Xhosa class and they will be free to relate to in Xhosa. But I also tell them from my experience it's not good. (They must).. utilise the opportunity. Let's use the class as a platform to learn the language and then learn to be confident to speak and to learn to make mistakes. (Busisiwe)

Heather tells of a similar experience with her Afrikaans speaking students, which according to her, became an issue in her class.

> I am Afrikaans speaking and some students know this. As a result they would engage me in the Afrikaans language and this became a problem as we encourage students to speak in English. I put a stop to it though by encouraging them to ask their questions in English instead. (Heather)

Busisiwe and Heather are from different race groups with different mother tongue languages. It would be interesting to further explore their respective approaches to language to see to what extent it had been shaped by the oppressive use of language either as a tool of inclusion or exclusion, and to what extent they view the use of English as a common language to create equal access for all their students.

Lecturer strategies in utilizing student background, prior knowledge and life experience as a frame of reference for the curriculum

In their study of how diversity is addressed in a postgraduate programme, McEwan et al (2008, p. 107) considers students' "background, prior knowledge and experience" as a means of enhancing their learning experience. While TVET college students are not at undergraduate level, TVET lecturers are most cognisant of the value their students bring to the classroom.

As a subject, Life Orientation draws on the students' frame of reference to assist them with understanding the curriculum topics. Five of the participants remarked that their students'

backgrounds, their prior knowledge as well as their life experiences, guided participants when they planned and presented their lessons.

> About my methods of teaching: it is normally dependent on the group I am working with, their background and the first baseline assessment that I do. I check what their interests are and cater to those needs. I have to check how I am teaching and from what angle I am teaching, as well as their frame of reference, which will be based on what they have answered during the questionnaire. (Benita)

> The LO curriculum is more relevant as these are things the students deal with every day. So most of them can relate to what is listed in the curriculum. Like in LO for instance, there are topics that they learn about. HIV is a topic they are being educated in, but they experience it in their day-to-day lives and communities. (Busisiwe)

> I adapt the learning material based on the knowledge the students bring with them. I still give them the content they are supposed to know. (Miriym)

Participants also drew distinctions between their different class groups, for example a Business Studies and Engineering group (Benita), or a class who learned faster and those who needed more time (Heather). An interesting comment came from Benita who referred to a Business Studies group being more "emotionally intelligent" compared to an engineering group who wants to be "entertained all the time". Having made this observation, the participant would then select learning material accordingly.

> Say, for instance, I work with an office admin group and usually it would be students that are a bit more emotionally intelligent. Therefore, you would tap into that and use a more psychological approach. The type of video clips you would choose would have a more emotional background and try to get them more motivated,

> When I am working with the electrical and engineering group for instance, to me they are boys so I have to keep them entertained all of the time. Therefore, I would choose more of a pop culture type activity. And topics that they need to do research on would be more relevant to them….for instance, cars or boats that they would like, just things that would interest them. There is no way I can make an emotional connection with them. (Benita)

Lecturer strategies to select diversity sensitive methods and materials

Participants explained that the prescribed textbook served as the primary learning material for most participants; some of them supplemented this with other printed materials as well as newspaper articles on current and relevant topics. A few participants, such as Jerome, Maureen and Benita used digital resources, which they referred to as *"interactive media"* (Jerome) and *"multimedia"* (Maureen).

> About the learning material, I think this response goes for my method of teaching as well. I predominantly use interactive media, whether it is audio or video, PowerPoint presentations. I try to keep it as animated as possible. (Jerome)

> This year I have tried to use case studies, multi-media. I used a documentary to showcase how drugs can affect your day-to-day situation. (Maureen)

Benita highlighted that this blended learning approach is as a result of the good IT infrastructure and reliable internet access participants have at their place of work. Benita, having worked at two different TVET colleges, spoke highly of this:

> About learning material... there are endless possibilities especially being on campus. The internet that we have and all of the technology and the computers that we have are some of the best that I have worked with. Some colleges do not have this, and this actually helps us as lecturers a lot. Learning material is quite easy to get a hold of. (Benita)

An unanticipated but pleasant trend that emerged came to light with words such as *"play"*, *"fun"*, *"entertained"*, *"animated"* and *"humour"* used by half of the participants in their responses. LO is an examinable subject at college; yet a number of participants made efforts to build in a lightness into their classroom presentations, especially with topics that can be sensitive at times.

> I do encourage small groups and maybe role play because I have realised that students enjoy when we play while they learn. (Busisiwe)

> I also try to incorporate fun by having debates on interesting topics. The students who find it difficult to open up share in the group sessions as well. (Maureen)

The engineering group for instance, to me they are boys, so I have to keep them entertained all of the time. Therefore, I would choose more of a pop culture type activity and topics that they need to do research on would be more relevant to them. (Benita)

I try to keep it as animated as possible and incorporate as much humor as possible because the emotion that is linked to the humor helps them anchor the information. (Jerome)

Lecturer strategies specific to language, race and culture in the Life Orientation class

McEwan et al "advocate bringing diversity positively and explicitly into the learning design to enable students to engage with and learn from each other in ways that benefit both students and staff/faculty members" (2008, p. 116).

Here individual participant responses were consistent with their other responses. However, very few lecturers cater for all three categories of diversity they were asked about, namely Language, Race and Culture. Drawing from their responses, all participants catered for the diverse languages in the class, but the extent to which they do, differs. While just about all the participants mentioned how they approach language in the LO class, very few were specific about their strategies regarding race and culture.

There is also a difference in approach between the Life Skills lecturers and ICT lecturers. Life Skills lecturers have more opportunity for responses and interactive activities for the students, while in the ICT class students need to be hands-on and practice their computer skills. However, even among the ICT lecturers, there were different approaches. A handful of participants felt that there is no room for accommodating race and culture diversity in their curriculum content; these include Johanna and Heather, both ICT lecturers.

The subject I teach being computers does not leave room for planning around the racial or cultural components. (Johanna)

In relation to race and culture it is straight forward as with computers you would not necessarily deal with this as you would with other theoretical subjects. (Heather)

A couple of participants had a completely different approach, such as Jerome and Pieter, both of whom take into account language, race and culture. Their approach is more aligned to teaching from a social justice perspective that a few of the other ICT lecturers.

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In most cases, they are intertwined because I try to … not draw too much attention to them individually. This could at times lead to unwanted debate and classification inside of the classroom. Therefore, I try to mix it up so that we do not get stuck on any of those issues. To not be stuck on the individual components i.e. language, race and culture but in the lesson, there would be some reference to either of those. (Jerome)

Pieter was the more specific of the two:

About culture and race, I think when giving them an exercise to type a letter you need to ensure there are no comments that would offend them. No racial or bias comments and no cultural or sexual comments. (Pieter)

Most of the participants who teach the ICT component, mentioned their students' challenges with language and the computer jargon.

(The lecturer) will talk about "saving something on a file" and the students will say they are writing it on a disc. Therefore you realise they have their own terminology and after a while you pick up the lingo and what they actually mean. One needs to translate the terms. (Pieter)

According to Heather, students not only struggle with the ICT jargon, but they also need a certain level of English proficiency to be able to edit documents for linguistic errors.

Looking at language, if there is anything they do not understand I will break it up in such a way for them to understand. With computers it is about teaching a skill, how to type for example. Lots of typing is involved, and editing…They do not how to rectify errors as they may not know what the correct spelling of a word is. (Heather)

Parallel to the ICT lecturers whose students need a certain level of English for the LO curriculum, the participants who teach Life Skills shared other approaches to language diversity. Especially in the Life skills classes where there appears to be more student responses and debates happening, lecturers view language as a tool for communication in a more social context and allowed students to use slang words (or "street English" as Pieter called it), and by doing so, draw on the lived experience of their students.

Whatever language the students use that is not too vulgar. As I said, when they say "blow job", I say "blow job". I am not going to tell them not to use that language. I would go into more of a social context. (Miriym)

Then there were other participants whose approach to language was to stick to English for teaching. Johanna said, "I speak English, as this is the language everyone understands". Busisiwe refused to speak Xhosa with her Xhosa students (despite the fact that her English accent was mimicked by a white student).

