

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE**  
**FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**  
**SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT**



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**An assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town (2020 – 2022)**

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**A mini-thesis Submitted In Partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters  
in Public Administration**

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## DECLARATION

I, Cassey Benito, declare that this mini-thesis, “An Assessment of the Impact of the Disaster Management Act of the Pandemic on the Educational Sector: The Case Study of the Northlink College” is a product of my work. I declare that where other people’s work has been used, this has been acknowledged. Additionally, I declare that students or any other previous work have not been submitted as my work. Furthermore, I understand the repercussions of plagiarism and am fully aware of the University of Western Cape’s policy on plagiarism.

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Cape Town

February 2022



## **DEDICATION**

The past few years of my academic journey was truly marked by a walk of great faith as I had to cling to God's promises over my life. Therefore, I am forever indebted to God. I dedicate this work to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, who made it possible for me to complete my Master's Degree.



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## **LISTS OF ACRONYMS**

CoGTA: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

DMA: Disaster Management Act

FET: Further Education and Training

HRW: Human Rights Watch

ICDM: Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management

ICT: Information Communication and Technology

POA: Portfolio of Assessment

PNC: Protea Northlink College

NSFAS: National Student Financial Aid Scheme

NCCC: National Command Council on the Coronavirus

NATED: National Accredited Technical Education Diploma

NCV: National Certificate Vocational

NICD: National Institute of Communicable Diseases

NDMAF: National Disaster Management Advisory Forum

NDMF: National Disaster Management Framework

NDMC: National Disaster Management Centre

NPIs: Non-pharmaceutical interventions

NGO: non-governmental organisation

PGWC: Provincial Government of the Western Cape

SANDF: South African Defense Force

SAPS: South African Police Service

SCT: Social Cognitive Theory

TVET: The Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UN: United Nation

UNESCO: The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF: United Nation Children Fund

WHO: World Health Organisation



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## Abstract

This study assesses the impact of the Disaster Management Act, Act 57 of 2002 of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the education sector in South Africa, with specific reference to the Protea Northlink College, Cape Town. The study is vital as the education sector was badly hit by the pandemic through regulations designed to contain its spread. Sudden closure of schools countrywide, with no mechanisms in place to assist continuation of teaching and learning, left the education sector in disarray. The challenge was that many of the schools had to scramble for different systems of ensuring that teaching and learning goes unhindered. This scramble led to many schools migrating or transiting from face-to-face teaching to remote or online teaching methods with the use of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) tools like computers, web-based class meetings, messaging applications and interactions through forums and also chats, which emerged as useful tools and new ways of communicating with their learners. To achieve this goal many educational institutions had to resort to teacher professional development to train the teachers first on how to deliver their courses remotely or online. It later emerged that these teachers are facing challenges like poor online teaching infrastructure, lack of teacher training, information gap and complex socio-economic home environment in which these teachers live. On the part of the students, many do not possess the resources to acquire these technologies and although at the various state universities students were provided with laptops with data to assist them to connect to these virtual lectures, many at Northlink College still faced connectivity challenges and they had to drop out of school. These new measures impacted teaching and learning as in many cases, teacher professional development was problematic for some as they could not manipulate these technologies. Previous studies have highlighted these educational challenges created by the pandemic without aligning them with a local setting or a specific Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College. It is this gap in the literature that this study seeks to address as it attempts to gain insights into these impacts through the lens of the Protea, Northlink TVET College. To achieve this goal the study adopted a qualitative research method using semi-structured interviews through telephones with Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students. The study revealed how instructional time was lost as many students could not graduate in record time and some dropped out of school. The study suggests that for online teaching to be effective, teacher professional development through technological mechanisms need to be a continuous endeavour so that pandemic-like events do not become a barrier in the sector.

**Keywords:** Covid, Lockdown, education, teaching, learning, Information, Communication Technology



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## CHAPTER ONE

This study assesses how the Disaster Management Act of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the educational sector in South Africa in general and at the Northlink College, in Bellville Cape Town in particular. This impact is informed by the outbreak of the coronavirus globally in general and Cape Town in particular as highlighted in this introductory chapter. This chapter highlights how the outbreak of the pandemic had significance on education in the city and underscores how the outbreak of the pandemic in Wuhan in China led to its spread globally and many countries closing their borders to prevent its spread and to protect their citizens.

In the case of South Africa, the government invoked the Disaster Management Act, Act 57 of 2002 as the legislative framework in the management of disasters and pandemics in the country to prevent free movements of people which could lead to the further spread of the pandemic. These strategies were guidelines issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to assist countries to manage the spread of the pandemic.

To ensure successful management of the pandemic the government then created the National Command Council on the Coronavirus (NCCC) to assist the National Institute of Communicable Disease (NICD) to set up a Ministerial Advisory Team to work on steps to prevent the spread of the pandemic. This team advised the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to invoke the Disaster Management Act to lock down the country to stem the pandemic.

This thesis explored the impact of this Disaster Management Act and the Pandemic on the education sector through the lens of Protea, Northlink College. To achieve the goal the thesis explored concepts like Public Administration, Public Policy and Social Policy, Disaster Management Act, Coronavirus, Lockdown, Teaching and Learning. The study adopted a qualitative research approach to gain insights from senior management, the lecturers and the students. The study employed the Social Cognitive Theory, Social Learning Theory and Observational Learning Theories. This chapter has provided a background to the study, examined the research problem, identified the research questions and the aims and rationale, and the research setting of the thesis. The chapter concludes with an overall argument and its structure.

## 1.1 Introduction and Background to the Research Problem

### **An assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had at Protea, Northlink College in Cape Town.**

This study is an assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town. The study is vital as globally, regionally; nationally and locally, the COVID-19 pandemic has created disruptions in the educational sector in many countries and South Africa and Cape Town.

It is worth noting that the first COVID-19 case was reported by the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission on December 31, 2019, in the Hubei Province in China (The World Health Organisation (WHO)), (2020b) and after that, the numbers kept increasing. On March 11, 2020, the (WHO, 2020a) officially announced that coronavirus (COVID-19) is a pandemic that health experts and governments worldwide had to watch and seek measures to stem its spread. Scientists dubbed the pandemic's source "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2" (SARS-CoV-2), but it is more commonly referred to by the label assigned to the disease it causes: coronavirus disease 2019 or "COVID-19".

The (WHO, 2020) explains that the coronavirus is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The WHO again explains that the virus has spread to 114 countries infecting 118,000 people in the world and it continues to surge globally and in less than a few months affecting 213 territories and 190 countries in the world. Globally, about 30,086,319 of the total cases, 21,833,645 of total recovered and 945,962 of total deaths were recorded until September 17, 2020 (Worldometer, 2020). According to (Medical News Today, 2020), the virus was viewed to be spreading fast, leading to countries closing schools to ensure confinements to control its spread.

According to (Medical News Today, 2020), the virus was viewed to be spreading fast, leading to countries closing schools to ensure confinements to control its spread. These confinements have created the greatest educational disruption in history as they affected nearly 1.6 billion learners in 190 countries and affected all continents (United Nations, 2020). This has led to the closure of schools globally impacting 94 per cent of the world's student population.

(Pokhrel & Chetri, 2021) note that, to prevent infections many governments called on schools to institute social distancing and restrict the movement of people. They add that the pandemic is worsening the living conditions of those in rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities, and the displaced, preventing them from continuing their learning. (Pokhrel & Chetri, 2021) add that the projections by many experts are that 23.8 million learners may drop out of school next year due to the pandemic's economic impact. They note that these disruptions have had, and will continue to have effects beyond education as the closures of schools hamper the provision of school feeding schemes that provide nutrition to children.

On the African continent, (Human Rights Watch, 2020) explains that the epidemic and the fear of it spreading further have pressured many governments to close schools and send children home. (HRW, 2020) again notes that the director of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Madagascar that provides education and alternative care services to children who were previously homeless and either orphaned or unable to live with their parents said that children accommodated with host families did not have any education during the closure.

The same could be said in South Africa, where according to South African Ministry of Health (News24 2020, March 05), the pandemic reached its shores on 5 March 2020, when the then Minister of Health Zweli Mkhize confirmed the first known case of a male patient who tested positive upon his return from Italy.

According to the (Daily Maverick, 2022) explains that on 15 March 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa, declared a national state of disaster, in line with the Disaster Management Act, Act 57 of 2002 which empowered the government to take measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic in the country as it announced immediate travel restrictions and the closure of schools.

(News24, 2020) further adds that on 17 March, the government launched The National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC). The mandate of this council was to manage the spread of the virus in the country. This council had to lead the government's plan to contain the spread of the virus and to alleviate its negative impact. The National Coronavirus Command Council was established as a committee of the Cabinet at its meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2020.

The NCCC faced criticism for making far-reaching decisions relating to the nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the country. But the government changed tune,



saying the NCCC did not take decisions. The NCCC was guided by the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) which assisted the government in understanding how viruses spread and how they can be controlled to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

According to (News24, 2020) in a debate in the National Assembly, President Ramaphosa explained to Parliamentarians that the NCCC was not in any way taking away the responsibilities and functions of the Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management and the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum or National Disaster Management Centre.

These bodies are established in terms of the Disaster Management Act of 2002. News24 (June 10, 2020) again reveals that the NCCC coordinates the government's response to the coronavirus pandemic. "The NCCC makes recommendations to Cabinet on measures required in terms of the national state of disaster. Cabinet makes the final decisions," Ramaphosa responded.

According to (News24, 2020) The National Institute for Communicable Diseases is a national public health institute of South Africa, providing reference to microbiology, virology, epidemiology, surveillance and public health research to support the government's response to communicable disease threats like the coronavirus and its different variants in the country.

The (News24, 2020) adds that the government went forward and on the 23rd of March 2020, a national lockdown was announced in line with the Disaster Management Act of 2002 Act 57. This Act is the legislative framework that institutionalised disaster, epidemics and pandemics in the country to ensure that all citizens are protected during the pandemic. Judging from this, the Disaster Management Act could be seen as both a public and social policy to protect South Africans during this pandemic.

In keeping with this act on the 27th of March 2020, the country was placed on lockdown with the vision to limit the movement of people and to prevent large gatherings to reduce the surge in infections. Hence, millions in the country had to stay at home to comply with these regulations of the DMA of the pandemic and halt working and attending school.

The South African government took the queue from the United Nation Children Fund (UNICEF, 2020) which issued key messages and actions for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools in March 2020 to ensure healthy schools. The government announced non-pharmaceutical

interventions (NPIs) noting that just as with other respiratory infections like flu or common cold public health measures are central to slow the spread of illnesses. These include:

- Staying home when sick;
- Covering the mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissues when coughing or sneezing and dispose of used tissue immediately;
- Washing hands often with soap and water; and
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects.

(UNICEF, 2020) provided guidelines for school administrators, teachers and students as it notes that the following basic principles can help stop the spread of this disease. (UNICEF, 2020) then issued recommendations for healthy schools:

- Sick students, teachers and other staff should not come to school;
- Schools should enforce regular hand-washing with water and soap, alcohol rub/hand sanitizer or and, at a minimum;
- Daily disinfection and cleaning of school surfaces;
- Schools should provide water, sanitation and waste management facilities and follow environmental cleaning and decontamination procedures;
- Schools should promote social distancing (a term applied to certain actions that are taken to slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease, including limiting large groups of people coming together).

There were also guidelines for students or learners with comorbidities like asthma, obesity, and diabetes. (UNICEF, 2020) substantiates that teachers with comorbidities or people with underlying conditions such as chronic respiratory illness, including asthma (moderate-to-severe), obesity, diabetes, or cancer, are at higher risk of developing severe diseases and death than people without other health conditions. This applies to children, but more information is still needed.

There were also general prevention measures at the schools such as:

- Hygiene and daily practices of the school and classroom level;
- The physical distancing of at least 1 metre between individuals including spacing of desks, frequent hand and respiratory hygiene;

- Age-appropriate mask use;
- Ventilation and environmental cleaning measures should be in place to limit exposure;
- Schools should educate staff and students on COVID-19 prevention measures;
- Develop a schedule for daily cleaning and disinfection of the school environment;
- Facilities and frequently touches surfaces, and ensure availability of hand hygiene facilities and national/local guidance on the use of masks.

(UNESCO, 2020) recognised that the pandemic has impacted schooling negatively (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020). UNICEF Key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools March 2020. The following basic principles can help keep students, teachers, and staff safe at school and help stop the spread of this disease. Recommendations for healthy schools are:

- Sick students, teachers and other staff should not come to school;
- Schools should enforce regular hand washing with safe water and soap, alcohol rub/hand sanitizer or chlorine solution and, at a minimum, daily disinfection and cleaning of school surfaces;
- Schools should provide water, sanitation and waste management facilities and follow environmental cleaning and decontamination procedures;
- Schools should promote social distancing (a term applied to certain actions that are taken to slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease, including limiting large groups of people coming together).

This study is an assessment of the impact of the Disaster Management Act on teaching and learning at Protea, Northlink College.

## **1.2 The Research Problem**

The central problem this study seeks to address is to assess the impact of the government's Disaster Management Act on the pandemic at the Protea, Northlink TVET College. As stated earlier, (Medical News Today, 2020) explains that the virus is spreading fast leading to countries closing schools to ensure confinements to control its spread to many students, and countries worldwide.

(UNESCO, 2020) which notes that as of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2020, almost 1.2 billion students and youth around the world were affected by the closure of schools and universities due to the outbreak of

COVID. (UNESCO, 2020) again adds that this represented 70% of this social segment worldwide. (UNESCO, 2020) analysed the consequences of the closure of schools and established a series of arguments as to why it is a phenomenon of urgency. These consequences for children include psychological effects, social isolation, difficulties in accessing nutrition and lack of physical exercise. As mentioned earlier, these confinements created the greatest disruption of education systems in history as they affected many in 190 countries and all six continents (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020).

(UN, 2020) explains that the pandemic is worsening conditions of learners, especially those in rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities. To ensure that teaching and learning continues, the (UN, 2020) explains that this led to many educational institutions turning from offline or face-to-face teaching to remote or online teaching with the use of computers, and web-based class meetings, and messaging applications, and interaction through forums and chats and radio messaging. These have become useful tools and new ways of communicating with their learners and the education community.

According to the (United Nations, 2020), this trajectory involves school administrators turning to teacher professional development to assist in training them to migrate into remote or online learning, been disseminated via computers and video applications, but in many cases, marginalised teachers and learners have missed out on such technical support systems.

(Espino-Díaz, Fernandez-Caminero, Carmen-Maria Hernandez-Lloret, Gonzalez & Alvarez, 2020) add that a survey of more than 10,000 teachers revealed that 92.8% of teachers suffered emotional fatigue, stress, anguish, or anxiety due to quarantine and distance education during this pandemic period. (Espino-Díaz, et al., 2020) add that excessive bureaucratic tasks, unclear instructions, lack of support in teleworking and lack of technical means were some of the main challenges pointed out by some of these teachers.

(Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) and (UN, 2020) add that challenges facing such policies include poor online teaching infrastructure, lack of teacher training, information gap and complex home environment in which most teachers live. Interestingly, most of their living spaces have now been transformed into their working spaces as they need to work remotely or work from home. Hence

their socio-economic conditions emerged as a factor impinging their ability to perform their duties as teachers.