> I try to also emphasise in my classes that we all use one language which is English. And sometimes my Xhosa students are very finding it very difficult because they see me as a Xhosa lecturer and they find when they first see me they think it's a Xhosa class and they will be free to relate to in Xhosa. (Busisiwe)

One or two participants indicated that they do not cater for their students' diversity specific to the categories of language, race and culture, but rather consider their students in other ways. A participant who is an ICT lecturer, Benita, mentioned that instead of catering for her students' race and culture, she adapted her exercises and assessment to reflect her students' interests. This resonates with D'Cruz's notion of "Diversity-beyond-culture" (2007, p. 28).

> I cater for them by identifying the specific research topics we will explore in class. I give the students an opportunity to choose these topics. I try also to link functions (social events they need to plan) to their backgrounds for it to interest them. (Benita)

Maureen is cognisant of her students' diversity to the level that she even reflects on the background of the authors of the learning materials she uses. In her discussion, she described the LO topic of Healthy Living and the author's approach to it.

> It is important to remember that it is also a person with a background who is writing the textbook. A good example is a text which dealt with nutrition and while reading it I thought of the society we live in with different needs, and poverty. I thought of how they (students) do not have the means to obtain these types of meals and yet in this textbook they are prescribing this meal plan. Tim Noakes was here recently and referred to "them" eating "pap" because "they" are all about pap and he believes in eating meat. I just thought how statements such as those could become problematic because that is staple food for most people living in the country. (Maureen)

Issues and Incidents related to Student Diversity

Participants mentioned a range of causal factors that lead to issues and incidents in their classrooms, most of them among students, but there were also student-lecturer tensions. These

include: Racial tensions (student - student as well as student - lecturer); Different values and principles (student - student as well as student - lecturer); Multilingualism in classes; Socio-economic factors; Age (older students with family responsibilities as well as older students in relation to a younger lecturer).

The responses with participants indicate that the foremost contributing factor that led to incidents is racial tension, followed by tensions between lecturers and students.

Issues and incidents as a result of racial tensions

Participants made reference to a number of tension related issues in their classes. On occasion they were able to mediate and diffuse the tensions. Other times these tensions escalated and flared up outside of the classroom. In fact, one such incident at their workplace was reported in the local media.

Participant responses indicate that not all of them are equipped to deal with these tensions. Consequently, those who are uncomfortable with the tense situation, will suppress it as quickly as possible, while other participants would allow the time and space for students to discuss the matter. Johanna said the following:

> Two years ago, I experienced a racial issue in my class. I cannot remember the detail but normally I do not give the students a chance for these incidents to take place as I keep them busy. (Johanna)

Benita described a particular occasion on which she thought drawing on the diverse background and 'hybridity' of one of her students would be an advantage to the rest of her class. Nieto (2009) refers to 'cultural fusions', and uses the term 'hybridity' to describe the blend of various cultures to form "new, distinct and ever-changing identities" (p. 18).

> There was a student in my class. She is a charismatic type of person. She has a Xhosa speaking parent and an Afrikaans speaking parent. She prides herself on the fact that she appears to be Afrikaans but she speaks Xhosa. She puts herself above the rest of the class.

> At first, it was nice to know that she could help me because she could translate the three different languages being English, Afrikaans and Xhosa. Later on as time went by, she actually intimidated the rest of the class. The rest of the class grew a form of irritation

towards her as she thought she was better than they were. That class thing became a challenge and very difficult for me. (Benita)

According to the participants, racial slurs, direct comments as well as comments that get misconstrued, all create and feed tensions among students from different races. Maureen, Pieter and Jerome discussed similar incidents, but each one experiencing it to different degrees.

Maureen had to contend with indirect slurs and comments among the different racial groups in her classes:

I have had instances where students would walk into the class and remarks are made e.g. 'they are always so noisy' when referring to a specific group. Or 'you Afrikaners never understand' or perhaps even things like 'you don't eat real food'. So you (the lecturer) do have these hints where you do not have direct communication. You can feel it in the atmosphere where they (students) have their own ideas e.g. I am from a white Afrikaans background so I am different from them. (Maureen)

Pieter described the tensions among strong females from different races in a colleague's class. He was called in as the programme manager to mediate:

I know that some of my colleagues have experienced issues. A Portuguese student, an older woman, very dynamic, and three very strong black female students who sometimes had differences of opinion. Therefore, I had an incident where things got out of hand. We did manage to get them together and sort out the problem. (Pieter)

Jerome, described a situation which he thought he had dealt with adequately, only to learn later that it had flared up again outside of class, to such an extent that it was reported in the media:

I had an issue once between students where it actually escalated into physical assault. It was race related, where one student referred to another as a monkey and that is why it escalated into a physical altercation. I immediately called the two students outside and spoke to them privately. I said that we are not animals in the classroom, only human beings, and that I would not tolerate any racial remarks or references as such. I said we need to respect each other otherwise we will not be able to function as a class... because of an issue like this.

In addition, I referred the matter to my immediate superior and the HOD. The matter was resolved, however after class was dismissed they continued to pick at each other which then resulted into a fight after college." (Jerome)

Issues and incidents as a result of tensions between lecturers and students

Participants also experienced tensions between themselves and their students. In her discussion, Busisiwe, an African lecturer of Xhosa descent, shared two such incidents, which were racially oriented.

> In the beginning while teaching the LO L3 students. I could not get along with them. There was a white boy in particular who would make fun of my accent and would repeat everything I said to try to get a reaction out of me. (Busisiwe)

> I had an occasion where I played a game to make a lesson interesting and fun for the students... I made a mistake during this time relating to the rules of the game and I had a white student who just lashed out at me for making a mistake. It got so bad that the faculty manager had to escort the boy out of my class. (Busisiwe)

Derick described how differences in interpretation can also lead to tensions. Derick elaborated on the sensitivity around diversity that he experienced in his classes and how lecturers need to be very clear about what they say. According to him, what a lecturer may perceive to be a humorous comment may be offensive to a student.

> I know that things can get out of hand. In a classroom with all these different tensions and high levels of sensitivity things can turn out to be difficult and turn into being viewed as discrimination or something like that. Therefore I have to be very clear about the meaning of things when presenting my lessons and explain what I mean by the different things I say.

> Let's say, I want to show them something and put it on screen (data projector) then I would switch off my lights to ensure that students are able to see what is shown on the screen. I like to joke, so once a student raised his hand and said, "Sir, I cannot see", and I said "But I can see you" (referring to his white teeth) and he was very offended by that. (Derick)

The responses showed that managing a diverse classroom is indeed challenging, and participants do not always get it right. Without disclosing the details of the incident, one participant mentioned an incident that resulted in him apologizing to his students.

> I have experienced a situation where a comment I made to a student was misconstrued. We were able to talk about it and resolve it though. It was something I learnt a lot from. To me I could have responded better in the situation but I thank God that after some time I went back and apologized. We, (myself and the students) could resolve it and we have all learned from that experience. (Derick)

Lecturer strategies to dealing with diversity related issues and incidents

The responses showed that when dealing with diversity related tensions in their classrooms, participants respond differently. Their responses include one or a combination of the following:

- Allow students the time and space in during teaching time to speak and discuss with each other

- _Do not_ allow students the time and space in during teaching time to speak and discuss with each other

- Advise and counsel students, either during class time or after college hours, as well as make contact with the home

- Refer the matter to management

- Ask a colleague to assist as mediator

- Apology to students

Similar to Nieto (2009) and Agarwal et al (2010), Lalas describes teaching for social justice as "providing students with a supportive learning environment that is just, fair, (and) democratic" (2007, p. 17) with an added dimension of compassion. This approach was reflected by a few participants in their responses, most of whom stepped into their pastoral role as lecturer as well as mediator within their classrooms.

A number of scholars promoted the necessity for developing critical thinking skills of students as part of a social justice approach to teaching a diverse classroom. Nieto (2009, p. 23) asserts that a social justice approach "creates a learning environment that promotes critical thinking".