On the other hand, many marginalised learners/students did not possess these infrastructures to connect with the lecturers/teachers. This led to many students losing out on some lectures and in some cases, dropping out of school leading to many learners starved in their studies. (Hattie, 2019) explains that within the technical and vocational sector the teaching methods are different from other schooling environments as teaching are lecture-oriented, work-oriented and in some cases industry-oriented and these methods cannot be demonstrated in online courses.

The problem is that unless other means are devised to ensure sustainable online or remote teaching and teacher professional development these challenges would persist. This is crucial as teachers and students are facing challenges working with ICT infrastructure and web-based meetings and messaging applications due to the digital divide and digital literacy (UN, 2020). This is true as learners do not have the resources to acquire the ICT technologies or computers with internet access and data and also the technical know-how to work with this equipment.

The (UN, 2020) adds that even with adequate infrastructure and internet connectivity many educators lack the digital skills, meaning they will likely struggle with their ongoing professional development, let alone with facilitating quality distance learning online. These are challenges that schools need to address to ensure sustainable online teaching in these schools.

(Pokhrel & Chetri, 2021) observe that 23.8 million learners may drop out of school next year due to the fear of the pandemic spreading further, which is leading to the closure of schools and its economic impact as many parents are out of work and others do not have the resources to keep their children in schools.

(Stukalo and Simakhova, 2020) adds that online education has shown problems with the provision of the Internet to the population of Ukraine (not in all villages and towns it is available), not all participants in the educational process have computers and other gadgets that are necessary to participate in online education.

Previous studies have highlighted these problems within the educational sector without specific attention to a TVET College in Cape Town. Hence, highlighting these issues is vital to seek

solutions from the government to design policies to assist both the lecturers and the students as the teaching methods within technical and vocational training centres are different.

By examining this problem through a qualitative research approach using Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students the researcher would gain insights into how these groups can be assisted in addressing the problem. This is vital as this problem impacted learners' abilities in terms of throughput or completing their courses in record time at this TVET.

### **1.3 Research Question**

The overarching research question this study sought to address is: What are the impacts of the Disaster Management Act on the pandemic at the Northlink College?

#### **1.3.1 Sub-Research Question One**

What were the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College to slow the transmission of the virus?

#### **1.3.2 Sub-Research Question Two**

What were the major changes introduced to learning and teaching to adapt to the pandemic spread at the Northlink TVET College?

#### **1.3.3 Sub-Research Question Three**

How does these measures impact the teachers and the students at the Northlink TVET College?

### **1.4 The Main Research Objectives:**

The study attempts an assessment of the impact of the government's Disaster Management Act during the pandemic at the Northlink TVET College.

#### **1.4.1 Sub-objective One**

To examine the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College to slow the transmission of the virus.

### **1.4.2 Sub-objective Two**

To explore the major changes introduced to learning and teaching to adapt to the pandemic spread at Northlink TVET College.

### **1.4.3 Sub-objective Three**

To investigate the end to which these measures impacted the students in the Northlink TVET College.

## **1.5 Research Rationale or Justification of the Study**

The outbreak of the pandemic triggered vast global, regional and national literature on its impact on health, the economy, financial markets and disruptions to the education sector (WHO 2020b; UNESCO 2020; UNICEF 2020; and Tadesse & Muluye 2020). This literature seems to suggest that globally educational institutions have to adapt to a new normal, which involves teaching and learning remotely or online, which is a drastic shift from offline or face-to-face teaching. Whereas this literature points to global and national trends, there is little attention paid to its impact on the TVET Colleges in Cape Town as they experience different challenges as explained earlier.

This gap or lacunae which is evident in existing literature (UNESCO2020; UNICEF 2020), focused more on the global education sector. It should be noted that the HRW explored the conditions in Congo, in the education sector, whereas this has not yet been measured at the Northlink TVET College in Cape Town. This study sought to close this gap in literature.

Secondly, previous studies did not measure the correct conceptualisation as in South Africa, where the government uses the Disaster Management Act of 2002 to proclaim the lockdown to quarantine citizens at home and prevent the spread of the pandemic. Thus, this study assesses the impact of the Disaster Management Act on the pandemic at Protea, Northlink TVET College.

Recent changes in the actual phenomenon require new measures in research, making this study vital as though the coronavirus started in March 2020 until July 2021 the country was still grappling with the third wave which in many ways suggested that the infection rates were higher than the scourge in 2020. In this light, there is the need for new dimensions in research to assess the impact of the DMA of the pandemic at the Northlink College. This reveals the relevance of

this study and justifies it, as both the students and the lecturers are still grappling with these challenges at Protea, Northlink College.

## **1.6 Research Setting**

The research setting is where the research was conducted, with a view to foreground the study. Post-1994 the new government prioritised reforms to transform the educational system (South Africa, 2008). (Terblanche, 2017) adds that these reforms were justified as the government inherited an unequal educational system which created two educational systems; the rich one for whites and the other for poor blacks (South Africa, 2008:38).

Amongst the changes, there was the birth of the South African Education and Training (SAEA) Act, (South Africa, 1998) passed in 1998 as a vehicle for an intensive post-apartheid vocational education policy reform. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college sector has faced major policy and governance changes since the birth of democracy in the country. These changes have resulted in name changes within the sector like moving from Further Education and Training (FET) to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). For this thesis, the acronym TVET will be used throughout for coherence.

This study was conducted at Northlink, Protea TVET College. The main courses offered at Northlink, Protea Campus is as follows:

### **NATED COURSES**

Business Studies N4: Marketing Management,

Business Studies N4: Human Resource Management,

Business Studies N4: National Introductory Certificate,

Clothing Production N4 - N6: National Diploma.

### **NCV COURSES**

Tourism Level 2-4: National Certificate,

Marketing Level 2-4: National Certificate,



Hospitality Level 2-4: National Certificate,

Finance, Economics and Accounting Level 2-4: National Certificate (Protea - Northlink, 2020)

### **1.7 Delimitations of the Study**

The study focused on an assessment of the impact of the Disaster Management Act of the Pandemic on the educational sector: The Case Study of the Northlink College in Cape Town South Africa. In this light, the study had to investigate variables like the role of the pandemic on teaching, learning and practical at the TVET College. The data was collected from Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students. The study population from which the study was conducted was made up of a sample size of 25 individuals. These included 5 Senior Managers, 10 Lecturers and 10 Students from the school using a qualitative research design. Though this sample size is small but it was large enough to make a generalisation. The study was limited to Northlink College as being a Master's Thesis the researcher could not research other institutions around Bellville. Also, there is a timeframe which was limited and the researcher could not stretch the work beyond the six months. Also, the pandemic presented other challenges to the researcher. Furthermore, since the study explored only the impact of the pandemic at this college from March 2020 to 2022 and to inquire how teaching, learning and practical were impacted.

(Ross, P. T., & Bibler Zaidi, N. L, 2019) expands that all investigations have limitations. The limitations of the study includes the following: The limitation in the timing of the interviews, especially as all the interviews were conducted online and in some cases through WhatsApp interviews. The other limitation was the cultural challenge in that being a research study for a Master's Thesis the researcher had to use the English language for the interviews whereas some of the students are Afrikaans speaking.

### **1.8 Research Methodology**

Researchers in the field of public administration use a variety of methodologies based on the nature of the research objectives of the study. Public administration research can use qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research. This study adopted the qualitative research design as the researcher deemed it the most appropriate.

### **1.8.1 Research Approach**

According to (Kansteiner & König, 2020), to conduct scientific research, a researcher might use either qualitative research or quantitative or a combination of both, which is the mixed-method research design contingent on the data collection method that the researcher chooses to utilise. In other words, the decision to use either a qualitative or quantitative research design was based on the data collection methods. What is important, according to (Kansteiner & König, 2020), was for the researcher to select research tools or techniques that suited the research approach of the inquiry. (Aspers & Ugo, 2019) explain that qualitative design is a way in which a researcher seeks to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions through descriptive and interpretative information.

### **1.8.2 Research Design**

A case study design was considered the most appropriate method for this study as stated by (Yin, 2003). (Yin, 2003) again notes that a case study allowed for a holistic and systematic design, focuses on a single aspect, using multiple sources of evidence to get a better understanding of the status quo.

### **1.8.3 Research Instruments**

The data collection methods used in this study included telephonic semi-structured interviews and a review of secondary sources. The researcher telephonically interviewed senior managers, lecturers and students. Secondary sources refer to information that has been compiled by others, e.g. research books, journal articles, reports, etc.

### **1.8.4 Data Analysis**

(Sharma, 2018) explains that data analysis refers to the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to any data collected. In the qualitative context of the study, content analysis was used to analyse the data. The researcher developed categories of responses based on the themes that emerged and then counted the frequency of instances when those categories occurred.

The themes that emerged from the thematic analysis process included:

- Theme 1: The President’s proclamation of the DMA Act of 2002 as a public policy.

- Theme 2: The DHET announcement on the closure of Higher Educational Institutions
- Theme 3: The main restrictions put in place by the Senior Management of Northlink.
- Theme 4: The changes in teaching and learning in the institution.
- Theme 5: The migration or transition from face-to-face to online or remote learning.
- Theme 6: The staff development strategies to continue teaching through online platforms.
- Theme 7: The challenges faced by some lecturers through remote learning.
- Theme 8: The challenges faced by students through these new teaching methods.

## **1.9 Explanation of main terms used in this study**

### **1.9.1 Public Administration**

Public administration is a broad term that can be described as the development, implementation, and study of government policy (Public Administration Review, 1996).

### **1.9.2 The Concept of Public Policy**

(Thomas Dye, 1972:2) offered a succinct formulation, describing the public policy as ‘anything a government chooses to do or not to do.

### **1.9.3 The Concept of Social Policy**

(Vargas-Hernández & Reza, 2011) defines social policy as a discipline that is concerned with the ways societies across the world meet human needs for security, education, work, health, and general wellbeing. (Vargas-Hernández & Reza, 2011) further add that social policy addresses how states and societies respond to global challenges of social, demographic and economic changes, poverty, migration, and globalisation in the globe.

### **1.9.4 The Concept of Coronavirus**

(Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir & Siddique, 2020:91) state that the coronavirus is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). They traced its origins to Wuhan, China and it gradually spread

around the globe. (Shereen et al., 2020) add that Genomic analysis revealed that SARS-CoV-2 is phylogenetically related to severe acute respiratory syndrome-like (SARS-like) bat viruses.

### **1.9.5 The Concept of Lockdown**

According to the Cambridge Dictionary ‘lockdown’ is a situation in which people are not allowed to enter or leave a building or area freely due to an emergency. The intention is to save and protect the lives of the people.

### **1.9.6 The Concept of Social Distancing**

According to the (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 1828): the practice of maintaining a greater than usual physical distance (such as six feet or more) from other people or of avoiding direct contact with people or objects in public places during the outbreak of a contagious disease to minimize exposure and reduce the transmission of infection.

### **1.9.7 Non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) to prevent the spread of the pandemic**

(Musa et al., 2020) expand that the recommendation of strict social distancing measures was also among the regular healthcare guidelines that were prescribed by the South African medical practitioners for curbing the spread of the COVID since the virus is transmitted amongst persons.

### **1.9.8 The Concept of Teaching**

(Rajagopalan, 2019) explains that teaching is when a person imparts information or skills to another person. (Rajagopalan, 2019) adds that imparting may mean sharing experiences or communicating information, for instance, lecture as the case at this Protea TVET College. He adds that in this light, teaching is regarded as both an art and science.

### **1.9.9 The Concept of Learning**

According to (Thorndike, 1928), learning is a permanent change in behaviour as a result of experience, and the behaviour includes both the external and internal actions of the individual which are observed and remain unobserved by the outside world. (Thorndike, 1928) explains that it includes the different ways in which people experience the world around them.

## **1.10 An overview of the study and the organisation of the thesis**

The overall argument of this Master's Thesis is to assess the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town. The thesis started by exploring how this Act led to the government closing all educational institutions in the country and authorities had to ensure compliance by all sectors. The study then developed this central argument by exploring how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted teaching and learning at the Protea, Northlink College through five interrelated chapters. It demonstrated how the DMA of 2002 served as a policy document to guide the government and how this impacted teaching and learning at the Northlink College.

Chapter one examined the background to the research problem, the research aims/objectives, the central research question, its rationale, research setting and an overview of the study and its organisation.

Chapter two explores the literature review and unpacks concept like public administration, public and social policy, DMA, coronavirus, lockdown, social distancing, non-pharmaceutical interventions, teaching, and learning and the legislative framework. The chapter also provides the theoretical bedrock of the study.

Chapter three examines the research methodology as it explores the concept of research methodology, research paradigm, qualitative research, research design, sample selection, data collection methods, data analysis, data collection methods, data analysis, data verification / trustworthiness, credibility and transferability.

Chapter four presents and discusses the data collected through semi-structured interviews, telephone interviews and extensive documentary reviews. The data collected responded to the three research questions which are linked to the main research objective of the study, which in itself emerged from the overarching research question of the study. Data analysis was completed through qualitative data and a thematic approach was applied as explained in the research methodology in chapter three.

Chapter five will conclude the study by presenting overall remarks and recommendations for policy, government and future researchers.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### The Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Study

##### 2.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter provided a background to the thesis. It highlighted the problem statement, the main research questions and sub-questions, the main research objectives, and also its sub-objectives, and the rationale of the study. It concluded with an outline of the rest of the study, and also its main arguments. This chapter will unpack the conceptual framework of the study as it explores concepts like public administration, public, and social policy, coronavirus, lockdown, social distancing, teaching and learning. The study also examined the legislative or policy framework which is the Disaster Management Act. Apart from the conceptual framework and the legislative framework the study also explored the theoretical bedrock on which the study is wedged. They are social theory in Public Administration, Social Cognitive Theory, Social Learning and Observational Theory.

##### 2.1 The Conceptual Framework

This section of the thesis encapsulates or summarises the main concepts that provide clarifications for the study. These concepts then form the literature review. The study is placed within the realm of public and social policy which is subsets in the field of public administration. Unpacking and understandings these concepts are vital in that the various decisions on the pandemic by the national government and its senior technocrats and bureaucrats and policy implementers are at the centre of addressing these public health challenges created by the pandemic in the country. Also, the use of the DMA of 2002 as a legislative framework was to provide guidelines on how the national, provincial and local governments should prepare themselves in handlings disasters, epidemics and pandemics in the country. This is crucial as the DMA seeks to reveal how the national government uses public policy to address public health issues in the country. It is, therefore, the impact of this DMA as public policy of the pandemic on teaching, and learning that is at the centre of this thesis as this study would demonstrate.

### **2.1.1 The Concept of Public Administration**

Public administration is a broad term that can be described as the development, implementation and study of government policy (Public Administration Review, 1996:247) like the impact of the pandemic at Northlink TVET College.

(Coetzee, 1988) explains that it is the executive branch of government; civil service; bureaucracy; the formulation, implementation, evaluation, and modification of public policy. The term public administration represents extensive terms ranging from an amorphous combination of theory and practice whose objectives are to promote understanding of government and its relationships with society. It also encourages public policies that are more responsive to social needs like instituting the DMA to protect citizens and to institute managerial practices in public bureaucracies that are designed to achieve effectiveness and efficiency and to meet the deeper human needs of citizens.

The literature further adds that public administration also refers to all employees of government except members of the legislature, the chief executive, and judicial officials, or high-level employees of government departments or agencies that make non-routine decisions that set standards to be carried by subordinates.

(Mthetwa, 2014) reads public administration as dynamic as it happens where more than one person works together to accomplish certain objectives. It is the implementation of government policy and the academic discipline that studies the implementation and also prepares civil servants for working in the public service.

(Cloete, 1988) explains that public administration is the accomplishment of politically determined objectives and it is more than the technique or even the orderly execution of programs. (Rutherford, 1947) adds that public administration involves policy; for the modern world, bureaucracy is the chief policy-maker in government. This study also unpacks the concept of public policy.

### **2.1.2 The Concept of Coronavirus**

(Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir & Siddique, 2020:91) state that the coronavirus is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). They traced its origins to Wuhan, China and it gradually spread

around the globe. (Shereen et al., 2020) add that Genomic analysis revealed that SARS-CoV-2 is phylogenetically related to severe acute respiratory syndrome-like (SARS-like) bat viruses.

The (WHO, 2020) notes that the virus is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which spreads between people in several different ways. The (WHO, 2020) adds that the virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing, or breathe. (WHO, 2020) notes that these particles range from larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols. The literature adds that current evidence of the virus suggests that it spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with each other, typically within 1 metre.

(WHO, 2020) adds that a person can be infected when aerosols or droplets containing the virus are inhaled or come directly into contact with the eyes, nose, or mouth. The fear of this spread prompted the closing of educational spaces like the Protea, Northlink TVET College. This was to prevent students from gathering in huge numbers and provide a breathing space for the spread of the pandemic at the campus. Thus, the closure of the school could be seen or interpreted as a non-pharmaceutical intervention by the authorities.

The (WHO, 2020) explains that the virus can also spread in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor settings like classrooms and school halls, where people tend to spend longer periods. This is because aerosols remain suspended in the air or travel further than 1 metre. WHO (2020) states that people may also become infected by touching surfaces that have been contaminated by the virus when touching their eyes, nose, or mouth without cleaning their hands.

On March 11, 2020, the (WHO, 2020a) officially announced that coronavirus (COVID-19) is a pandemic that health experts and governments worldwide had to watch and seek measures to stem its spread. Scientists dubbed the pandemic's source "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2" (SARS-CoV-2), but it is more commonly referred to by the label assigned to the disease it causes: coronavirus disease 2019 or "COVID-19".

According to (Medical News Today, 2020), the virus was viewed to be spreading fast, leading to countries closing schools to ensure confinements to control its spread. These confinements have created the greatest educational disruption in history as they affected nearly 1.6 billion learners in 190 countries and affected all continents (United Nations, 2020). This has led to the closure of schools globally impacting 94 per cent of the world's student population.



(Pokhrel & Chetri, 2021) note that, to prevent infections many governments called on schools to institute social distancing and restrict the movement of people. They add that the pandemic is worsening the living conditions of those in rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities, and the displaced, preventing them from continuing their learning. (Pokhrel & Chetri, 2021) add that the projections by many experts are that 23.8 million learners may drop out of school next year due to the pandemic's economic impact. They note that these disruptions have had, and will continue to have effects beyond education as the closures of schools hamper the provision of school feeding schemes that provide nutrition to children.

### **2.1.3 The Concept of Lockdown**

In this section of the study, the researcher explored the concept of lockdown as applied by the Disaster Management Act of 2002 in South Africa. According to the Cambridge Dictionary 'lockdown' is a situation in which people are not allowed to enter or leave a building or area freely due to an emergency. The intention is to save and protect the lives of the people.

Also, (Merriam Webster, 1828) notes three definitions of the concept. The first is the confinement of prisoners in their cells or most of the day as a temporary security measure. Secondly, emergency conditions in which people are temporarily prevented from entering or leaving a restricted area during a threat of danger and finally a temporary condition imposed by governmental authorities during the outbreak of epidemics disease in which people are required to stay at their homes and refrain from or limit activities outside the home involving public contact. For this study, the last definition is deemed appropriate and would be used to explore this study.

Since the focus of this study is to gain insights into how lockdown impacted education at the Protea, Northlink TVET College we need to strategise on how the concept was adopted to contain the coronavirus virus at the College. As noted earlier, the pandemic in March 2020 was spreading fast and claiming lives. Thus, the lockdown for (Rex, 2020) had to ensure that the virus is contained and the curve is flattened or infection rates are reduced.

Piryani, (Shakya & Huq, 2020) note that many experts and governments see lockdowns amongst the non-pharmaceutical measures utilised to contain the virus from spreading to other people and other countries or to flatten the curve. The (News24, 2020) reveals that in South Africa the government had to rope in the South African Defense Force (SANDF) or the military and the South

African Police Service (SAPS) to assist in enforcing the lockdown to keep people at home and prevent the spread of the virus. (Ren, 2020) expands that lockdown led to the closure of schools and learners staying at home and losing instructional time.

- According to the Provincial Government of the Western Cape which notes on it, COVID 19 Website explains that to stop the spread of coronavirus COVID-19, the National Government has announced a lockdown across South Africa. Please stay at home during this time.

In the South African context, a lockdown is an emergency protocol that requires all citizens to be confined at home unless through the adjusted alert DMA Regulations.

- You are performing an essential service;
- You are getting an essential good or receiving an essential service;
- You are collecting a social grant;
- You are seeking emergency, life-saving or chronic medical attention;
- Note that you may be subjected to screening for COVID-19 by an enforcement officer while you are not at home.

In addition:

- Grocery stores, pharmacies, banks and other essential services will remain open;
- Retail shops and shopping malls must be closed, except where essential goods are sold on conditions that the person in control must ensure safe distancing and hygiene conditions;
- Only essential goods may be sold in retail stores;
- All South African borders are closed during the period of lockdown, except for the transportation of essential goods and fuel;
- The deployment of soldiers and police to control movement of people, and
- Manuvouring the hours of the curfew.

#### **2.1.4 The Enforcement of the Lockdown in the South African Context**

The government cognisant of the difficulties in managing human behaviour had to introduce several steps to ensure that the lockdown is strictly respected. The government had to open the military barracks and bring out the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) to assist the South African Police Service (SAPS), Law Enforcement officials and the Traffic Department and Community-Based Organisations to assist in ensuring that South Africans respect the lockdown measures and respect the Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions.

First, all those on the streets must provide valid written proof that they are out because they are providing essential services. This explanation had to be accompanied by either a letter from the place of employment if the person in question is employed or a letter from the city acknowledging the person in question as a recognised trader providing essential services.

Failure to comply with the above resulted in the following punishment:

- A fine of R1500 for breaking lockdown regulations.
- The enforcement officials have to ensure that all those on the streets are wearing their masks. If you are caught without a mask, you are either given the warning to wear it or given a fine.
- All businesses must have sanitisers at the entrance and all customers or clients need to sanitise before entering the premises.
- If arrested, you should be afforded all the normal rights. A state of Disaster should by definition be implemented in a manner consistent with the SA Constitution Act 106 of 1996 mainly, its Bill of Rights in Chapter Two.

#### **2.1.5 The Concept of Social Distancing**

According to the (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 1828): the practice of maintaining a greater than usual physical distance (such as six feet or more) from other people or of avoiding direct contact with people or objects in public places during the outbreak of a contagious disease to minimize exposure and reduce the transmission of infection.

Under a new "social distancing" strategy, handshaking could be discouraged, with other, less tactile forms of greeting taking their place. One of these which emerged globally was greeting through elbow contact. This was envisaged to discourage the transmission of the disease.

According to (Bootsma & Ferguson, 2007), their work demonstrate that the notion of social distancing is not new as it was practiced during the 1918 influenza pandemic. The scholars expand that the United State (U.S) unlike Europe put considerable effort into non-pharmaceutical interventions during the time of the Spanish influenza pandemic in 1918–1919, but in Spain little NPIs were put in place. (Johnson and Mueller, 2002) revealed that this led to its lethality and the multiple distinct waves of the epidemic seen in many areas in Spain. The scholars note that conservative estimates indicate that 50 million people died worldwide as the US tried a range of interventions in 1918, including closure of schools and churches, banning of mass gatherings, mandated mask wearing, case isolation and disinfection or hygiene measures. The interest of this study is to demonstrate how non-pharmaceutical interventions can be used to mitigate pandemics.

#### **2.1.6 Non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) to prevent the spread of the Pandemic**

In this section of the study, the researcher explored the notion of non-pharmaceutical interventions as mechanisms to prevent the spread of the pandemic in the country. Especially as it emerged that vaccines may take a year or two to develop. This, then emerged as a challenge.

(Musa et al., 2020) add that due to the unavailability of pharmaceutical interventions such as suitable vaccines and a COVID-19 anti-viral medication, the implementation of non-pharmaceutical interventions like the restriction of movement, social distancing, face-masks usage, quarantine of exposed persons, isolation of confirmed and tested cases, contact-tracing and so on, are the commonly prescribed measures by the World Health Organisation.

(Musa et al., 2020) expand that the recommendation of strict social distancing measures was also among the regular healthcare guidelines that were prescribed by the South African medical practitioners to curb the spread of the COVID-19 since the virus is transmitted among persons.

(Musa et al., 2020) note that NPIs are actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, that people and communities can take to help slow the spread of illnesses like pandemic influenza (flu). (Musa et al., 2020) explain that when a new flu virus spreads among people, causing illness

worldwide, it is called pandemic flu. Because a pandemic flu virus is new, the human population has little or no immunity against it.

### **2.1.7 The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD)**

According to (News24, 2020) the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) is a national public health institute of South Africa, providing reference to microbiology, virology, epidemiology, surveillance, and public health research to support the government's response to communicable disease threats like the coronavirus and its different variants in the country.

### **2.1.8 The Concept of Learning**

(Thorndike, 1928) notes that learning is a lasting change in behaviour as a result of experience, and the behaviour includes both the external and internal actions of the individual which are observed and remain unobserved by the outside world. (Thorndike, 1928) explains that it includes the different ways in which people experience the world around them. He conducted experiments on dogs and cats to discover whether they learn their tasks through imitation or observation.

He compared the learning curves of cats who were assigned to observe others escaping from a box with those who had never seen the animals getting out of the box. He found no difference in the rate of learning between both of the groups. So, it was revealed that the process of learning depended upon the relationship between stimulus and response. The animal solved the problem not by reflecting and thinking over the action that was performed by them.

According to (Watson, 1914) learning experiments on animals (rats) and human beings in which he revealed that the law of effect has not as much importance in the learning process as has been emphasised by Thorndike. Watson discovered that once the animal was well trained at running the maze, it did so almost automatically. He explored animals' sensory abilities: for example their abilities to discriminate between similar stimuli. He rejected the law of effect and all that was important for him was the frequency of occurrence of stimulus-response pairings.

According to (Axman et al., 2005) Edward Tolman conducted studies and revealed drawbacks in the law of effect. For example, rats were permitted to explore a maze in which there were three routes/ways of the different distance between the starting position and the end. The rats' behavior revealed that they have got a mental map of the maze when it was blocked. They prefer the routes

according to their shortness. He discovered that the animals could use the knowledge that they gained in running the maze. This result was developed further by (Pandey, 1988) who discovered that unexpected decreases in reward quantity caused rats temporarily to run a maze more slowly than normal while unexpected increases caused a temporary elevation in running speed.

(Skinner, 1955) conducted experiments on animals and developed the basic concept of operant conditioning. He claimed that this type of learning was not the result of stimulus-response learning on the part of these animals. He notes that the basic association in operant conditioning was between the operant response and the reinforcer. (Skinner, 1955) adds that the relation to a stimulus is different in the operant behavior, and the most operant responses may be emitted in the absence of what is regarded as a relevant stimulus.

According to (Pavlov, 1928), the learning process is thoroughly dependent on reflexes. It is the outcome of a neutral stimulus when it is associated with part of a reflex. He believed that human behavior could be explained entirely in terms of reflexes, stimulus-response associations. According to (Brockett, 1994) & (Roger, 1983), learning is a personal act of an individual to make full use of his potential. It is a process of self-actualisation to its maximum level.

According to (Driscoll, 2000), learning is a process of continuous change in human performance or performance potential. The literature adds that it must come about as a result of the learner's experience and interaction with the world around him. (Vaill, 1996) expands that learning is a way of being. The literature notes that it is an ongoing set of attitudes/temperaments and actions by the individual and groups which they employ to keep abreast of the surprising, novel/new, ambiguous, obtrusive and recurring events. The study now turns to teaching in TVET colleges.

### **2.1.9 Learning and Teaching in Technical and Vocational Schools and Colleges**

It is worth noting that there are different methods of teaching within technical and vocational education. These are Work Education: Project method, Discussion method, Demonstration method, Work-Study method, and Exposure and Observation method. In this light, therefore teaching, and learning technical, and vocational subjects should be seen differently.

(Hattie, 2009) showed that the key (in this case, to attainment) is what happens at the 'learner end', through the day-by-day reflective, pedagogic decisions that teachers make that develop learners

into their coaches and teachers. Learning and teaching methods that work for the technical and vocational colleges.

The following list is indicative of methods that are relatively well-understood in some contexts. The majority are broadly ‘learning by doing’ or ‘experiential’, though many combine reflection, feedback, and theory. For each one there is significant research to suggest that it might be effective in vocational education:

Learning by watching, Learning by imitating, Learning by practising (‘trial and error’), Learning through feedback, Learning through conversation, Learning by teaching and helping, Learning by real-world problem-solving, Learning through Inquiry, Learning by thinking critically and producing knowledge, Learning by listening, transcribing and remembering, Learning by drafting and sketching, Learning by reflecting, Learning on the fly, Learning by being coached Learning by competing, Learning through virtual environments, Learning through simulation and role play Learning through games.

Sifting through this list the researcher deduced that teaching and learning in a technical and vocational college entails a mammoth task and therefore transiting into online education was going to be difficult if not impossible for some learners to catch up. In the next section, legislative framework which serves as a bedrock of this study is elucidated.

## **2.2 The Legislative Framework**

### **2.2.0 The Disaster Management Act (DMA) (Act No 57 of 2002)**

This section of the thesis examines the Disaster Management Act as the legislative framework of the study as the act envisages and states the various steps the national, provincial and local governments are supposed to take in managing and dealing with disasters, epidemics and pandemics in the country. The act is an example of both public and social policy designed to create an institutional framework to mitigate the impact of disasters, epidemics, and pandemics like COVID-19s. The DMA was inaugurated in 2002 and since the outbreak of COVID in 2020 it has been amended several times to make it relevant to the pandemic.

In order for the South African government to tackle the coronavirus, the DMA of 2002 had to be amended as the Disaster Management Act: Regulations relating to COVID-19 as Government

Notice R480 of 2020 Published in Government Gazette no. 43258 on 29 April 2020 and Assented to on 29 April 2020 and Commenced on 29 April 2020. Amended by Disaster Management Act: Regulations relating to COVID-19: Amendment (Government Notice 608-B of 2020) on 1 June 2020 and others relating to 11 October 2021 as signed by Dr. Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, designated under section 3 of the DMA, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002), having declared a national state of disaster, published in Government Gazette No. 43096 on 15 March 2020, hereby in terms of section 27(2) of the DMA, 2002, after consultation with the relevant Cabinet members, make the Regulations in the Schedule. Thus, these amendments empowered the government to embark on instituting regulations which are attuned to the challenges presented by the pandemic to ensure that these regulations are consistent with the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996.