Lalas (2007, p. 17) cites Cochran-Smith who suggests that educators should guide students towards developing "critical habits of mind" while critical reflection and reflexive practice is one of the aims of D'Cruz's diversity programme.

A couple of participants, Benita and Miriym, addressed the diversity tensions by incorporating it (diversity) into their classroom presentations. Benita discussed that she depersonalized the tensions when she "showed them an advert by Nando's based on diversity", which had a very positive effect.

> There was this boy in the (engineering) class who is also white and very outspoken. He would tell you exactly how he would feel about everything and I respect him for that but he is out of line and that is one of the reasons he is at our college because he did not fit into the mainstream (school). You would not believe the impact of that one advert on that child. …. It was five minutes of his life and it changed him totally. He kept quiet and he was more respectful. (Benita)

Miriym, who also volunteers as a Life Line counsellor a few evenings a week, dons her counsellor hat in class when dealing with diversity challenges. Through her passion, she demonstrates compassion for her students while also stimulating their critical thinking.

> I would ask questions. I do crisis line coaching and without saying anything, I just ask questions. The reason the student got angry was because, I made him think… You ask pertinent questions which allows them to think and while speaking to the one (student), the other one is listening and they will realise who they are. (Miriym)

Lallas describes the teacher for social justice to have "compassion" (2007, p. 17). Busisiwe showed compassion first, instead of following up with disciplinary measures (as spelt out in Namhlanje college policy). Busisiwe experienced negative behaviour towards her as a lecturer (see quote under student –lecturer tensions), but she chose a gentle approach.

> I was supposed to issue him with a Note of Concern (start a disciplinary) but I thought let me first speak to the boy and also call his mother. I spoke to his mom, she gave me a sense of how the house-hold was, and therefore I could understand. (Busisiwe)

The responses show that in their attempts to be "just, fair, (and) democratic" (Lallas, 2007, p. 17), participants also called in other parties to assist them. Maureen called on her peer, a fellow lecturer, while other participants such as Johanna and Jerome, referred the matter to their line

managers. When Maureen struggled with two strong language groups in one of her classes, she felt it best to call in a third party. She chose a colleague who is a Xhosa mother tongue speaker since she (Maureen) has a large group of Xhosa speakers in her class.

> In this class, I had a strong Afrikaans group and a strong Xhosa group and they just could not gel. It got to a point where I had to call in a mediator (another lecturer) to help with the situation because you also have your Xhosa group who speak in their language as well. … I thought it might be fair to call another lecturer from another race (Xhosa) group so that it could be viewed from both sides. So in essence, I created a space for all to express our views. In the end to reach common ground we all agreed to speak English going forward. (Maureen)

Not all participants create space for their students to address tensions in the classroom. Johanna, who teaches the ICT component of LO, explained that she sticks to her planning when tensions arise in her class and gets assistance from her manager.

> Normally I do not give the students a chance for these incidents to take place as I keep them busy. I would handle (it) on my own by putting a stop to any negativity before it gets a chance to fester. I also engage my faculty manager who would address these situations. (Johanna)

Jerome engaged with his students as well as referred to their manager.

> I immediately called the two students outside and spoke to them privately….. In addition, I referred the matter to my immediate superior and the HOD. The matter was resolved, however after class was dismissed they continued to pick at each other. (Jerome)

Ways to assist lecturers with managing student diversity

Participant replies as to what would assist them with managing their student diversity, were typically based on the difficulties they experience. While one participant commented that "Nothing can equip you" (Benita), the other suggestions range from self-development and professional *development opportunities* to *assistance with classroom practice.* The types of further development participants suggested in their discussion include better communication, learning more languages and about other cultures, as well as workshops on diversity.

Throughout their responses, Jerome and Benita consistently mentioned language as a challenge in their classrooms. Both of them want to tackle the "language barrier' they experience.

> If I could have the platform to improve on other African languages, this would break the language barriers we experience in the classroom. (Benita)

> Because my biggest struggle is the language barrier I would like to see if there is an option for me to equip myself with one of the official African languages be it Xhosa or Zulu. This will enable me to remove the barrier that currently exists. (Jerome)

Maureen, Heather and Pieter highlighted the need for Diversity workshops:

> Workshops or programmes where we can bring these differences and feelings to light. They could also use a questionnaire. (Maureen)

> This (diversity) is not going to go away and sometimes we are not sure whether or not we are saying or doing the right thing. If the college can send us on a course, on how to deal with these different cultures within the classrooms and our communities, it would help. (Heather)

> I remember that when I studied in 1990, Diversity never came up in study material. It is very important that lecturers understand that there are different cultures and dynamics in classes. It is important that they learn to manage these cultures. (Pieter)

In their responses, participants also remarked that they need assistance in the classroom. Johanna spoke of the advantage of having a class assistant who spoke Xhosa, while Benita says that prior knowledge of her students' profile would help.

> The class assistant whom I have helps a lot with the language barrier that exists. I am mindful now of my speech as well. (She) also helps a great deal with assisting with computer practice functions when students do not understand. (Johanna)

> What would assist me as a lecturer is having a student profile beforehand to investigate and acquire background information about my students. This would assist me in understanding them better. (Benita)

Ways to create a diversity sensitive learning environment for students

Gauging from the responses, participants gave a range of views of what is needed to create a learning environment that is supportive of the student diversity within Namhlanje TVET College. Participant responses can be grouped in three areas of development, namely: Curriculum, learning materials and methods; Ethos of acceptance and inclusion; and Student contribution.

Consistent with all of their responses, the participants once more identified language diversity as the primary category of diversity where they feel much can be done.

Participants expressed their concerns with English being the language of learning and teaching, and suggested ways in which students can be supported in the classroom. Benita proposed that all textbooks should be reviewed and that there should be language tutors who assist students.

> We only have our textbooks written in English. If this could be reviewed and if it could be written in other languages, it will help. Having tutors to translate the English textbook in other languages would also be beneficial. (Benita)

Johanna said that visual aids help, "I have posters up that assists the black students to understand the subjects better". Jerome shared his view and also wanted more visual aids to help students feel "at home".

> I think the easiest solution will be to have visual aids within the classrooms, posters or diagrams for topics that relate to the subject content that has been transcribed, simply translated in their own language in English, Afrikaans, Xhosa or Zulu. I think that will make them feel more "at home" if I can put it that way. (Jerome)

A number of participants mentioned the difficulties experienced with the curriculum topics. Miriym proposed getting in guest lecturers, while Benita suggested that research topics should reflect the student diversity of race and culture.

> Having someone come in and talk about life skills, drug abuse and sexuality. Those are the things, which need to be concentrated on within the life skills programme... When we have people from the career centre and HIV/TB testing, that should form part of my life skills course not something isolated done during a break. (Miriym)

The minute you use race and culture as a topic to do research on that interests them as they can relate to it. So in essence, it is about introducing learning topics that are relevant to students. (Benita)

Both Miriym and Busi encourage the use of group work to reach their students and break down barriers.

When you do role-play and interactive demonstration you can see that expression on the students faces and know that you are reaching them. (Miriym)

If we can encourage group work. Working together will assist with the language barriers. (Busisiwe)

Maureen and Heather remarked that the strengths of students should also be drawn up, as well as the SRC.

I think the SRC...should come in and just share their experiences and conduct workshops. That would be fantastic for students to learn... I think all of us in South Africa have to deal with these preconceived perceptions around culture and this stands in our way. If they (SRC/facilitator) could come in and students of all cultural groups can partake in these activities, that would be great. (Maureen)

(I had) about five girls who were really struggling. I had to have them come to class during intervals to do extra practice. What I loved about the situation was how the rest of the class supported them by also joining in on the extra classes and helping them. This happened last year and as time progressed these students' marks improved substantially. Peer teaching helps a lot.

Several participants made reference to creating an ethos of acceptance and inclusion for all students. They suggested a number of things lecturers can do to create a diversity friendly environment, many of which are taken as implicit, yet it does not come spontaneously for many lecturers. Pieter said that lecturers must show that they are "open to diversity". Johanna kept it simple, "Greet your students in their languages".