The section of the study examines the origins of the act, its aims and objectives, the role of the National Disaster Management Centre, the different organs of the Disaster Management Act and how the outbreak of the Pandemic led to the invocation of the Act by the government. In setting the scene, this mini-thesis explains primarily the origins of DMA.

### **2.2.1 Origins of the DM Act**

According to (Van Niekerk & Du Plessis, 2021), the Disaster Management Act was the culmination of a lengthy legislative process that started immediately after apartheid ended in 1994. The discussions emerged due to devastating floods in the Cape Flats, which exposed the inadequacies in the Civil Protection Act 67 of 1997 in caring for the majority of people of South Africa, and the most vulnerable who are mostly black and coloured in these communities.

To ensure that the impact of a disaster is mitigated, (Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) explain that the new government embarked on a Green/White Paper process, which led to the first draft Bill on Disaster Management in 1999. The new Act, however, was not promulgated until early 2003 due to delays in Parliament. (Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) additionally explain that the main aim of the legislative process was to drive a paradigm shift from not only responding to disasters to that of disaster risk reduction. In line with international thinking, the focus shifted from "disasters" to "hazards" and "vulnerability" (Van Niekerk & du Plessi, 2021).



These scholars further argue that the vision was to make sure that no longer could disasters be seen as natural phenomena, which only required some response. Instead, it was now regarded as a manifestation of failed human planning and development, which can be managed and mitigated before it becomes an issue. In essence, there is nothing like a "natural disaster" all disasters are human-made. The argument here was that if disasters are institutionalised in public policy frameworks like the Disaster Management Act, their impacts could be managed and mitigated.

Judging from the above reasoning (News24, 2020) notes that the South African Disaster Management Act was acknowledged internationally as one of the most forward-thinking new generation laws on disaster risk and the management thereof. This new focus influenced how disaster and disaster risk management was defined in the Act. It is also this definition of "disaster", which greatly impacts on how the COVID-19 pandemic is being managed in South Africa by the government and its agencies and or the bureaucrats.

### **2.2.2 Aims and objectives of the Disaster Management Act (DMA)**

According to Disaster Management Act (DMA) (Act No 57 of 2002) the aims and objectives of the DMA are stated below.

- The main aim of the Disaster Management Act is to provide for an integrated and co-ordinated disaster management policy that focuses on preventing or reducing the risk of disasters, mitigating the severity of disasters, emergency preparedness, rapid and effective response to disasters and post-disaster recovery; the establishment of national, provincial and municipal disaster management centres; disaster management volunteers; and matters incidental thereto.
- The Act aims to ensure that disaster risk reduction becomes an institutional requirement for all sectors and spheres of government. (Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) add that the DMA, therefore, calls for the development of a national policy (in the form of the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF)) and the establishment of a National Disaster Management Centre with decentralised disaster risk management structures in all municipalities, metros, and provinces. It also designated responsibilities within each organ of state to ensure that Disaster Management becomes an integral part of governance in the country.

- The Act requires that the president establishes an Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management, and calls for all municipalities and organs of state to develop disaster risk management plans and report on these to the National Disaster Management Centre on an annual basis. Furthermore, each Disaster Management Centre is responsible for establishing a Disaster Management Advisory Forum, which aims to bring together many stakeholders from within government, the private sector, NGOs, and academia to tackle the pandemic in that specific centre.

### **2.2.3 The functions of the National Disaster Management Centre**

According to (Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) add that although the Act and National Disaster Management Framework was a very forward-thinking law at the time of promulgation, the implementation thereof has been less so. The scholars add that research at all levels of government highlighted the challenges and lack of implementation by state agencies.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) explain that the main reasons for the limited implementation have been the placement of the various Disaster Management Centres and the lack of perceived importance of multi-sectorial disaster risk reduction. The National Disaster Management Framework makes the argument for the placement of the disaster risk management function (the centres) within the government structures.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) claim that the thinking at the time of the development of the Act was that the National Disaster Management Centre would be placed within the auspices of the President, as is the case in most other countries. The scholars explain that the escalation of the placement to the other spheres of government would thus follow a line: Provincial Disaster Risk Management Centres in the Premiers' Office and Municipal Disaster Risk Management Centres in the office of the Municipal Manager (not Mayor's office for other legislative reasons).

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) note that, however, this never occurred, and the National Centre remained within the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The main argument for the placement of the National Centre in the highest political office is the need for decisive and mandated decisions on issues about hazards and disasters. The literature adds that the Act in Section 3 makes provision for the Act to be administered by a Cabinet minister designated by the president whom, in SA, during the COVID-19 pandemic is the Minister of Cooperative

Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta). (The Amendment Act, 2020) indicates that the Head of the National Centre (Dr Tau) reports directly to the minister.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) explains that at the time of the declaration of the Act, the idea was that the Minister in the Presidency would be given this responsibility, which means that the National Disaster Management Centre would be placed in the Office of the Presidency. This argument was supported at the public hearings of the Disaster Management Bill in Parliament by all political parties.

#### **2.2.4 The Different Organs of the Disaster Management Act**

In this section of the thesis, the researcher inquired about the different organs of the Disaster Management Act. According to DMA (Act No 57 of 2002) the Disaster Management Act has several bodies to ensure its success in implementing its policies and ensuring its success.

These are:

- The Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management (ICDM); and
- The National Disaster Management Advisory Forum (NDMAF) or National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC).

This resulted in the development of draft legislation in 2000 which resulted in the promulgation of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 on 15 January 2003.

The Act provides for:

- An integrated and co-ordinated disaster risk management policy that focuses on preventing or reducing the risk of disasters, mitigating the severity of disasters, preparedness, rapid and effective response to disasters, and post-disaster recovery;
- The establishment of national, provincial and municipal disaster management centres;
- Disaster risk management volunteers;
- Matters relating to these issues. It is in line with this Act that the government closed the country.

### **2.2.5 The outbreak of the pandemic and the Proclamation of the Disaster Management Act**

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) note that the outbreak and spread of the pandemic led the government to declare a national state of disaster on the 15th March 2020. The scholars add that in this light, Dr. Dlamini Zuma the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs noted that considering the magnitude and severity of the Covid-19 outbreak which has been declared a global pandemic by the WHO. Additionally, it was also classified as a national disaster by the Head of the National DMC. According to the Head of the National DMC, taking into account the need to augment the existing measures undertaken by organs of state to deal with the pandemic, gives the Minister authority to act. The Act has been amended several times since March 2020 to give powers to the government to act.

As noted earlier, in order for the South African government to tackle the coronavirus, the DMA of 2002 had to be amended as DMA: Regulations relating to COVID-19 as Government Notice R480 of 2020, published in the Government Gazette no. 43258 on 29 April 2020 and Assented to on 29 April 2020 and Commenced on 29 April 2020. Amended by DMA: Regulations relating to COVID-19: Amendment (Government Notice 608-B of 2020) on 1 June 2020 and others relating to 11 October 2021 as signed by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, designated under section 3 of the DMA, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002), having declared a national state of disaster, published in Government Gazette No. 43096 on 15 March 2020, hereby in terms of section 27(2) of the DMA, 2002, after consultation with the relevant Cabinet members, making the Regulations in the Schedule.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) agree that the Minister is the designated authority under Section 3 of the Disaster Management Act in terms of 1) Section 27 (1) of the Act, hereby declare a national state of disaster having recognised that special circumstances exist to warrant that declaration of a national state of disaster and 2) Section 27 (2) of the Act may, when required, make regulations or issue directions concerning the matters listed therein, only to the extent that it is necessary for:

- a) Assisting and protecting the public;
- b) Providing relief to the public;
- c) Protecting property;
- d) Preventing or combatting disruption; or

e) Dealing with the destructive and other effects of the disaster.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) note that the first argument is that disaster risk reduction requires integrated and multi-sectoral approaches and the implementation of the Act can only be done successfully if the placement of the coordinating function (of the centres) are linked to the highest decision-making structures of the state. This is to ensure effective implementation in Disaster Management Acts.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) add that secondly, the designated minister will have extraordinary powers in the case of the declaration of a national state of disaster, as the current state of disaster confirmed, and thus the Minister in the Presidency would be the most appropriate accounting line due to his/her proximity to the president.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) aver that this would mean, for example, that in the event of the declaration of a national state of disaster, the regulations would come directly from the presidency and not a line ministry. A national "state of disaster" is also unique in the sense that the Act defines a disaster as an occurrence which "threatens to cause or causes" damages and losses. Thus, any "state of disaster" (local, provincial or national) can be classified and declared if the state foresees that the occurrence might, or does exceed our abilities to cope with it. The preventative and risk reduction perspective is thus clear.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) note that in the years that followed, the implementation of the Act was dismal at best. The National Centre was relegated to a section within Cogta, with minimal powers to ensure the implementation of the Act across sectors and spheres of government. The motto of the disaster management changed from "Everyone's business" to "Not my business." Covid-19 highlights the error in the placement of the disaster risk management function within a ministry and not the presidency.

### **2.2.6 The role of the Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management**

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) explain that this also muddles intergovernmental duties during disasters. The Act gives the president the responsibility in Section 4(1) to establish the Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management. Paragraph 1.1.1 of the National Disaster Management Framework gives further clarity.

The scholars concur that an intergovernmental committee must give effect to the principles of cooperative governance and aims to bring together the different levels of government, as well as other needed role-players. This committee reports to the cabinet and ensures a uniform approach to disaster risk management in South Africa. (Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) add that while the Intergovernmental Committee has been established by the president, it has not had a meeting since 2002. It should meet at least four times per year as per the National Disaster Management Framework.

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) note that this means that the oversight role of the cabinet in terms of disaster risk management has not been functioning as per the law. If this committee was operating as required by the legislative framework, it would also mitigate the need for the cabinet members to be "deployed" to a province, as well as the need to have established the National Coronavirus Command Council in the first place-the Intergovernmental Committee would have fulfilled that role.

### **2.2.7 The challenges of the implementation of the Disaster Management Act**

(Van Niekerk & du Plessis, 2021) add that as with most laws, the Disaster Management Act was developed and promulgated as a top-down approach. However, the Act is quite clear in its bottom-up implementation. Disaster risks must first and foremost be identified, assessed, reduced, and managed at the local government level through the current development processes. Any event remains a local concern until it escalates to another level. These scholars note that the lack of proper implementation of the Act at the national level has undoubtedly had a significant impact at the provincial and the local level. In the majority of cases, disaster risk management is just not a serious concern of sector managers and political decision-makers.

### **2.3 The Theoretical Framework**

This section of the thesis explores the theoretical framework of the study. To gain a good understanding of this word we need to first have a clear understanding of the word theory. The word theory originates from the Greek word *theoria*. Which means "contemplation," or speculation" (Bell & Bryman, 2011:34). In this light, the concept is generally a systematic and formalised expression of previous observations and is predictive, logical and testable. In principle,

scientific theories typically are in most cases tentative and subject to corrections or inclusions in a wider theoretical structure (Bell, 2005:26).

(Van der Waldt, 2017) notes that the basic function of theory is to describe, explain, predict or control phenomena in a variety of contexts. The theory generally consists of philosophical assumptions which can be classified in terms of the following categories: epistemology (questions of knowledge), ontology (questions of existence), and axiology (questions of values) (Littlejohn and Foss, 2005:18).

(Littlejohn & Foss, 2005) explain that epistemological questions deal with how the phenomenon is explained, whilst ontological underpinnings of a theory refer to what the researcher believes real and consider existing.

### **2.3.1 Social Theory in Public Administration**

(Harrington, 2005) explains that social theory is the study of scientific ways of thinking about social life. It involves ideas about how societies change and develop methods of explaining social behavior, power, and social structures, classes, gender, ethnicity, modernity and civilization, revolutions and utopias and pandemics. The other was the social learning theory.

### **2.3.2 Social Learning Theory**

(Lou, 2013) opines that Bandura proposed the concept of social cognitive theory. (Lou, 2013) argues that a general contention is that much of the development in human cognition was explained by the interplay of internal personal factors in the cognitive, affective and biological events, behavior; and environmental events. According to (Nabavi, 2014), (Bandura, 1961) conducted his famous experiment known as the Bobo doll experiment to study patterns of behaviour by social learning theory, and that similar behaviour was learned by individuals shaping their behaviour after the actions of models.

Bandura's results from the Bobo Doll Experiment changed the course of modern psychology, and were widely credited for helping shift the focus in academic psychology from pure behaviourism to cognitive. He demonstrated that children learn and imitate behaviours that they have observed in other people. According to (Banyard & Grayson, 2000), Bandura believed that direct reinforcement could not account for all types of learning and that people can learn new information

and behaviours by watching other people. According to (Shaffer, 2005), people learn from one another, via: Observation; Imitation; and Modeling.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) holds that portions of an individual's knowledge acquisition can be directly related to observing others within the context of social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences. The theory states that when people observe a model performing a behavior and the consequences of that behavior, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviors. Observing a model can also prompt the viewer to engage in behavior they already learned (Bandura, 1986, 2002). In other words, people do not learn new behaviors solely by trying them and either succeeding or failing, but rather, the survival of humanity is dependent upon the replication of the actions of others. Depending on whether people are rewarded or punished for their behavior and the outcome of the behavior, the observer may choose to replicate behavior modeled. Media provides models for a vast array of people in many different environmental settings.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986) is a learning theory based on the idea that people learn by observing others. These learned behaviors can be central to one's personality. While social psychologists agree that the environment one grows up in contributes to behavior, the individual person (and therefore cognition) is just as important. (Bandura, 1986) adds that people learn by observing others, with the environment, behavior, and cognition all as the chief factors in influencing development in a reciprocal triadic relationship. For example, each behavior witnessed can change a person's way of thinking (cognition). (Bandura, 1986) notes that similarly, the environment one is raised in may influence later behaviors, just as a father's mindset (also cognition) determines the environment in which his children are raised. The reciprocal determinism was explained in the schematization of triadic reciprocal causation (Bandura, 2002)

### **2.3.3 Observational Learning**

According to (Lou, 2013), in his famous Bobo doll experiment, Bandura demonstrated that children learn and imitate behaviours they have observed in other people. The children in Bandura's studies observed an adult acting violently toward a Bobo doll. When the children were later allowed to play in a room with the Bobo doll, they began to imitate the aggressive actions they had previously observed.



## 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided clarifications for some of the key concepts employed in this study like concepts like public administration, public policy and social policy. An understanding of these policies is vital as the national government with ministers had to make decisions that were deemed suitable to protect South Africans from infections and the spread of the virus which could lead to more hospitalization and more deaths in the country. In this light, the national government adopted both public and social policies to grapple with this challenge. The study also examined the coronavirus, the notion of lockdown and how it was implemented in South Africa and also its enforcement, the notion of social distancing and non-pharmaceutical interventions to curb the spread of the pandemic. The concept of teaching and learning were examined. The study also explored the DMA of 2002 as the legislative framework. The study also explored the theoretical framework which is the social theory of public administration, social learning, and observational theories. The study will now transit to chapter three to examine the research methodology.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter explored the literature review of the study as it explained concepts like public administration, public and social policy, coronavirus, lockdown, social distancing, education, teaching, and learning. The legislative framework of the study was the Disaster Management Act. The chapter also explored the theoretical grounding of the study. This chapter examines the research methodology that was used in gathering the data on the impact of the Disaster Management Act on the pandemic on the educational sector at Northlink College. It will explain concepts like the research methodology, research paradigm, research design, qualitative research, case study research, telephonic interviews, and document review, triangulation of data and data analysis, and ethical considerations.

Flowing from the above, scholars such as (Blaxter et al., 1996) point out that:

... research is not a wholly objective activity carried out by detached scientist. It is a social activity powerfully affected by the researcher's own motivations and values. It also takes place within a broader social context, within which politics and power relations influence what research is undertaken, how it is carried out, and whether and how it is reported and acted upon (Blaxter et al., 1996:15).

With this in mind, the researcher would outline the design of this study and the various decisions that were taken in the course of the study.

#### 3.1 The Notion of Research Methodology

To conduct any form of inquiry, the researcher has to be guided by a specific research methodology. (Merriam Webster, 1828b) describes research methodology as the analyses of the principles of methods, rules, and hypotheses employed by a discipline; the development of methods; procedures to be applied within a discipline. This view is shared by (Leedy, 1993) who reads a research methodology as an operating outline within which the facts are placed so that their meaning may be seen more clearly; it also details the research design used in the study.

Others scholars such as (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014) explain that the research methodology consists of two major aspects that the researcher requires in order to deliberate in the methodology. The researcher needs to discuss first, how data will be collected. Secondly, the researcher needs to discuss how the data will be analysed after the collection. The next matter to be clarified is whether the researcher will be conducting basic research or applied research, or a combination of both. Basic research is characteristically utilised to create basic understanding and to study and develop theories to clarify a particular phenomenon of interest to the researcher.

The literature further adds that there are applied research studies pragmatic problems to enable the identification of solutions that can be implemented in practice. This then leads to the need for a research paradigm to guide the researcher on what type of data to gather to gain insights into the study on an assessment of the impact of the Disaster Management Act at Protea, Northlink TVET College.

### **3.2 The Research Paradigm**

During the investigation, the researcher must be certain of the value of data to be collected in answering the overarching research question and to achieve the research objectives. Therefore, a research paradigm is crucial as it helps to guide the researcher in making critical decisions or choices on the study. Furthermore, a research paradigm is an inclusive system of related practices and thinking that defines the nature of inquiry along three dimensions which are; ontology, epistemology, and methodology (TerreBlanche and Durrheim, 1999).

(Bryman, 2012) reveals that Thomas Kuhn is accountable for devising the concept of “paradigm.” He adds that the paradigm defines “a cluster of beliefs and dictates which for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied, how research should be done, and how results should be study. Furthermore, a research paradigm a paradigm is mainly applied in the natural sciences. In social science, paradigms are likely to be regarded as research traditions.

According to (Leedy, 1997), the term ‘paradigm’ is used to refer to a set or cluster of commonly-held beliefs or values within the research or scientific community about a field of study. The beliefs shape or dictate how the researcher should go about carrying out a scientific study. This includes what they should focus on, what methods to use and how the researcher should interpret the results.

(Denzin and Lincoln, 2011:91) define a paradigm as “a set of beliefs that guide action.” According to (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) a paradigm includes four major beliefs that will guide a research action. These are axiology (ethics) which is about the role of values in the research process; epistemology which states that there is a relationship between the researcher and what is learned in a research process; ontology which asks about the nature of reality; and methodology which focuses on the procedures the researcher will follow to answer research questions.

According to (Neuman, 2006), a paradigm refers to a general organizing framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, key issues, models of quality research, and methods for seeking answers.

However, what is significant here to the researcher is to understand that by adhering to a specific paradigm or research custom, researchers assume a particular way of investigating a phenomenon associated with their domain. Thomas Kuhn further recognises that when scholars accept and pursue specific methods and processes of collecting data, they are unavoidably confronted with certain challenges and discrepancies (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:19).

This inquiry made use of social constructivism and the interpretive paradigm. Social constructivism is vital as it is concerned with understanding the world from the subjective experiences of individuals and communities. Hence, the study would be utilising meaning (and not measurement-oriented methodologies), related to interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. “Interpretive research does not predefine dependent and independent variables, but focuses on the full complexity of human sense-making as the situation emerges” (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). It is based on this understanding of social constructivism that the qualitative approach was deemed suitable and was adopted to gain meaning in this study.

### **3.3 The Exploratory Research**

(Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:12) state that in exploratory research, the primary aim is to collect new data on a specific topic that has not been investigated before. Research that has the general aim of exploration frequently refers to the research of an unfamiliar subject. As per our social, technological methods change; fiscal, new areas of study arise nonstop.

## **Explorative**

One of the characteristics of qualitative research design is that it is explorative. The purpose of the exploratory's study is to gain new insight into what is being studied (Cresswell, 2007). According to (Cresswell, 2007), qualitative research is done when a researcher wants to examine the problem carefully, rather than using predetermined information from the literature, or other scholars. This explains why this research is done in a natural setting where events take place. The study engaged in semi-structured telephone interviews and observations to elicit information about the experiences of senior managers, lectures and students at Northlink College.

## **Descriptive**

According to (Babbie and Mouton, 2001), descriptive research describes situations and events. It implies that the representing reality of participants should be clearly described. This focuses on a description of participants' experiences and perspectives of the research phenomenon. This should be backed up by evidence in the gathered data. It is also important in this study to describe the experiences of students and lecturers on the impact of the Disaster Management Act of the Pandemic at Northlink College. Based on these experiences, the researcher would then propose how remote learning through online platforms can be improved to become a sustainable form of teaching at Northlink especially as there are clear signs that the pandemic is not petering out or going away soon. The type of research questions asked in Chapter 1 indicates that the study examines, explores, investigates and analyses the phenomenon of interest under investigation, which is the impact of the Disaster Management Act of the pandemic at Northlink TVET College.

(Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014) add that exploratory research can be conducted due to the following goals: to gain new perceptions through the preliminary test or pilot test; to classify important concepts, to identify major partners; to recognise social needs; to identify outcomes of the research problems; to develop hypothesis; to verify expectations; to get used with unfamiliar conditions, policies and patterns. In this light, an assessment of the impact of the DMA of the pandemic at Northlink TVET College would be a vital study to reveal new concepts.

While doing exploratory research, data reliability and correctness are normally not scientific standards as the study design has to be flexible to allow perceptions of unidentified fields of the study. (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014) add that the research approach applied in exploratory

research involves qualitative methods like individual, case studies, and focus group discussions. In this case, a qualitative research method was deemed suitable for the study.

### **3.4 The Qualitative Research**

(Niewenhuis, 2007) explains that the qualitative research method is aimed at exploring the different problems or cases as well as uncovers the quality of whatever is being investigated. (Creswell, 2012) views qualitative research as responses that have been given by subjects in a study in the form of words that subjectively do not use numbers to describe reality to the researcher; it can also be collected from primary and secondary sources.

(Creswell, 2014) further weaves in that numerous characters in a study need to be carefully examined so that qualitative research can be assessed. This is crucial as qualitative research uses multiple approaches and procedures for the collection of data. (Maxwell, 2005) concurs with Creswell that qualitative research should be guided by intellectual objectives so that an understanding of the meanings assigned by the respondent to events and situations, the specific context in which respondents are situated, and the processes that contribute to situation, events, and actions should be well exploited. Thus, qualitative study involves creative clarification of occurrence. (Maree, 2011) substantiates that the world is made up of individuals with different beliefs systems and assumptions, attitudes and values. The scholarship seems to suggest that by exploring the expertise of others about the occurrence, the reality of the matter will be known. Qualitative research is thus an act of acknowledging, interactive relationship between researchers and participants. And also between participants and their experiences and how they have constituted reality based on those experiences in a specific setting.

According to (Dörnyei, 2007:24), “qualitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analysed primarily by non-statistical methods”. (Dörnyei, 2007) further states that qualitative research takes place in a natural setting where events occur practically. It also focuses on the perspectives of individuals in a situation being studied; as a result it involves interviews where participants share their experiences of the situation. Another characteristic of qualitative research is that it uses a very small sample size for the data to be manageable and it also focuses on in-depth cases.

Authors like (Creswell, 2007); (Babbie and Mouton, 2001) summarise the characteristics of the qualitative research approach as explorative, descriptive and contextual. These characteristics are discussed briefly below.

This study employed a qualitative method to gather data on the study. There are different approaches in qualitative research to gather in-depth data in a study. These approaches include narrative, life history, ethnographic, case study, self-study, etc. The researcher employed the use of open-ended emerging data with the primary objective of developing themes from the study. The researcher views this approach suitable for gathering this data. This is vital as it is an assessment of participants' contributions which will assist the researcher in developing a pattern of understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Also, the qualitative method provided answers to the questions about what, how and why they did it. Their explanations would provide the researcher with clues on how to develop the study.

Notwithstanding the above, the qualitative research design has some inherent limitations. Amongst these limitations are the generalisations of findings, which are not possible or not allowed, that is, findings emerging from a study cannot be generalised to a large population compared to the quantitative research approach. Also, in the qualitative research approach, conducting interviews for data collection is a long process and time-consuming. The analysis of the data also is time-consuming as these data are too voluminous and need to be arranged into carefully organised themes for triangulation and analysis. Besides, there is a problem when it comes to proving the reliability and validity of the research findings. (Anderson, 2010) notes that this is due to the fact that one would have to redo research that has been conducted thus duplications and repetition is common and time-consuming.

Nonetheless, the researcher deemed the qualitative approach suitable to gather and analyse data needed to assess the impact of the DMA of the pandemic on the educational sector at Protea, Northlink TVET College. This requires an in-depth inquiry which was done by asking questions from Senior Managers, Lecturers and students at Protea, Northlink TVET College.

### **3.5 The Research Design**

This section of the study explores the research design that was adopted in gathering the data on this study. (Flick, 2004) reads a research design as a strategy to gather and analyse data to allow

the scholar to respond to the research questions. (Miles and Huberman, 1994) explain that research design is the bond that holds the research together, arguably enabling the researcher to tie all the key parts of the research project together to assist in answering the main research question (s).

(Babbie and Mouton, 2001) notes that a research design is a guideline to make choices about the research methods that are to be applied in order to achieve the intended goal. This implies that the research design has to do with planning and implanting the study in the correct way (Rasinger, 2008). According to (Leedy, 1997), a research design is imaginary planning for conducting a research project. (Leedy, 1997) further states that a research design is an overall framework for collecting data and that it provides a format for the steps in the study.

Babbie and Mouton (2001) concur with (Leedy, 1997) by stating that research design is a plan or structured framework of how researchers intend conducting a research process in order to solve a research problem. (Creswell, 1994) adds and notes that a research design is a series of events that link the procedures for gathering the empirical data to the overarching research questions on the one hand, and to ensuring that the right data is collected, analysed, and conclusions are arrived at. Different research designs are suggested when following either the qualitative or the quantitative approaches. Research designs for qualitative approach are ethnographic, phenomenological, narrative, case study and grounded theory research (Creswell, 2007) while research designs for the quantitative approach can be classified according to whether they are experimental or non-experimental (Leedy, 1997)

It is this design that relates to the practical aspects of how the study was conducted to answer the research question on an assessment of the impact of the DMA of the pandemic at the Northlink TVET College. The researcher employed case study research as part of the research design in this inquiry.

### **3.6 The Case Study Research**

In keeping with a qualitative research tradition, case study research was deemed suitable for this study. (Yin, 2008) the expert on case study research notes that it should be understood as a careful method of collecting information about a certain unit of analysis, which may include though not limited to; individuals, groups, communities, organisation, or even a country.



The choice of the case study method was selected based on its strength. (Miles & Huberman, 1994) explain that the strength of a case study is rooted in its intensive description approach and analysis of a phenomenon, social unit, or system bounded by time and place.

This research study was designed as a single-case study as the researcher wanted to probe a particular phenomenon of concern deeply, not necessarily to generalise on the basis of the analysis, but rather to begin to understand a particular problem which is an assessment of the impact of the DMA of COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector at Northlink College. The study involved interviewing Senior Managers, Lecturers, and Students at the College to gain these insights into these impacts.

Adelman et al. (1980, as cited in Cohen & Manion 1994) identify as one of the advantages of case study research, is the fact that data generated from such research is ‘strong in reality’. According to them, this ‘strength in reality is because case studies are down-to-earth and attention holding, in harmony with the reader’s own experience ...’ (1994:123).

Adelman et al. (1980, as cited in Cohen & Manion 1994) also argue that:

“case studies are a step to action ... Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use; for staff or individual self-development, for within-institutional feedback; for formative evaluation; and in educational policy making ... At its best, they allow readers to judge the implications of a study for themselves (1980, as cited in Cohen & Manion 1994:123)”.

Case studies are usually in-depth exploratory studies of a particular phenomenon or issue, and can include a mixture of methods such as personal observation, the use of informants for data collection and analysis of tasks administered (Hua & David 2008; Babbie and Mouton 2001). The case study is ideally suited to the needs and resources of the small-scale researcher, for it allows a focus on just one example. This might be the researcher’s place of work or another institution with which the researcher has a connection, such as a college in this case.

According to (Hua & David, 2008) the case study design has some advantages. These scholars state that, a case study allows for use of multiple sources and techniques in the data-gathering process. Data can be both qualitative and quantitative and can come from primary research as well as from secondary sources such as government publication and novels, among other things. Tools

for collecting data can include surveys, interviews, and observation. A case study is able to provide rich and in-depth data on the behaviour of an individual or small group (Hua & David, 2008:99).

Interestingly, there are different types of case studies. Among these different types of case studies that exist, the study employed a holistic embedded single case design as noted by (Yin, 2003:42). This is critical in that when researchers are interested in looking at the same issue but now captivated by different decisions made by different stakeholders within the same area, then a holistic embedded unit would enable the researcher to explore the case, while considering the influence of the various variables and associated attributes on the phenomenon (Yin, 2003:42).

This is crucial as the study seeks to assess the impact of the DMA of the pandemic at the Northlink TVET College. Case studies are designed to bring out the views of the participants by using multiple data sources such as interviews, focus group discussions and observations. In this case, data was collected from multiple sources from Senior Manages, Lecturers and Students. These case studies have their caveats which are worth highlighting.

Case studies have been criticised by many scholars citing the absence of scientific quality and reliability and that they do not resolve the problems of a broader population. For example, a case study allows the researcher to obtain a general understanding of a specific problem or a phenomenon or series of activities and can offer an overview given that several sources of findings were applied. Further, (Noor, 2008) adds that another limitation of a case study is that it can be valuable in taking the developing and inherent properties of life in companies and the outgoing tide and flow of the company's events, particularly in situations where the transition happens quickly.

An oft-heard concern about case studies is that they provide little basis for "scientific" generalization. This is a real concern in that the case study does not represent a 'sample'. In a case study, the researcher's goal is, '... to expand and generalize theories ... and not to enumerate frequencies' (Yin, 1994:10). Yin expands on this point when he writes that case study researchers should 'generalize findings to "theory" (Yin 1994:37).