Both Heather and Derick alluded to the voices of students being heard:

Lecturers should make time for our students as well. It's about being open to their opinions and to not be prejudiced. With regards to race it is about respecting and supporting each other. (Heather)

I think it is important to give students a safe, healthy platform where they can have a sense of belonging. They should never fear that their opinions aren't valued. They should have a platform and space both in and outside the classroom to vent and say how they feel.

I also think showing genuine interest in them, asking what they are doing after hours etc. I think if they see you are treating them as a human being it will assist us in the whole notion of diversity. (Derick)

Busisiwe and Miriym expressed that lecturers should acquire more languages. Busisiwe said that "it would be advantageous to try to explain and teach subjects in different languages" while Miriym feels that "lecturers can become more familiar with languages and cultures."

Lecturer preparation to manage student diversity

One of the participants neatly summed up the steps in the process of training lecturers for diversity when she said,

Unpack the term diversity into three sections: how to better understand diversity, learning how to appreciate diversity, and how to deal with diversity related matters. (Benita)

Past diversity training opportunities of lecturers

It is important that diversity training programmes recognise the diversity among the lecturer participants, and in doing so, it has the potential to enhance their learning experience. McEwan et al suggests that diversity programmes should:

bring diversity positively and explicitly into the learning design (of the programme) to enable (lecturers) to engage with and learn from each other in ways that benefit both students and staff members. (2008, p. 116).

The participant responses reflect that every participant who had exposure to diversity training acknowledged that the training helped them manage the diversity in their classes. The nature and depth of the training varied among the participants. Of all the participants interviewed,

only one of them, Maureen, did not have any prior diversity training or diversity- related training. Of the rest, more than half attended a diversity-specific workshop, with the rest attending workshops where diversity was inherent. Topics of Life Orientation or diversity-related training opportunities include:

- MOT training (Norwegian programme)
- Peer education
- Life Line: tele-counsellor
- HIV Aids
- Integrated Learning
- Continuiing Education
- Self -Empowerment
- Survival Skills in the Workplace
- Women in Engineering
- Career Guidance
- Life Orientation curriculum related training

Paul posits that the intended outcome of multi-cultural or diversity initiatives is supposed to be the reduction of prejudice, discrimination, and bias against persons of various races, classes, ethnicities, and other underrepresented groups (2003, p. 40). The data shows that not all participants gained the same value from their diversity training opportunities.

Four of the participants - Johanna, Miriym, Derick and Pieter - attended the same diversity workshop arranged by Namhlanje TVET College. Heather attended a number of diversity-related workshops prior to her joining Namhlanje. Miriym and Jerome's formal qualifications had a diversity agenda built into it. A few of the participants, Miriym, Derick and Heather, had multiple opportunities with diversity-related programmes.

Heather and Miriym felt that one workshop was not enough. Despite the number of diversity related workshops she attended, Heather still feels that it was not sufficient.

> There is a lot more that one needs to help the students. So I am not saying it (the training) is not beneficial, I am just saying it wasn't enough. (Heather)

Miriym's negative body language expressed her irritation with a once-off training opportunity:

You cannot start a workshop on something like diversity and just leave it hanging in the balance. It was like just having it for the sake of saying we have had a diversity workshop. (Miriym)

Based on the responses, it seems that not all participants gained maximum value from the training opportunities. The authors Nieto (2009, p. 23) and Lalas (2007, p. 19), as well as D'Cruz (2007, p. 52), all emphasis 'critical thinking', 'critical habits of mind' and 'critical reflection' as elements of a social justice approach. Not all responses reflected this 'critical' approach. A few participants did show skills of critical reflection and seemed successful with integrating their learning (from prior diversity- related programmes) to their professional practice. Many reflected on their students' lives, the curriculum, their learning environments and how best to support their students; however, some one or two participants were not comfortable with the handling diversity tensions and chose to ignore or suppress them and focus on academic work instead. The inverse is also true however, that in order to develop a social justice approach to you professional practice, one does Not need to have participated in a diversity training programme. Maureen is the perfect example of a lecturer who without any formal training opportunity in diversity, seems to have a developed a personal ethos that embraces and supports all kinds of diversity. Situated Learning Theory (Lave and Wenger, 1990) posits that learning is unintentional and situated within authentic activity, context, and culture. The DHET Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers (2013) has an expectation of lecturers to develop through Situated Learning; Maureen is one such lecturer who has met this expectation.

Participant views on how lecturers should be trained, what lecturer preparation should look like and how diversity programme should be designed

Participant comments during their responses on what diversity programmes should look like are mostly based on their prior experience. Some of their suggestions include (in order of highest frequency): interactive workshops, group sessions, more than just an introductory workshop, "ongoing" training, on-site / in class support, small groups, team building, "right" facilitator, timing and duration.

Drawing on the participant comments, it became clear that, no matter the nature of the training they had, it was not adequate to prepare TVET lecturers for the diversity in their classrooms.

The literature shows different approaches to preparing teachers to address issues of diversity. Among these are the multicultural approach (Hemson, 2006), critical multicultural approach (Hemson, 2006), culture specific pedagogy (Marbley, 2007) and social justice perspective approach (D'Cruz (2007); Lallas (2007); Nieto (2009)).

Hemson described both the multicultural approach as well as the critical multicultural approach as applied by two higher education institutions in South Africa to their post graduate teacher-students to address issues of diversity. With the multicultural approach of one "black" institution, students were not implicitly neither explicit taught or guided to deal with diversity in school. Very little attention was given to diversity. Lecturers and students were aware that they may have to work with people from other races, but this awareness comes across as an "out-there approach" (2006, p. 19). Hemson puts forths that "If anything, diversity is seen as a problem to be avoided rather than to be explored, contested, or drawn into the curriculum" (2006, p. 23). Of the participant responses, a few displayed a rudimentary form of a multicultural approach. Johanna's responses were typical of this approach:

Race is a problem in my class, especially with the black students. (Johanna)

Two (2) years ago, I experienced a racial issue in my class. I cannot remember the detail but normally I do not give the students a chance for these incidents to take place as I keep them busy. As mentioned, I would handle this (diversity tensions) on my own by putting a stop to any negativity before it gets a chance to fester. I also engage my faculty manager who would address these situations. (Johanna)

The subject I teach being computers does not leave room for planning around the racial or cultural components. (Johanna)

Despite the higher education institution being a 'black' institution "there is not a coherent response to inform how students analyse and respond to diversity" (Hemson, 2006, p. 23) but a strong cultural framing towards language was present. Johanna's responses focus on language as well:

I greet my students in their languages. I have posters up that assists the black students to understand the subjects better. I speak English, as this is the language everyone understands. Difficulty with the English language is also a struggle. The biggest challenge is language.

While language is a common concern mentioned by many participants, some of the responses show a more critical approach. Developing the critical thinking skills of students, is an element of both an critical multicultural approach as well as a social justice perspective approach (D'Cruz, 2007, p. 52; Nieto, 2009, p. 23). Benita and Miriym described how they encourage their students towards reflection and critical thinking. Benita used media with diversity as a theme to get her students to reflect and change their attitude to those who are 'other' to them while Miriym challenged her students with thought provoking questions in their slang and 'street language', which got the student to reflect deeply in a 'language' that they identify with.

Hemson citing Kumashiro (2000, pp. 40-47), describes a critical multicultural approach as "…'education that changes students and society' – the intention is to unsettle taken-for-granted assumptions of the relationship of social groups to each other, as well as to raise issues of power within education" (2006, p. 27). Many of the participant responses resonate with this aspect of the critical multicultural approach as they mediate daily with their students' assumptions of who and what the 'other' social groups are. Maureen shared the comments made by her black students about the white students, and vice versa. Busisiwe and Heather had to work hard at their students perceptions of who they are as individuals who would be biased in favour of those students who shared their mother tongues.