According to (Yin, 1994), as with scientific experiments, case studies 'rely on analytical generalisation. Through this approach, the investigator strives to generalise a particular set of

results to some broader theory (Yin, 1994:36). (Yin, 1994:41) warns researchers doing a single-case study to address all major concerns before limiting themselves to it. (Hua & David, 2008) also mention ‘susceptibility to bias’ (Hua & David, 2008:100) as a weakness in the case study design, as researchers work on collecting data in case study research.

Case studies are described as ideographic research methods; meaning approaches that investigate persons as individuals as opposed to members of society. Case studies are normally descriptive in nature and offer an abundance of long-term material on persons or specific circumstances. Case studies have the capacity of providing fresh ideas and hypotheses to arise from cautious and thorough observation. The case studies do have restrictions given that there might be challenges with confirming or qualifying the information, underlying factors prove to be complex to test, and conclusions cannot be made from a solitary case study (Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). Despite these caveats and limitations, this study employed a case study approach to gain insights into an assessment of the impact of the DMA of the pandemic at Northlink College.

### **3.7 Sampling Strategies and Participants**

Since this study is a qualitative research and case study research was adopted, there is the need for a research sample and the identification of the sampling strategy, the sample size as well as the participants that assisted the researcher to gain in-depth insights into the phenomenon of interest. (Miles & Huberman, 1994) note that a sample size is the set of people or entities from which findings are to be generalised: the population must be spelled out in advance before a sample is taken. Some scholars describe it as a target population. And they added that when identifying a target population for a study, it is instructive that it should consist of people who have the relevant information that the researcher is seeking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The word sampling refers to the choice the researcher makes on a given population or other groupings that are seen as necessary for the research study (Goddard & Melville, 2001). It should be noted that in qualitative research purposive sampling and non-probability is commonly applied instead of a random sampling and probability method (Niewenhuis, 2007). To gain these insights, this study adopted the purposive sampling approach as a suitable research method for data collection in this study.

The participants were selected based on the specific traits which distinguished them from the others since the study was interested in gathering data mainly from Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students at the Protea, Northlink College. Hence only persons connected to these three groups were involved. In this light this is described as purposive sampling (Niewenhuis, 2007).

According to (Patton, 2005), purposeful sampling is used when the focus is on selecting information-rich cases. The researcher therefore resorted to utilising this research technique to solicit that the best possible source of information could be obtained to assist in answering the overarching research questions. Therefore there was the need to identify Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students at Protea, Northlink College in Bellville - Cape Town.

The reason for selecting these three categories of people is that the researcher had anticipated that they will have valuable insights on “An assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic at Protea, Northlink College in Cape Town. In this light, data collection only happened at Protea Campus, as the researcher only required information from the Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students. Since this was an exploratory study, the researcher felt that a case study research at the Protea, Northlink College in many ways would provide more insights into answering the research questions of the study. From this stand point a quantitative research method would not have assisted the researcher in achieving the objectives of this study which was an assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town.

The researcher selected 25 participants for the study 20 females and 5 males, who were all Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students at the Protea, Northlink TVET College. The choice of this small sample was guided by the challenges the researcher encountered in soliciting or recruiting participants for the study.

It is worth mentioning that the researcher had earlier tried in the month of June 2020 right up to April 2021, as it was impossible to gather data due to the Covid-19 restrictions. The campus was closed and not a single Manager or Lecturer or Student was on campus until lockdown level 3 was announced that it became possible to even enter the campus and collect cellphone numbers and email addresses.

The choice of these 25 participants was predicated on the challenges the researcher faced, although the researcher was authorised to conduct fieldwork in September 2021, but due to the Covid-19 restrictions and the shutting down of the campus because of Covid-19 cases increasing it was difficult for the researcher to access the Managers, Lecturers and Students in order to collect the data.

The researcher finally carried out her fieldwork in October 2021 when the Campus Manager of Protea Campus authorised the researcher to conduct research under strict protocol. Five out of seven Senior managers agreed to assist the researcher by completing the questionnaires and doing the telephonic interview. The remaining 2 Senior Managers stated that they were scheduled for workshops and could not participate. The Campus Manager of Protea Campus insisted that though the institution has 54 lecturers it would be impossible to grant me unlimited access to these lecturers due to COVID-19 protocol. The agreed amount of lecturers that could be interviewed was at most 15 lecturers.

Interestingly, when the researcher tried to contact some of these 15 selected lecturers, many were not ready for telephonic interviews. Some explained that their schedules clashed with the researcher's and others stated that they were very busy. The researcher succeeded to interview only 10 lecturers. This gave a response rate of 66%.

Though this might not be a true reflective representation of the entire population of lecturers but regarding the COVID-19 atmosphere and its restrictions the researcher had no choice but to proceed and work with these participants. The researcher then proceeded to conduct telephonic interviews with these participants and was guided by the research guide in Appendix 1.

The researcher then proceeded to search for students who would willingly assist in the study. But due to COVID-19 protocol as stated earlier and the lockdown, the researcher had to go through certain protocol with the Campus Manager at Protea Campus. Though the institution boasts of 1781 students in 2021's academic year, the Campus Manager insisted that the researcher can only interview 15 students from the various departments. Despite various attempts by the researcher to mobilise students to assist in the investigation many who were contacted turned down the invitation sighting non-availability. Finally only 10 students were interviewed and this also gave a 66% participation. Shah, (2020) agrees that researching during the COVID-19 pandemic has

emerged as one of the greatest challenges that researchers are facing. The researcher then proceeded to conduct telephonic interviews with these 10 students and was guided by the research guide in Appendix 1.

It is worth noting that only 3rd year students were recruited into the study as they were the only class that the Campus Manager assigned the researcher to work with. Secondly, many of these students could understand the value and purpose of a research study since they were in their final year of their studies.

Hence, due to these challenges of representation in research, gender balance and ensuring all students and classes are represented became secondary. Despite these challenges the researcher ensured that the data was ethically collected at Protea, Northlink College to ascertain the impact of the pandemic in the study site.

### **3.8 Research Methods: (Data Collection Sources)**

(Dale & Volpe, 2008:28) explains that qualitative researchers are in most cases concerned about the validity of their findings and to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation of how various procedures of their study are used in collecting data. In this study, multiple methods were used in collecting data. These range from existing literature (secondary data), telephone conversations and observations (primary data). The use of multiple methods enabled the researcher to embark on triangulating.

#### **3.8.1 Literature Review (Secondary data)**

To gain insights into the phenomenon of interest, the inquiry started through sourcing the literature from documentary sources technically known as secondary data. The process involves a collection and analysis of available literature on public administration, public policy, social policy, disaster management act, coronavirus, lockdown, non-pharmaceutical interventions education, learning and teaching. 25 participants participated in the study, comprising of 20 females and 5 males who were all Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students at the Northlink College, were interviewed. The researcher then proceeded to conduct telephonic interviews with these participants on the 25, 26 and 27 October 2021, each interview lasted for about 40 minutes. This approach was opted for, due to COVID-19 restrictions. The first group constituted the Senior Managers (4 females and 1

male). The second group consisted of Lecturers (8 females and 2 males) and the third group consisted of Students (8 females and 2 males) and these interviews were guided by the research guide depicted in Appendix 1. So, Table 4.1 profile of the senior managers interviewed.

The researcher started by making appointments with the senior managers at the institution through phone calls, emails, and dates were arranged for these interviews. This strategy enabled more participants to be involved in the investigation and all of them accepted to be interviewed.

Flowing from the concepts from the literature the researcher was able to prepare a clear conceptual framework which on the other hand assisted in developing the theoretical bedrock for the study. These were mostly textually based and in some cases were available in electronic and physical format. In this case, the desktop method was the main method employed to gather the data from government documents, gazettes, books, newspapers, published and unpublished articles, and minutes of meetings on an assessment of the impact of the DMA of the pandemic at the college. This literature ranges from 1990 to 2021 as we need to gain insights into the onset of the educational sector post-1990 in South Africa and the outbreak of the Covid-pandemic and the invocation of the DMA of 2002 as a governance tool to control the movement of people as a non-pharmaceutical intervention in control the spread of the pandemic.

### **3.8.2 Interviews**

The role of interviews in qualitative research is unique and incontestably a major one in ethnographic research. (Dale & Volpe, 2008:29) explains that the qualitative research interview is an attempt to understand the world from the subject perspective, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world. This view is substantiated by (Patton, 1990:1) who avers that "qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" interviews are of vital importance in that a legitimate way to generate data is to interact with people (talking and listening to them) thereby capturing their experiences in their own words (Dale & Volpe, 2008:29).

According to (Burns and Grove, 1997), an interview involves verbal communication between the researcher and the respondent during which information is provided to the researcher. This implies that in interviews the interviewer asks questions and the interviewee responds to the questions either telephonically or face-to-face. Interviews can be unstructured, semi-structured or structured.

According to (Nunan, 1992), in unstructured interviews, questions are based on the response of an interviewee. In other words, there is no predetermined set of questions or agenda. (Nunan, 1992) argues that in semi-structured interviews, on the other hand, the interviewer has a general idea of what s/he wants to get at the end of an interview, but does not use any agenda. In structured interviews the researcher brings in a list of questions to the interview which will be asked in that order.

(Bailey, 1994:174) identifies the following as advantages of interviews:

- Flexibility – where the interviewer can probe for more answers instead of just asking what was originally intended to.
- Control over the environment – the interviewer can assure the participants of privacy. In other words, the researcher can always adjust the interview environment.
- The response rate is always high because the researcher is instantaneously recording responses with an audio-recorder.
- Researchers can use more complex questions, which would otherwise not be used in administered questionnaires.
- Completeness of questions is guaranteed. The research can always make sure that all the questions are answered.
- Interviewing provides the researcher with the chance to find out from the people those things that cannot be directly observed.

Despite the advantages mentioned above, there are also some disadvantages of this data collection procedure, such as that interviews are time consuming, costly and difficult to administer, more especially for those who did not receive any training (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). In addition to these disadvantages there might be personal biases and questions may be directed to a different way of responding to a question. The duration for the interviews was also minimised to avoid embarrassing interviewees because of their schedule. The number of interviewees per senior manager was also minimised. To avoid the impact of untrained interviewers, the researcher managed to discuss the interview schedule and the techniques that are necessary in interviews with the Campus Manager. The interview schedule was also piloted before it was used in this study.



### 3.8.3 Telephonic interviews

(Vogl, 2013:133) notes that telephone interviews provide a more balance of power distribution between interview participants. It allows the interviewees the opportunity to speak freely in their own setting, exercise greater control over their views and thus direct conversation towards areas that are perceived as vital. The telephonic interview is vital especially during this COVID-19 pandemic era of research where face-to-face interviews stands a risk of too much rapport which could divert discussions and thus losing its focus and possibly lead to infection of research participants.

(Tucker and Parker, 2014) explain that interviewers are encouraged to maintain a certain degree of distance and formality with research participants. They add that telephone interviews can reduce social pressure on participants while building rapport as many are always shy especially to respond to sensitive questions.

(Holt, 2010) conducted a study on the use of telephone interviews and found that many interviewees preferred the option of telephone interviews instead of face-face interviews. The authors' further state that these interviewees did not only prefer this option but were so much appreciative for giving them the preference to choose. The reasons these interviewees advanced, were that they are more comfortable openly discussing individual experiences over the phone than talking to the interviewer's face. This is vital, especially with the rise of COVID-19.

New sub-questions or probes are common features that researchers often identify during qualitative interviews. The lack of visual contact gives the interviewer to unobtrusively notate follow-up questions while the interviewee is speaking (Hermanowicz, 2002). Interviewees are often busy (Holt, 2010) and this group of participants is always willing to accept a telephone interview, this is so because, rescheduling and cancellation can be easy and convenient (Chapple, 1999).

However, there are some limitations to this approach. Some authors argue that the lack of facial expressions has the potential to impact the communication process (Gillham, 2000; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008). The authors state that the lack of visual clues could create challenges for researchers. Firstly, there is the risk of misunderstandings due to lack of visual cues and this can lead to a breakdown in the communication process (Hermanowicz, 2002). Secondly, body

language is absent for probing, seeking clarifications and elaborations to answers given (Stephen, 2007). Thirdly, key non-verbal visual data are not recorded by the researcher (Novick, 2008) and this type of data collection is crucial in qualitative research. Fourthly, body language which is considered natural in conducting interviews would be lacking, thus the researcher is unable to seek clarifications or elaborations to answers given (Stephen, 2007). Finally, interviewers cannot depend on visual cues to assess the interviewees' level of interest.

Notwithstanding, the above challenges, the researcher considered this approach vital as the selection of participants is purposive and the sample size of the study is small. This gave the researcher the opportunity to make a lengthy telephone conversation with all the participants. Scholars argue that a telephonic interview is not suitable for all participating groups. Instead, researchers are required to carefully select their target research participants when selecting their interview methods (Farooq, 2017). The researcher carefully selected her participants in conducting a telephonic interview.

- The President's proclamation of the Disaster Management Act of 2002 as a public policy instrument to curb the spread of the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- This was later followed by the announcement by the Department of Higher Education and Training on the closure of Higher Education and Training Institutions like Northlink College.
- The main restrictions put in place by the Senior Management of Northlink College in keeping with the Disaster Management Act and the Non- Pharmaceutical Interventions of the state.
- The changes in teaching and learning in the institution.
- The transition from face to face teaching and learning to the introduction of online or remote learning.
- The staff development strategies to continue teaching students through online platforms or remote learning.
- The challenges faced by some lecturers through remote learning.
- The challenges faced by students through these new teaching methods.

As intimated earlier, of the 25 participants for the study 20 females and 5 males who were all Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students at the Protea, Northlink College. The researcher then proceeded to conduct telephonic interviews with these participants. The first group constituted the Senior Managers (4 females and 1 male), Lecturers (8 females and 2 males) and Students (8 females and 2 males) and these interviews were guided by the research guide see Appendix 1.

### **3.8.4 Observations**

Observation is one of the procedures normally used to collect data in a qualitative study (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). The scholars explain that this is a measuring instrument used to measure truthfulness and honesty. The researcher usually observes a number of behaviours taking place in interviews and in the classroom or even outside the classroom. The main use of observation in the study is to examine a phenomenon while it is occurring. In this study, aspects that need to be observed were pre-determined in order to avoid collecting data that is not useful for the study (see Appendix A). But the emerging aspects were also allowed for inclusion in the study.

According to (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989), the researcher may observe events as a participant observer, who becomes part of the observed situation, or a non-participant observer, who records all behaviours taking place as an outsider. During participant observation an observer becomes part of the participants while observing the situation. In non-participant observation the researcher sits back as an outsider and records what he or she is observing. In this study, the researcher is a participant because she is also a staff member at Northlink College.

During the observation process, the observer recorded some field notes and audio recorded some lesson presentations. According to (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992), field notes are notations generally made to document observations during an interview. (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) further states that field notes should indicate or express what researchers see, think or experience. Observational notes or field notes entail description of events experienced through watching and listening during interviews and lesson offerings. They answer questions such as who, what, where and how of a situation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Observations have advantages because they allow the study of behaviour at close range which may help in realising contextual variables that are present in a situation. According to (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989), this may also become a disadvantage if the closeness leads to biases which may

affect the results. Another disadvantage of this data collection instrument is that the presence of the observer may change the behaviour of the observed subjects. Observations took place before any questionnaire or interview was conducted to avoid the influence that interview questions or questionnaires may have on participants.

### **3.9 Document Review**

Bowen (2009) reads document review as a reliable data collecting tool that was used to collect qualitative data. For (Creswell, 2013) document review involves a researcher collecting and reviewing documents to obtain the required data. (Amin, 2005) adds that these documents may be management or official reports, court proceedings or minutes of meetings, or private documents.

In this inquiry, only official documents like The Constitution of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, and The Disaster Management Act (Act 57 of 2002) was used. Organisational documents are useful secondary records collected by others and covering a wide range of material (Hall and Hall, 1996:212). The main advantage of these sources is that they can be processed at greater speed and with a lower cost of retrieval compared to primary data, where respondents need to describe what is meaningful and salient without being confined to standardised categories. These documents might be policy documents or minutes of meetings of the College.

### **3.10 Data Triangulation**

To successfully answer the overarching research question, the researcher had to triangulate the data. Triangulation for (Denzin, 2012) is a process whereby the researcher analyses data from multiple angles, it is also useful in checking the validity of different types of data. This is so important in my research because the stories and lived experiences of the Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students will just be looking at the question from one angle. These may be from the Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students and will also have a story to tell when analysed in comparison and will give a clearer view. The researcher is aware of the challenges that researchers face in gaining access to certain personalities. Being a staff member at Northlink College, Protea Campus was easy. The researcher had earlier made contact with Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students at Northlink College, Protea Campus.

### **3.11 Data trustworthiness**

In the field of social research, data trustworthiness is a key challenge that researchers need to guard against. This is so because the absence of trust in the data could result to discredit the study's reliability, credibility and conformability. The aspect of trustworthiness in research is imperative for both qualitative and quantitative research validity, conformability, and reliability (Lincoln & Gube, 1985). The framework for assessing trustworthiness in research is based on the above criteria. Information dependability and data accuracy are called reliability in research.

The transfer and information applicability is what is referred to in research as data validity. This requires that the same research can get the same findings. Transferability suggests that you can use the research findings in another setting. The research objective is to render by conformability. However, it is difficult to be objective in all cases, which requires that a conformability audit be conducted to determine whether research data supports the process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To instill trust in the findings, the researcher combined individual interviews with information from the participants and an analysis of written documents. As such, the data from interviews and the case study were verified to see if they are similarities and/ or differences. Also, the researcher gave all the participants a chance to verify whether or not the facts were reflective of their views. This helped the researcher to establish whether the interpretations of what the participants had shared with the researcher were true.

To have control over research bias the researcher avoided generalising the findings of his population. The findings were understood from a context and perspective. For (Neuman, 2006:188) the validity and reliability in research form a key aspect in research measurement. Depending on the research approach applied, validity and reliability will have different meanings. In qualitative research, validity is seen as the ability of an inquiry to be genuine hence trustworthy (Neuman, 1997).

### **3.12 Reliability and validity**

(Bulmar & Warwick, 1983) the approach used by a researcher depends on its legitimacy, effectiveness, appropriateness and this is key in research validity. Validity therefore, is "the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under

considerations" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:122). Adequate reflection involves that a repeat of the study can be done by another researcher. (Guion et al., 2011) argue that research validity can be achieved through other means of data analysis like thematic methods. This process also has setbacks as the environment can change after the original research has been conducted.

According to (Maree, 2007:80), the use of two methods of analysis is involving several investigators or peer researchers to help with the interpretation of the data, as it could enhance validity and reliability. To ensure validity, the study sought the assistance of a peer researcher to cross- check the processes and look for similarities and differences in the text.

### **3.13 Conformability**

According to (Shenton, 2004), the use of independent research instruments that differ from skills and perceptions of the research is imperative for the conformability of the study. However, the author points out that it is difficult to displace real objectivity as researcher bias cannot be avoided in the process of setting interview questions. Nevertheless, this does not deny the fact that the researcher can obtain some form of conformability in the study. (Shenton, 2004) went further to point out that the concept of conformability is the qualitative investigations comparable concern to objectivity. Hence, efforts were made to ensure that the findings of the study can be assured. This was a necessary step to put out any possible bias in the study pattern.

### **3.14 Research Ethics**

Ethical clearance is a phase whereby the ethical consequences of the study and tools are checked thoroughly to certify that the intended research processes may not cause any danger to the participant in any way. (Kawulich & Ogletree, 2012) insist that companies establish ethics committees and codes of ethics to safeguard both the researchers and respondents from hurtful research activities.

(Creswell, 2013) emphasises that codes of ethics may be distinguished according to the research discipline, but it is largely settled that the measures are taken by the researcher to warrant, through upholding informed consent, "data anonymisation and confidentiality", and that the study does not contain any potential challenges. The researcher informed the participants of the magnitude of the

study and to evade dishonesty and promote voluntary contribution to the study. All the participants were advised to pull out from the study if they deem it not to continue.

As stated in the Appendices, in the study and the Consent form used throughout the interviews, all the participants in the study were told about its purpose. The researcher was duty-bound to inform the participants that the data collected will be used for mainly study purposes and may be vital for other organisations facing similar challenges (Nyahodza, 2019).

Putting the instruments and the procedures to be followed aside, gathering data from the respondents increases ethical anxieties. Ethical concerns involve taking into consideration that you do not want to put people in danger, promote consideration for their privacy, encourage respect for people and not expose people to insignificant research studies. For the researcher to ensure that s/he does not harm respondents, the researcher must be careful of body and psychological harm. The constitution permits people to “have a right to privacy” and the scholar must keep the data collected with confidentiality it deserves. This simply means that whoever is reading the study must not be able to identify who the respondent is. It is vital for scholars to take into account the fact that subjects are separate human beings and should be treated with utmost respect (Goddard and Melville, 2001).

### **3.15 Chapter Summary**

This chapter examined the research methodology that was used to collect the data on the study. To achieve this goal the study adopted a qualitative research design. In addition, the incorporation of non-prospect sampling approaches, case study, which is convenient and purposive were applied to select the various participants. Also, data collection tools and process, data analysis, ethical consideration, trustworthiness, reliability, and validity, and the limitation of the study were discussed. The next chapter presents the research findings and analysis of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented a detailed discussion on the research methodology that was employed in collecting the data on an assessment of the impact of the Disaster Management Act of the pandemic on the educational system at the Protea Northlink TVET College. This chapter presents the results of the findings and the analysis of the study. It discusses the data that was collected through telephonic interviews and extensive documentary reviews. The data collected intended to respond to the three specific research objectives of the study, which were outlined in chapter one of this study.

#### 4.1 Participant background information

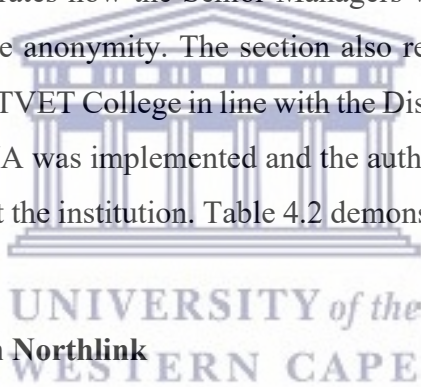
**Table 4.1.1 The Senior Managers from Northlink**

Participants	Gender	Age Range	Highest Qualification	Longevity in service (years. Years at Northlink	Specialisation	Participant Code
Senior Manager	Female	30 - 40	Bed Honours: Educational Management	8	Economic and Management Sciences and Business Studies	SM1
Senior Manager	Female	30 –40	B Ed	11	Hospitality Studies and Business Studies/Management	SM2



Senior Manager	Female	40 - 50	BTech Hospitality Management	16	Hospitality and Business Management	SM3
Senior Manager	Male	40 - 50	B Ed	21	Special Needs Education & IT	SM4
Senior Manager	Female	50 –60	BA Degree	14	Tourism	SM5

This section of the study explores the background information of the Senior Managers at Northlink College during the COVID 19 pandemic and the closure of schools. This information includes their administrative positions, their levels of education, gender, ages and longevity in services. As illustrated above Table 4.1 illustrates how the Senior Managers were coded in the interviews to protect their identities and ensure anonymity. The section also reveals their authority to initiate and implement the closure of the TVET College in line with the Disaster Management Act of 2002. This would indicate how the DMA was implemented and the authority of the Senior Managers to halt the spread of the pandemic at the institution. Table 4.2 demonstrate the profile of the lecturers interviewed.



**Table 4.1.2 The Lecturers from Northlink**

Participants	Gender	Age Range	Highest Qualification	Longevity in service (years. Years at Northlink	Specialisation	Participant Code
Lecturer	Female	30 – 40	BTech Consumer Science: Food and Nutrition	11	Hospitality	L1

Lecturer	Female	30 - 40	Bed Honours	8	Business Studies and Information Administration	L2
Lecturer	Female	30 - 40	Hons: Environmental Management	4	Tourism	L3
Lecturer	Female	40 - 50	BTech Post School Education	7	Fashion Design and Construction	L4
Lecturer	Female	40 – 50	PGCE, B. Food and Beverage Management Service	8	Hospitality	L5
Lecturer	Male	40 – 50	Adv Dip: Culinary Arts	5	Hospitality	L6
Lecturer	Female	50 - 60	M.ED	11	English	L7
Lecturer	Female	50 - 60	Adv Dip. Home Eco and Ed	10	Hospitality	L8
Lecturer	Female	50 - 60	BTech in Textile Design and Technology	24	Fashion Drawing	L9
Lecturer	Male	50 – 60	BSc (HDE)	11	Maths and Science	L10

This section of the study delves into the socio-economic status of the Lecturers in the interviews. This information includes their levels of education, gender, ages and longevity in services. As illustrated above in Table 4.2, the Lecturers were coded in the interviews to protect their identities and ensure anonymity. The section intends to shed light on their teaching ability to initiate and implement teaching in this TVET College. This would indicate how they were able to deliver lectures during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Furthermore, in the below Table 4.3, student profile who were interviewed for this study, is demonstrated.

**Table 4.1.3 The Students from Northlink**

Participants	Gender	Age Range	Qualification	Longevity at Northlink	Specialisation	Participant Code
Student	Male	20 - 30	NCV: Hospitality	3	Hospitality	S1
Student	Male	20 - 30	NCV- Finance, Economics and Accounting	3	Finance, Economics and Accounting (FEA)	S2
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV- Finance, Economics and Accounting	3	Finance, Economics and Accounting (FEA)	S3
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	3	Tourism	S4
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	3	Tourism	S5

Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	3	Tourism	S6
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	4	Tourism	S7
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	3	Tourism	S8
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	3	Tourism	S9
Student	Female	20 - 30	NCV: Tourism	3	Tourism	S10

This section of the study explores the socio-economic status of the Students in the interviews. This information includes their gender, ages, and courses and levels of studies. As illustrated above in Table 4.3, it shows how the Students were coded in the interviews to protect their identities and ensure anonymity. From the Table 4.3 above, it can be deduced that students who were interviewed range from the age of 20 to that of 30. Furthermore, interviewees were more biased towards students who study tourism. To this end, out of 10 students interviewed, 7 were from the tourism department, while 1 is from the hospitality department and 2 are from the FEA department. The section intends to shed light on their ability to learn and be taught in this TVET College. This would indicate how they were able to assimilate lectures during this COVID-19 pandemic lockdown at the Northlink College.

## **4.2 Presentation and Discussions of Research Findings**

### **4.2.1 Sub-Objective One**

The study primarily solicited an understanding from the management of what COVID-19 is. Coupling this, the research objective and question sought to understand the restrictions that were put in place by the institution to minimize transmission of the virus at the campus.

All five Senior Managers, who are referred to here as SM1-SM5 responded that:

“Covid-19 is a “severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2” (SARS-CoV-2), but it is more commonly referred to by the label assigned the disease it causes: coronavirus disease 2019 or “COVID-19”.

The understanding here is that COVID-19 is a severe acute respiratory syndrome which is known as COVID-19. This therefore suggests that management at Northlink College had awareness of what the COVID-19 virus is.

The finding reveals that the COVID-19 pandemic is a severe acute respiratory syndrome and many governments are taking necessary precautions to monitor its spread worldwide. This finding is in line with existing literature by the WHO (2020) which explains that COVID is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

So, now that it corresponds from the participants entailed understanding of the virus, the researcher went to enquire about the the main restrictions that are put in place at the Northlink TVET College, to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Correspondents in this regard were the managers at the College who stated the following:

The Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) noted that:

“Following the outbreak of the Pandemic, the President of the Republic declared the closing down of the country in terms of the Disaster Management Act, Act 57 of 2002, which empowered the government to take measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic in the country. This led to the President announcing immediate travel restrictions and the closure of schools. This was also followed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, calling on all schools to close their doors to teaching and learning in line with the President’s announcement. The Senior Managers followed on these Presidential and Ministerial Directives to close the college. Three months later the DHET engaged with Universities and TVET Colleges to start engaging with lecturers and students on how to re-start classes virtually or through online platforms.

The understanding here is that the South African government invoked the Disaster Management Act of 2002 and the country was placed on Lockdown Level 5 which closed down the country and prevented the movement of people and centres of learning and teaching were closed.

The finding is in line with extant literature by the Disaster Management Act of 2002 relating to COVID-19: Amendment (Government Notice 608-B of 2020) on 1 June 2020]...which explains how the South African government proceeded to invoke the DMA of 2002 to close all economic activity in the country and also centres of teaching and learning.

#### **4.2.1.1 The next theme was why the restrictions?**

When the researcher asked the Senior Managers “why the restrictions were imposed?”

The Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) explained that:

“The restrictions were intended to slow the spread of the pandemic, as schools were regarded as areas of mass gathering, which if allowed open, could serve as super spreader areas.”

The understanding from the Senior Managers is that the restrictions were intended to slow the spread of the pandemic at the various schools since these schools were regarded as areas of mass gatherings.

This view is shared by the Disaster Management Act of 2002 relating to COVID-19: Amendment (Government Notice 608-B of 2020) on 1 June 2020]...and UNESCO (2020) which agrees that educational centres needed to be closed to slow down the spread of the pandemic since schools were regarded as centres of mass gatherings and if not closed could emerge as super spreader sites.

#### **4.2.1.2 Which meeting took place amongst Senior Management to ensure that the TVET College should be closed?**

The next theme was to understand from the senior managers which meeting took place amongst management to ensure that TVET Colleges should be closed? The researcher then asked the senior managers which meeting sanctioned school closure?

The Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) revealed that:

“We had a meeting on the 24th of June 2020 and started engaging with lecturers and students via WhatsApp. The second step was we sent notes, activities, etc. to the student community.”

The understanding here was to ensure that all senior managers, lecturers, and students are safe due to the rapid spread of the pandemic as overcrowding spaces were regarded as possible areas where people can be infected.

The (WHO, 2020) notes that the closure of schools was vital to ensure that these educational spaces do not serve as spaces for the spread of this pandemic.

#### **4.2.1.3 The next theme was regarding the attendance of staff members in this meeting on school closure?**

The researcher then asked the senior managers who were in attendance in the meeting?

The Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) revealed that:

“We held a meeting and all senior managers were in attendance”.

The senior managers agreed that all senior managers were in attendance. But for ethical reasons the researcher withheld their names as agreed in the ethical clearance forms.”