Marbley et al (2007) citing Gay (2000) suggests that culture relevant pedagogy uses "the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective…. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students; it is culturally validating and affirming" (2007, p. 29). A number of participants actively engage their students in their classroom practice. Notably, it may be due to their own knowledge, but Maureen, Derrick and Pieter readily engaged with their students regarding their cultural practices to the benefit of their diverse classes. Drawing on the 'lived experience' of the individual is also a notion put forth by the social justice perspective; according which "inequality and oppression are lived experiences and is everyone's responsibility" (D'Cruz, 2007, p. 52). Only a few participant responses reflected that they agree with this view.

According to Nieto (2009, p. 23), a social justice approach:

a) challenges, confronts and disrupts misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination;

b) provides all students with resources necessary to learn to their full potential;

c) draws on the talents and strengths the students bring to their education;

d) creates a learning environment that promotes critical thinking and supports agency for social change.

Lallas and D'Cruz are strongly aligned with these, with D'Cruz emphasising the role of identity of the individual l(2007, p. 52), while Lallas emphasises the role of educator as well as the added dimension of compassion (2007, p. 17).

Many of participant responses show that they are aligned to teaching from a social justice perspective to some degree. Jerome and Pieter, are among those participants whose approach to their classroom practice demonstrate consideration of and planning for the language, race and culture of their students. Maureen, Miriyam and Benita draw on the strengths of the students in selecting the context for their content, while Busisiwe remains compassionate while challenging stereotypes and disrupting misconceptions among her students.

Regarding diversity workshops for lecturers, Pieter suggested that the facilitator should do a base-line assessment before starting with the workshop:

> Have delegates attending the workshop complete a questionnaire beforehand is a good idea to determine the gaps and what should be concentrated on. (Pieter)

This resonates well with Pederson's (as cited by Marbley et al) example of a five-stage process for planning a training activity:

a) the creation of a needs assessment in order to determine the specific needs of the trainees and how they should be prioritized;

b) the design of objectives for the training as designated by the data collected from the needs assessments;

c) the design of a plan that explicitly states how the previously designated needs and objectives will be met;

d) implementation of the training design; and

e) evaluation of the knowledge, awareness, and skills of the trainees according to previously documented objectives. (2007, p. 12)

A number of participants had firm views about the nature of a diversity programme. Johanna and Miriym who attended the same diversity workshop with Pieter and Derick, both highlighted in their responses that it should be more than just an introductory workshop.

It should be more than just an introduction but an actual session concentrating on Diversity in its entirety. (Johanna)

It should be on going not just an introduction. You cannot start a workshop on something like diversity and just leave it hanging in the balance. (Miriym)

Benita, Maureen and Piet suggest interactive workshops with group work as one of its methods.

A workshop but not a sit-down workshop; it should be a visual exercise. It should be interactive and in group sessions. Not just once off sessions but also on-going. (Benita)

Group responses, not the traditional approach of someone standing in front and presenting. It should be hands-on." (Maureen)

It is also wise to include role play and practical components to change their attitudes. (Pieter)

Much of these speaks to the diversity programme of D'Cruz which also focuses on *processes* in which each of us daily interacts with others, each situation offering the potential to celebrate or oppress difference. Hence it minimizes the likelihood for expectations of techniques or packaged solutions that begin and end in the training session, and instead introduces participants to the idea of engaging with diversity and difference as an ongoing process of learning (2007, p. 41).

Heather also supported a group work approach, but with a limited group size. As with D'Cruz that "social justice…is every one's responsibility", Heather suggested that a diversity programme should have an individual development approach as well:

For the training to be more effective and to resonate, it should be more of a one on one approach, rather than a big group…In larger groups, not everyone would find value as they may not participate the same as when in a one on one setting. (Heather)

Derick made a call for non-formal, on-site training which resonates with D'Cruz's 'process' approach, while Jerome (different to a number of participants) proposed once-off training during the college holiday.

With the time constraints I do not think a formal education of the topic is doable. I do however think there should be on site training for staff to attend. (Derick)

The time- frame and period of when the training is conducted should be taken into account. I think it should be conducted over the holiday period… if possible for it to be over a span of two to three days. (Jerome)

Topics to be included in a diversity programme for college lecturers

The range of topics that participants suggested during their responses that should be included in Diversity training can be grouped under two heading: *What is Diversity?* and *How to Manage Diversity*. The *What Is* topics generally speaks to the categories of diversity described by the literature as traditional or primary and broadened categories of Diversity.

The *What Is* topics (in order of highest frequency): Religion, Race, Culture, Customs, Norms and values, Gender, Language, Education, Economic status, Geographic location, Age, Diversity as difference, and Who am I.

The *How To* topics: Conflict resolution, Mediation, Counselling, Classroom theory and practice, Student preparation for diversity in the workplace.

Religion, race and culture recurred most frequently in the participants' responses. Surprisingly, given that race was mentioned in most of the responses with participants as a response to questions, it was not a category that many participants thought should be included in diversity training for lecturers. Participants mentioned religion more frequently than race, with one participant, Busi, mentioning both race and religion in their responses.

Our differences stem from age groups, race/ colour, our culture and educational backgrounds. Religion should be taken into account as well. (Busisiwe)

Derick and Pieter both included religion and gender in their responses; Pieter elaborated on the different religions on his campus.

Important topics would be gender, customs, religion, respect. (Derick)

In the city where we are living, we have Christian students but most of the coloured students are Muslim. Some Christian students do not understand the Muslim student traditions and religion. What happens with the African students is that they come from

rural areas and has not been exposed to Muslims and that type of things that are in Cape Town. Therefore it is a strange environment for them. (Pieter)

Similar to race as a topic, language was suggested as a workshop topic by only one participant, even though it was raised frequently throughout earlier responses with participants. However, a few participants did remain consistent throughout their responses: Johanna consistently mentioned her difficulty with languages, and not surprisingly, she included it in workshop topics when she said that "language barriers should be concentrated on".

Jerome did not use the word "language" but he too remained consistent throughout, and highlighted the need for assistance with classroom practice.

> It is essential to have that training prior to focusing on terminology and methodology in the classroom. It will simplify the task of being a lecturer within a class with such a diverse group of students. (Jerome)

In their earlier responses, participants expanded on the tensions they experienced on campus, yet less than a quarter included conflict resolution as a topic. Maureen, who also struggled with stereotyping, suggested conflict resolution, as did Jerome.

> I think it should include conflict resolution and mediation because of the diversity in our classrooms. (Jerome)

> I think it will be a good idea, conflict resolution and stereotyping should be included. (Maureen)

Both Maureen and Jerome had major flare-ups in their classes, with Maureen calling in a colleague as mediator, and the fist fight among Jerome's students ending up in the media reports. Including conflict resolution among their topics, may be as a result of these experiences.

Heather suggested that lecturers should also be trained how to counsel students. In her responses, she made interesting comments based on her prior training experiences.

> I also think a course on counseling would be helpful. Teaching us how to "read between the lines" or grasp what a person is trying to say when they struggle to articulate themselves. On a different occasion I attended a course which touched on this a bit. That is what I found helpful in addressing issues. (Heather)

D'Cruz (2007) programme Working With 'Diverse Bodies, Diverse Identities' with its human rights and social justice agenda (2007, p. 52), consists of three modules which explores:

a) Critical role of Language - represents and names assumptions/ categorizes and gives meaning/ device of power

b) Issues of Diversity - 'practical consciousness'/ 'linguistic communities'/ 'rhetorical devices'

c) Social Inquiry - critical reflection and reflexive engagement (2007, p. 42).

The participants' responses and topics suggested for a diversity programme, are reflected in this model of D'Cruz, which in my view may well be suitable for college lecturers.

SECTION 5 – SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The research problem that this study considered is: Life Orientation lecturers who teach a diverse student population in a TVET college, are faced with a number of teaching and learning challenges. This study has shown how the research problem can be approached.

The aim of the study was to investigate Life Orientation lecturers' experiences of diversity at a TVET college. The research question was key in achieving the aims of this study.

I investigated the research question: "How are Life Orientation lecturers experiencing diversity in their classroom?" It guided me to examine how Life Orientation lecturers were coping with their experience of diversity, what kind of preparation Life Orientation lecturers had received to help them cope with diversity, as well as how they should be prepared to cope with diversity.

My study applied a qualitative research approach which was applied to the TVET college context where "reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds" (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). For my research I selected Life Orientation lecturers at TVET college. Bryman asserts that people are constructing meaning in and through interaction with each other (p.20). In their work environment, college lecturers are confronted with issues of diversity daily which elicits specific actions and reactions from them. These are influenced and informed by their students as well as their colleagues and campus management. How they respond to it can be shaped by prior training, situated learning or learning within their community of practice. Their learning then contributes to shaping their own reality.

The purposive sampling of Life Orientation lecturers contributed to the success of this study. I intended to include lecturers from: a) various categories of college lecturer qualifications; b) NCV programmes in both the Business and Engineering fields offered on the selected campus; c) Lecturers who trained pre and post 1994; d) all racial groupings represented on the campus; and e) fair balance between the genders. Other that a balance between the genders, my sample met all the other criteria.

I approached my study from a social justice perspective and examined the diversity related challenges which college lecturers face. I anticipated that learning would take place.

I used an interview schedule as my instrument for data collection. This was in the form of semi-structured interviews and included closed-ended as well as open-ended questions. This allowed

participants the space to give a more open and personal account of their experiences and attitudes which produced rich, detailed responses. Working toward my research question, I designed the interview schedule around the following themes: Diversity, curriculum, teaching and learning; Diversity, Life Orientation and its teaching and learning challenges; Approaches to preparing college lecturer for addressing issues of student diversity and inclusion. The design of the interview schedule was a writing process of draft, redraft and final copy. This was needed to ensure that the questions would result in rich data that would speak to the research problem. I also sourced statistics on student demographics from the student administration department of the TVET college. These data-gathering methods allowed me some insights to how diversity is understood and managed by college lecturers. My request to the HR training department for a list of lecturing training opportunities arranged by the college for its lecturers was not successful.

I was not fully prepared regarding the cost of transcriptions, resulting in a delay of the transcription process. I was overwhelmed by the huge amount of data my interviews generated. I systematically organised the data following Bryman's suggestions. Working through the participant responses, I identified major themes as they emerged. By manually colour-coding trends and patterns, I identified different categories and sub-categories.

By analysing the data as well as drawing on the research from various authors as well as education policy documents, I was able to make meaning of the diversity college lecturers experience in their class rooms and how they respond to this diversity. The data provided me with insights into how responsive they are to diversity from a social justice perspective and to view what learning they have acquired. The data revealed that many participants do have a social justice perspective approach to diversity. As the data reflected, not all participants actively embrace diversity, even though they had experienced diversity training opportunities, and for those who had multiple training opportunities and were actively applying a social justice approach to diversity, even they contend that there can never be 'enough' preparation. The data supports my recommendation that diversity preparation should become a compulsory module in any TVET college lecturer qualification.

FINDINGS

1. The data revealed that all lecturers are confronted with issues related to diversity in their classrooms. Among the kinds of diversity, participants included race, language,

religion, culture, ethnicity, age, education, privileged vs disadvantaged / those who do not have, economic diversity, gender and foreign nationals.

2. All lecturers thought about ways in which they could confront issues related to diversity, but not all lecturers were coping well with these challenges. Lecturers invariably identified problems related to students' diversity as follow: racial tensions among students as well as students and lecturers; different values and principles among students as well as students and lecturers; multilingual classrooms; socio-economic factors and age.

3. Lecturers confronted issues related to diversity in different ways. They applied a range of strategies to deal with diversity related issues and incidents. Their strategies include one or a combination of the following: allow students the time and space in class during teaching time to speak and discuss with each other; *do not* allow students the time and space in class during teaching time to speak and discuss with each other; advise and counsel students, either during class time or after college hours, as well as make contact with the home; refer the matter to management; ask a colleague to assist as mediator; apology to students.

4. All preparation which lecturers received was inadequate to confront the diversity issues which emerged in their classes. All but one of the lecturers, Maureen, have had some form of preparation or training to deal with diversity in their workplace. The most common form of preparation was a once-off introductory workshop which all felt was inadequate. While more than half of the lecturers attended diversity-specific workshops, others attended workshops where diversity was secondary, such as skills for the workplace. A third of the lecturers experienced multiple diversity-related training opportunities, yet they expressed their views that more training was needed. The need for continued training stems from the diversity-related issues that continue to exist on TVET college campuses.

5. In reference to diversity, lecturers used terms such as race, ethnicity and culture interchangeably. This illuminates the depth of the challenges lecturers experience as well as their struggle to use "politically correct' and accurate language.

6. The "diversity divide" between lecturers and students was not one of my considerations at all. That there would be differences yes, but I did not anticipate the extent of the divide. On the one hand, some participants are still dealing with the historical past of South Africa as a country; they still grapple with issues of diversity, culture, religion, and difference in a traditional sense. On the other hand, their current day students'

diversity reflect a 'hybridity', an evolving individual identity, rather than an association with culture. This may also be a contributory factor in the disconnect between lecturers and the students: lecturers are still grappling with race, ethnicity and culture as elements of diversity, whereas student have progressed outside of those boundaries towards the shaping of their hybrid identities. This resonates well with current debates in the literature regarding issues of identity. In addition to hybridity, intersectionality is a term which could explain the evolving identities of students. Hence the need for lecturers to apply "critical reflection and social inquiry" as proposed by the Social Justice Perspective approach, which would enable them to discern differences among their students.

7. Diversity training is not a pre-requisite for any individual to have developed a social justice approach to their professional practice. The concluding comments to my literature review, stated that "findings would be used as a measure to determine if lecturers without prior training had experienced learning about diversity as a result of social interaction within their working context." Maureen is one such lecturer; she is the perfect example of a lecturer who without any formal training opportunity in diversity, seemed to have a developed a personal ethos that embrace and support all kinds of diversity. Situated Learning Theory (Lave and Wenger, 1990) posits that learning is unintentional and situated within authentic activity, context, and culture. The DHET Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers (2013) has an expectation of lecturers to develop through Situated Learning; Maureen is one such lecturer who has met this expectation.

8. An unanticipated but pleasant trend that emerged from the data was lecturers' use of humour as a strategy to deal with diversity-sensitive issues and challenging curriculum. This came to light with words such as *"play"*, *"fun"*, *"entertained"*, *"animated"* and *"humour"* used by half of the participants in their responses. Even though LO is an examinable subject at college, a number of participants made efforts to build a lightness into their classroom presentations, especially with topics that can be sensitive.

Anticipated findings confirmed

The following anticipated findings were confirmed by the participants' responses and curriculum documents:

1. Not all lecturers were trained in diversity management. Of those who were, only some responded to the diversity of their students, while others remain oblivious to how their support of their students' diversity (or lack of it) may impact the learning of both lecturer and student.

2. Not all lecturer responses reflected a 'critical' approach to dealing with issues of diversity. A few participants showed skills of critical reflection and seemed successful with integrating their learning (from prior diversity-related programmes) to their professional practice. Many reflected on their students' lives, the curriculum, their learning environments and how best to support their students; however, one or two participants were not comfortable with handling diversity tensions and chose to ignore or suppress them and focus on academic work instead. This would suggest that not all participants gained maximum value from the training opportunities.

3. Diversity as a curriculum outcome constitutes a marginal percentage of the total curriculum credit of the NCV programme. In fact, with the recent review of the NCV programme, it was reduced even further. With the original design of the NCV programme, Diversity was a subject topic of Life Orientation (LO) L3 and contributed 27% of the Life Orientation L3 curriculum (LO subject guideline, p. 4). With the implementation of the revised L3 curriculum in 2014, it was no longer a topic on its own, but was subsumed by Citizenship as a topic. As such, diversity was reduced to 7% of the LO L3 curriculum.

Theoretical insights

My investigation has been guided by the literature on teaching a diverse cohort of students. My conceptual framework focused on social justice and approaches to teacher preparation for diversity. It sufficed because it enabled me to investigate and analyse different understandings of diversity and approaches to prepare lecturers to deal with issues of diversity. The lecturer responses could be explained and interpreted in terms of the different approaches to lecturer preparation as answers to my conceptual framework.

My conceptual framework was limited as the literature excluded language as an element of diversity; it was absent from all the definitions/ descriptions/ conceptions of diversity in the literature, as well as from my participants' understanding of diversity, yet in my investigation, language featured prominently. The data shows that language diversity is a major consideration in the diverse TVET college classroom. Perhaps language should be included in the broader

definitions and categories of diversity, much as geographical location has been included. Despite its omission from the literature as a possible element of diversity, the scholars recognise language as a device of power. To this end, D'Cruz for example included language in her diversity programme as a module called "The Critical Role of Language".

Further investigation

A few trends emerged from the data that would prompt further interesting investigations. Two of these relate to diversity of language, while a third is the issue of identity among TVET college students.

1. Heather and Busi were two participants who refused to accommodate students who have the same mother tongue as their own; Heather is Afrikaans and Busisiwe is Xhosa-speaking. When their students assumed that their lecturer who has the same mother tongue would assist and help them in their own language, both Busi and Heather were adamant that they would only speak English. Busisiwe's motivation was that by speaking only English, students would have a safe space to practice their English skills. Namhlanje TVET College has a language policy which allows for language diversity. It allows lecturers the space to respond to students' questions in their mother tongue, if they required further explanations, and if the lecturer does speak the students' language. Yet these two participants chose differently. I would be most interested to explore the deeper underlying reasons for their choices.

2. Most participants ranked language highly as one of the major diversity-related challenges they experience. An investigation into whether this is a South Africa-specific phenomenon given the country's eleven official languages, or whether this is a global occurrence, may prove valuable to the South African TVET context.

3. The current day students' diversity reflect a 'hybridity', an evolving individual identity, rather than an association with culture. Lecturers may still be grappling with race, ethnicity and culture as issues, whereas student have progressed outside of those boundaries towards the shaping of their hybrid identities. This resonates well with current debates in the literature regarding issues of identity. In addition to hybridity, *intersectionality* is a term which could explain the evolving identities of students. This evolving of identities among TVET college students would make for interesting investigation as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

My recommendations include all three key elements in the education process, i.e. policy and curriculum, the lecturer and equally important, the student.

Policy and curriculum

The DHET national policies promote the importance of addressing issues related to diversity and inclusivity. Among others, this is stated in the DHET White Paper For Post-School Education and Training of 2013 (p. 4) and are being supported by further policy documents. These issues of redress are described as "transformation priorities" by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, in the Draft Social Inclusion Policy Framework (2014). This draft policy framework references the National Development Plan, Vision 2030 which describes the country as a "divided society" and emphasises the education system as the "key driver in addressing poverty and inequality in society" (p. 7). In spite of the many national strategies of the past twenty years, the next two decades (2014 – 2030) will continue to see redress and transformation as national imperatives, thus placing issues of Diversity firmly on the national agenda. These national policies should inform the nature of strategies adopted by TVET colleges to confront issues related to diversity within the college sector.

Lecturer preparation

Diversity training programmes should have multiple trajectories which accommodate full-time students as well as in-service lecturers.

For the new TVET lecturer qualifications, a Diversity module should constitute a core component of the qualification. An example of this would be the new formal TVET lecturer qualification. As Hemson (2006) says, "teaching practice is key opportunity for change". Student-lecturers should be prepared for the range of diversity that they will experience on TVET college campuses.

For in-service lecturers, continuing support should be tailored to the individual learning needs of the lecturer. This is illuminated by Nieto quoting Soudien, Carrim and Sayed (2004) who argues that:

one size does not fit all because citizens are not located in homogenous, symmetrical and stable social, economic and political positions. How one addresses the differences and different kinds of inequalities... is a strategic matter (Soudien, Carrim and Sayed).

Additionally, for in-service lecturers, diversity training should be a compulsory component of their Continuing Professional Development. In this way, lecturers will have opportunity and exposure to current trends and debates relative to diversity issues. The diversity training models applied by Pederson (as cited by Marbley et al) and D'Cruz may prove valuable in the design of a diversity programme for college lecturers.

Student involvement

It is my view that no diversity programme will be successful if the role, contribution, value as well as power of the study body is not acknowledged and consulted. Student councils are part of the governance structures of TVET colleges; as such, they have an immense role to play to advance an inclusivity agenda. Student councils could arrange workshops where students explore their own unique diversity, as well as the diversity of the student population at large. Campus management can include diversity as part of the student orientation programmes at the start of academic period; this will be particularly valuable to new students who may not have been exposed to a diverse group of students before.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is limited in as far as it represents a very small sample of lecturers at one TVET campus. It included Life Orientation lecturers as the curriculum includes Diversity as a topic. However, this by no means suggests that other TVET lecturers do not struggle with issues of diversity. The geographical location of the site of research, being semi-urban, is also relevant, as the demographics of city campuses and rural campuses may differ for both students and lecturers. Also, the study is focused on TVET lecturers; a further study to include student views of how their lecturers cope with diversity related issues would be valuable.

My literature search yielded academic texts which do not include language as a dimension of diversity, yet language and its related challenges within the multilingual classroom was a significant factor for my participants. The study has shown that Life Orientation lecturers at a TVET college struggle to confront the teaching and learning issues related to the diversity of their students. The manner in which they respond to this diversity is almost as wide as the scope and definition of Diversity as a concept, and these responses were not necessarily shaped by

the absence or presence of prior diversity training. Furthermore, the study has shown the need for diversity training; not only should it be a integral part of the TVET college lecturers' formal qualification, but it should be ongoing as part of lecturer continuing professional development. With the current South African landscape of social trends such as the hashtag theme of #RacismMustFall, among others, diversity training is gaining urgency.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LIFE ORIENTATION LECTURERS

1. Profile

1.1. Surname	
1.2. First names	
1.3. Address	
1.4. Telephone no.	
1.5. Email address	
1.6. Gender	
1.7. Race	
1.8. Religion	
1.9. Home language	
1.10. Other languages	

2. Highest Qualifications

TYPE	NAME OF QUALIFICATION	INSTITUTION / SERVICE PROVIDER	YEAR OBTAINED
2.1. Academic			
2.2. Teaching			
2.3. Workplace			

3. Qualifications and/ training for Life Orientation

3.1. Formal Qualifications			
3.2. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training opportunities			
3.3. Other training opportunities: Own Initiative			

Include all the CPD and other training opportunities that you participated in outside of your teaching environment.

4.   Lecturer experience within the college sector

4.1.   Years Experience as a college lecturer: ....

4.2.   Programmes taught:

4.2.1. NCV - vocational ☐

4.2.2. Occupational ☐

4.2.3. RPT 191 - Engineering ☐

4.2.4. RPT 191 - Business ☐

4.3. Subjects taught: ....

....

....

5. Experience in teaching Life Orientation

5.1. Experience – college: Levels: ☐ ☐ ☐

5.2. LO Component: Life Skills ☐ Computer Literacy ☐

5.3. Experience – other: ....

(please specify the other)

6. Diversity, curriculum, teaching and learning

6.1. What does the word **Diversity** mean for you?

....

....

6.2. What diversity do you encounter in your class?

....

....

6.3. How do you cater for the range of students in your class?

6.3.1. Curriculum content

....

....

6.3.2. Learning material

....

....

6.3.3. Methods of teaching

....

....

6.4. What have you found difficult about the range of students in you class?

....

....
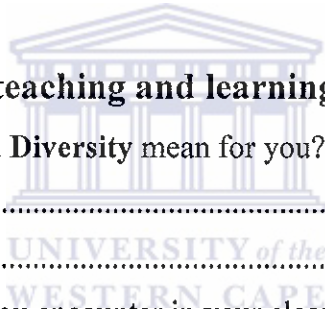
6.5.   What issues had arisen in your class that are associated with diversity and
        difference?

....

....

6.6.   Have you experienced incidents related to diversity?

....

....

6.7.   Describe one such incident.

....

....

6.8.   How did you respond?

....

....

6.9.   What would assist you to manage the diversity of your students?

....

....

6.10.   How can a supportive learning environment be created in which students feel
        that their language, race and culture are acknowledged and valued?

....

....

7.   Diversity, Life Orientation and its teaching and learning challenges

7.1.   Do you plan your lessons to take into account Language, Race and Culture?

....

....

7.2.   How do you plan your lesson to take into these three elements?

....

....

7.3.   Tensions among the diverse student population are on the increase at FET
        colleges. Towards the end of 2013, tensions among students at your campus

provoked an incident which was reported in the local news. According to the report, a white student had called a black student a "monkey".

7.3.1. Are you aware of this incident?

....

....

7.3.2. How do you think such an incident could have been avoided? Mention the key role players.

....

....

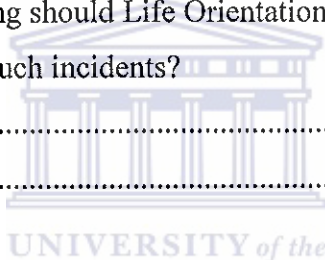7.3.3. Does the Life Orientation lecturer have a role to play in incidents such as these? Explain your answer.

....

....

7.3.4. What training should Life Orientation lecturers receive that may help them in managing such incidents?

....

....

8. **Approaches to preparing college lecturers for addressing issues of student diversity and inclusion**

8.1. Have you ever done a course or workshop on diversity?

....

....

8.2. Was it helpful in managing the diversity in your class?

....

....

8.3. If yes, describe how it was helpful.

....

....

8.4. Has your college arranged any such course or workshops for its lecturers?

....

....

8.5. What topics do you consider important for a workshop on diversity?

....

....

8.6.   How best could diversity training be done?

....

....

APPENDIX 2: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The Principal
Namhlanje TVET College
Any Street
Somewhere-Out-There
ZA

Dear Principal

Field work towards completion of Masters in Adult Learning and Global Change: Permission to use Strand campus as site of research

I am currently a registered student with the University of the Western Cape, where I am doing a structured Master in Adult Learning and Global Change programme. I have thus far successfully completed six of the eight modules, the last two of which makes up the research component. The key focus of the research is to investigate how Life Orientation lecturers at a FET college are prepared to teach a culturally diverse student population in a FET college as well as to explore the teaching and learning challenges faced by them.

The aim of the study is to generate new knowledge about the qualifications and training of lecturers to teach Life Orientation, how issues of diversity are being managed and supported in the college classroom, and to draw up a set of recommendations and suggestions for improved classroom practice as well as training of LO college lecturers with regards to diversity. The NCV programme, and specifically Life Orientation as subject will be used as context. To this end, I require a sample of Life Orientation lecturers inclusive of all or most of the racial groupings in South Africa who also teach students from various racial backgrounds.

With this letter then, I request permission to use the selected campus as my site of research.

If permission is granted to use this site, I will endeavour to schedule interviews off campus, and in that way not impact negatively on the teaching and learning process. I also give an undertaking to adhere to the ethics codes pertaining to these types of research and assure the College that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All records and data will be kept in secure storage for 5 years. Participation is voluntary which allows participants to refrain from answering any question that s/he may find uncomfortable, or to withdraw from the study at any time. I am willing to share the findings of my research with your institution.

Should you have any questions, my supervisor Prof Z Groener can be reached at the University of the Western Cape at tel. no. 021-9592231

I look forward to your positive reply.

Yours in education

Salma Emjèdi
(student no. 8530295)

APPENDIX 3: INFORMATION LETTER

Request for consent in research study:
NCV, FET college, TVET college, FET band, NQF, diversity, social justice, college lecturer, diverse classroom.

Dear _____

I would like to request your participation in my investigation which forms part of the degree Master in Adult Learning and Global Change for which I am registered at the University of the Western Cape.

The key focus of the research is to investigate how Life Orientation lecturers at a FET college are prepared to teach a diverse student population in a FET college as well as to explore the teaching and learning challenges faced by them. The aim of the study is to generate new knowledge about the qualifications and training of lecturers to teach Life Orientation, how issues of diversity are being managed in college classroom, and to draw up a set of recommendations and suggestions for improved classroom practice as well as training of LO college lecturers with regards to diversity.

I am kindly requesting an interview at a date and time that will suit you and the College, one that does not impact negatively on the teaching and learning process at college. I acknowledge that participants may experience discomfort during the interview, and feel restrained with their answers. To ease possible tensions, interviews may be held away from campus, at a venue selected by you, one which you are comfortable with.

I request permission to audio record the interview. Please be assured that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence and will not be shared other than for the purpose of this research project. Your name will not be disclosed but pseudonyms will be used to keep your identity anonymous. Alternately each participant may be allocated a participant number. Participation is voluntary which allows you to refrain from answering any question that you may find uncomfortable, as well as to withdraw from the study at any time. All records and data - consent forms, interview schedules, audio recordings - will be kept in secure storage for

5 years. After my research paper has been accepted and approved, and the content made public, I will be happy to share my findings and recommendations.

My research project will be registered with the University of the Western Cape; as such I will adhere to their ethics procedures as outlined in the university's research ethics policy. If you have any questions, my supervisor is Prof Z Groener can be reached at the University of the Western Cape at tel. no. 021-9592231.

Yours faithfully

_____

Ms. S Emjedi

UWC Student No: 8530295

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Consent in research study: NCV, FET college, FET band, NQF, diversity, social justice, FET college lecturer, diverse classroom.
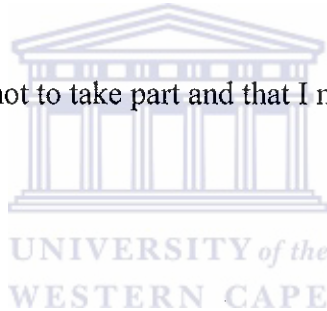
I, _____ , a _____ (designation)

at _____ (name of college) agree to be part of the research

project by participating in an interview; I also agree that the interview may be recorded.

I have been informed of my right not to take part and that I may withdraw at any time during

the research process.

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interview Date : _____

Time: _____

Venue: _____

APPENDIX 5: APPROVAL LETTER FROM UWC RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

19 November 2014

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby certify that the Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the following research project by:
Ms S Emjedi (Education)

Research Project:	Changing diversity, social justice perspective and adult learning – the case of a public further education and training (FET) college.
Registration no:	14/9/9

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape

A place of quality,
a place to grow, from hope
to action through knowledge

APPENDIX 6 : DATA ANALYSIS TABLES

Table 1: Participant demographical information

Gender	Female: 6		Male: 3	

Race	Mixed: 1	Black: 1	White: 3	Coloured: 4

Religion	Christianity: 8		Jewish (Integrated): 1	

Home Language	Afrikaans: 6	English: 2	Xhosa: 1

Year of First Qualification	1980 – 1994: 4	1995- 2005: 4	2006: 1

Type of Qualification	Advanced certificate :2	Post-grad certificate :3	Diploma: 6	Higher Diploma: 4	Degree: 2	Honours degree: 2

Life Orientation training (any content/ topic)	Qualification (module/ content) : 5	Continuing Professional Development: 7	Other (eg. personal development): 3	None: 1

Table 2: Student demographical information

Total number of NCV students in year of research: 380

Gender	Female: 208/ 55%		Male: 172/ 45%	

Ethnicity	Black: 229/ 60%	Coloured: 118/ 31%	White: 33/ 9%

Home Language	Xhosa: 55%	Afrikaans: 23%	English: 19,7%	Sotho: 0,01%	Swati: 0,008%	Other: 0,005%	Unspec: 0,002%

Age in years	40+yrs : 1	30-39: 18	25-29: 59	20-24: 213	16-19: 85	DOB not given: 4	Born-frees : 120