The revelation from this attendance list is that all senior managers were in attendance during this meeting. This, therefore, reveals that there was unanimity amongst these senior managers that they should abide by the instructions from both the President and the Minister of DHET on the closure of this TVET College due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This finding is in line with (UNESCO, 2020) which explains how many educational spaces had to close their doors to learners due to the outbreak of the COVID pandemic.

#### **4.2.1.4 How did the Lecturers receive the message on School closure from the Senior Managers?**

The researcher then asked the senior managers how the lecturers received the message on school closure.

All the Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) revealed that:

“The Lecturers positively received the message as they all agreed that there was the need to stem the tide of the spread of the COVID-19 and to save lives.”

The understanding from the lecturers was that they had to work with the senior managers collaboratively to curb the spread of the pandemic in the school.

The finding is in line with (WHO, 2020) which explains that many schools worldwide had to close to protect the lives of the senior managers, the lecturers, and the students.

#### **4.2.2 Sub-Objective Two**

**To explore what were the major changes introduced to teaching and learning to adapt to the fear of the spread of the pandemic spread at Northlink TVET College**

**4.2.2.1 The next theme was what were the major changes introduced to learning and teaching at Northlink TVET College following the closure of schools?**

The researcher then proceeded to ask the Senior Managers what were the major changes introduced to learning and teaching at Northlink TVET College following the closure of schools?

Senior Managers (SM1, SM2, and SM5) explained that:

“Since the meeting of 24 of June 2020, we started engaging with students via WhatsApp once all their contact details were collated; we sent notes, activities, etc. We had an online platform in place, the LMS online learning platform for students to have access to their learning content.”

The finding explains that the senior managers at Protea started engaging with lecturers and students through online meetings, which were cascaded by program managers to the relevant lecturers in their departments via WhatsApp.



#### **4.2.2.2 What were the specific measures that were taken to slow the spread of the Pandemic at Northlink?**

The next theme that the researcher asked the Senior Management was what were the specific measures that were taken to slow the spread of the Pandemic at Northlink?

Senior Manager (SM1, SM3, and SM4) revealed that:

“There was the closure of the campus, which resulted in the end of face-to-face teaching and the migration to online teaching and learning. This led to senior managers, lecturers, and students staying at home”.

The understanding here is that many educational spaces were closed to curb the spread of the pandemic and many had to resort to online or remote teaching and learning through the use of ICT tools like computers and web-based applications.

This view is shared by (UNESCO, 2020) and (UN, 2020) which reveals how many schools worldwide were closed due to the pandemic to slow its spread to more people in the world.

#### **4.2.2.3 What measures were taken to assist the lecturers to adapt to this "new normal" or the COVID-19 teaching model while the school was closed?**

The next theme that the researcher asked the Senior Managers was what measures were taken to assist the lecturers to adapt to this "new normal" or the COVID-19 teaching model with schools closed?

Senior Managers (SM3, SM4 AND SM5) noted that:

“We implemented our LMS system and utilized it with social media to communicate with the students on work covered in face-to-face classes. We also implemented a staff training program that provides staff with training on online tools and applications to help students develop and learn in a blended environment. We also introduced traditional distance learning modalities, often a mix of educational television and radio programming, and the distribution of print materials.”

The understanding here is that the Senior Managers migrated from face-to-face meeting to an online or remote teaching where they had to use online training for staff. We have trained staff on LMS Moodle platform, how to record lessons, how to embed audio in powerpoints, how to download and use WhatsApp web on our pc, how to use Quizizz.com to conduct formative assessments and shortly we will be training staff on teams” to engage with students.

The finding is that Northlink College migrated from face-to-face teaching to online teaching. These online teaching platforms are in line with extant literature by Espino-Díaz et al. (2020) which reveals that many centres of learning have resorted to online teaching and learning through the use of information and communication technologies to be able to stop the number of infections.

But this migration to online learning could be criticised as (Nabavi, 2014), (Bandura, 1961) conducted his famous experiment known as the Bobo doll experiment to study patterns of behaviour by social learning theory, and that similar behaviour was learned by individuals shaping their behaviour after the actions of models. Hence, online learning was plausibly taking away the role of models.

Also, the introduction of online learning counters Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986) which is a learning theory based on the idea that people learn by observing others. These learned behaviors can be central to one's personality. While social psychologists agree that the environment one grows up in contributes to behavior, the person (and therefore cognition) is just as important. (Bandura, 1986) adds that people learn by observing others, with the environment, behavior, and cognition all as the chief factors in influencing development in a reciprocal triadic relationship. For example, each behavior witnessed can change a person's way of thinking (cognition).

When Lecturers were asked how they had to work, many of them revealed that:

“The college provided Lecturers with money to enable them to buy data to engage with students. The LMS online platform also assisted the lecturers. Weekly training sessions and sharing of best practice sessions we had in 2019 aided lecturers”.

The finding is that the College provided Lecturers with money for the purchase of data to engage with students and other online platforms were used to assist the lecturers. This is an important

finding to ensure that teaching continues during the pandemic and ensure that Students are still getting their lessons despite the lockdown and the closure of schools.

This continuation to save lives goes against the observational theory. According to (Lou, 2013), children learn and imitate behaviours they have observed in other people. The children in Bandura's studies observed an adult acting violently toward a Bobo doll. When the children were later allowed to play in a room with the Bobo doll, they began to imitate the aggressive actions they had previously observed.

#### **4.2.2.4 Efforts in ensuring Staff/ Lecturer professional development to adapt to working with these new training methods?**

The researcher asked Senior Managers what were the efforts towards ensuring staff/teacher professional development or training lecturers to adapt to working with these new training methods?

The Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) revealed that:

“The campus manager had regular training sessions to ensure lecturer development or training on the use of Information and Communication Technology. A few staff members were identified to manage the training”.

The understanding is that staff/ lecturer professional training became vital during this period to ensure that the Lecturers have the requisite skills in ICT to deliver courses using these web-based application training programs and systems.

The finding reveals that teacher professional training became vital during this period to ensure that the Lecturers have the requisite skills in ICT to deliver most of their courses. Hence training the staff and teacher development became central in these educational centres to up-skill them to deliver their lecturers. This view is shared by (UNESCO, 2020), (UN, 2020), and (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020) who explain how staff and teacher development became central in these educational spaces.

#### **4.2.2.5 The role of the training facilitators and whether they experienced any challenges training the lecturers during their training sessions?**

The next question the researcher asked the Senior Managers was whether the training facilitators experienced any challenges training the lecturers during the training?

Senior Managers (SM2, SM4, and SM5) explained that:

“Yes there were challenges such as issues of wifi accessibility and issues of inadequate infrastructure”.

The finding reveals that the lecturers who did the staff development training had some problems like issues of wifi, accessibility and inadequate infrastructure.

The finding reveals that the campus managers who did the staff development training had some challenges like issues of wifi, accessibility, and inadequate infrastructure. This finding by (UN, 2020) notes that there are huge challenges involved in online training such as internet connectivity and inadequate ICT infrastructure especially in many developing countries in accessing the internet. The (UN, 2020) blames this on the digital divide and digital literacy.

#### **4.2.2.6 What other problems did Senior Management experience when rolling out the plan for teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic at Northlink?**

The next question the researcher asked the Senior Managers was what other problems did they experience when rolling out the plan for teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic for Protea Campus?

All Senior Managers (SM1 – SM5) explained that:

“It was a new experience for all concerned, as it took some time to get used to it; it was a psychological as well as practical/implementation adjustment. Many suffered from stress and others were depressed”.

It emerged that many lecturers faced a lot of challenges during this period as some suffered from stress and depression as they were not used to these new teaching models.

This finding is in line with (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020) and (UN, 2020) who note that many teachers suffered from depression and others experienced stress-related challenges.

#### **4.2.2.7 What were the other forms of teaching methods introduced apart from the online teaching at Protea Campus, Northlink College?**

The next theme the researcher asked the Students was what were the other forms of teaching methods introduced apart from the online teaching at Protea Campus, Northlink College?

Students (S1, S3, S5, and S6) revealed that:

“The new teaching tools involved the migration or transitions from offline or face-to-face meetings to remote or online teaching methods with the use of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) tools like computers, web-based class meetings, messaging applications and interaction through forums and chats. These tools have become useful tools and new ways of communicating with their learners and the education community. These tools are a shift from the traditional face-to-face teaching where lecturers are supposed to stand in front of students.”

The students revealed that there was migration from face-to-face teaching to online teaching with the use of ICT tools like computers, web-based class meetings and other forms of teaching. These tools have emerged as tools to enhance learning and are a shift from the traditional teaching methods.

The finding is that the TVET College has migrated from face-to-face teaching to online teaching using ICT with computers and web-based applications to ensure that teaching and learning continues.

This view is shared by (UNESCO, 2020) and (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who hold that many educational centres turned to online or remote learning to ensure that teaching continues in the heart of the spread of the pandemic.

#### **4.2.2.8 The next issue was whether there had been any resignations by lecturers due to the fear of being at work because of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The next theme the researcher asked the Senior Managers was whether there had been any resignations by lecturers due to the fear of being at work because of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Senior Managers (SM1 – SM4) noted that:

“They were not aware of any resignations from staff members due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yes, there were increase cases of absenteeism during this period by the Lecturers but no resignations”.

The understanding here is that there were no resignations from lecturing positions at the college. This findings are in line with existing literature by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) which points to the fact that the disruptions created by COVID-19 has had an impact on the number of teachers still continuing teaching in their various positions and being regular.

#### **4.2.2.9 The issue of the impact of the measures on teaching**

The next theme the researcher engaged with the lecturers was to seek an explanation on how the measures taken at Northlink, Protea Campus have impacted on teaching?

Lecturers (L1, L 4, L6, and L8) revealed that:

“The new teaching methods have allowed lecturers to be more creative, innovative, and flexible with their teaching styles. This has led to many of us adapting to the new teaching methods introduced by the Senior Managers”.

The understanding here is that many lecturers have adapted to the new teaching methods and they currently hail it as being creative, innovative, and flexible.

The finding is in line with (Hiemstra and Brockett, 1994) who notes that learning is a personal act of an individual to make full use of his potential. It is a process of self-actualisation to its maximum level. The basic characteristics of self-actualizing people are: they have a tolerance for ambiguity, acceptance of self and others, and peak experiences that lead to personal transformation through new insights.

(Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) explains that many Lecturers are systematically seeking more innovative ways to teach during this COVID-19 period.

#### **4.2.2.10 The next question the researcher asked was how these measures impacted on the lecturers?**

The researcher then proceeded to interrogate the Lecturers how these measures impacted on them? Lecturers (L2, L4, and L7) revealed that:

“It has up-skilled the Staff/Lecturers as well as assisting them to start embracing blended learning and ICT teaching. But in some cases exams have been postponed and some have been canceled. This has impacted the learners.”

The understanding here is that it has up skilled the Staff/ Lecturers and assisted them to start embracing blended learning and ICT teaching and led to the postponement of exams and in some their cancellations.

This finding is shared by (UN, 2020) who notes that these new teaching methods are impacting teachers’ ability to deliver lectures.

#### **4.2.2.11 The next issue was how students were able to return to the campus after the hard level 5 Lockdown**

The next question the researcher asked lecturers, was regarding the return of students after the hard lockdown level 5, and whether the students experienced difficulties adapting to the "new normal"?

Lecturers (L1, L3, L6, and L8) revealed that:

“Not really they are far more comfortable with the technologies, it was more the availability of data to use it.”

The understanding here is that many of the Students are comfortable with the new teaching methods. The only challenge they experienced was the issue of data to enable them to connect to the internet.

The finding is that many students are comfortable with the new teaching methods of online teaching introduced by the Senior Managers at Northlink.

**4.2.2.12 The next theme was to ask the lecturers how they ensured that all the students were on the same page and that no student was left behind.**

When the researcher asked the Lecturers on their efforts to ensure that their students were coping with these changes?

Lecturers (L2, L4, L8, and L10) explained that:

“To ensure that all the students are on the same page and that no one is left behind during the Covid-19 pandemic, the lecturers submitted recorded videos of themselves explaining the PowerPoints. The lecturers would also include a video to show practical information and examples from either YouTube or ones that they have made. I would assign formative tests using quizizz.com to test students’ knowledge and then allow them to review their results. I would communicate all of this via WhatsApp and engage with students on the group.”

The understanding here was that the Lecturers embarked on several processes to ensure that no student is left behind. The Lecturers submitted recorded videos of themselves explaining power points. The Lecturers also included videos to show practical information from either YouTube and other forms of teachings.

This finding is vital as the teaching methods in TVET Colleges are quite different from those in other educational centres as the students go through different learning systems unlike in grammar schools.

**4.2.2.13 The next theme was to explore the challenges experienced by Lecturers regarding the implementation of the new teaching methods?**

The other theme that the researcher engaged the Lecturers was on the challenges experienced by Lecturers regarding the implementation of the new teaching methods at Protea Campus, Northlink College?



Lecturers (L2, L4, L6, and L8) noted that:

“There was the issue of time to find what works for the individual lecturer and resources at home to use the new blended learning program. Also there was one on one training and support with trainers for staff. IT support from campus”.

The finding seems to suggest that the training of lecturers has emerged as a problem as there is the need to identify what works and what needs to be improved upon to assist the lecturers.

This finding is shared by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who revealed that many lecturers suffered emotional exhaustion, stress, anguish, or anxiety due to confinement and distance education. The scholars also notes that there were excessive bureaucratic tasks, unclear instructions, lack of support in teleworking, and lack of technical means were the issues pointed out by lecturers.

#### **4.2.2.14 The next theme was on other teaching methods utilised apart from the introduction of ICT at Northlink College?**

When the researcher asked the Lecturers as to what other teaching methods were utilised apart from the introduction of Information and Communication Technology?

Lecturer (L1, L4, L6, and L9) noted that:

“There were face-to-face classes and projected (via screens) practical classes.”

The understanding here is that most of these classes were now using face-to-face classes using projected screens during practical classes.

#### **4.2.2.15 The Impact of these measures on teaching at Northlink**

The next issue was to explain how these measures taken at Campus impacted on teaching?

When the researcher asked the Lecturers to explain how the measures taken at Northlink, Protea Campus have impacted on teaching?

Lecturers (L3, L5, L6, and L9) revealed that:

“It has allowed most of us to be more creative, innovative and flexible with my teaching style”.

The finding reveals that despite the challenges faced by these methods it has given them an opportunity to be creative, innovative and flexible with teaching style.

#### **4.2.2.16 The impact of these measures on the Lecturers?**

The next question the researcher asked the Lecturers was how these measures impacted on them as Lecturers?

Lecturers (L2, L4, and L5) revealed that:

“It has up-skilled most of us, as and assisting us to start embracing blended learning and ICT teaching”.

The Lecturers notes that the system has up-skilled them as they have acquired new skills during this period as they are now able to continue teaching using online tools.

The finding is that the Lecturers have acquired more skills during these difficult times of the Pandemic.

When a similar question was asked by the researcher to the Students, Students S5, S7, and S9 explained that:

“When we were allowed back on campus after the hard lockdown level 5 many students experienced difficulties adapting to the "new normal" or the new teaching methods.”

The finding reveals that many students faced difficulties adapting to the new normal after several weeks at home due to the lockdown as some female students were pregnant and dropped out of school. The closure of schools made it difficult for many learners to learn from their peers. This is in line with the Social Cognitive Theory which holds that an individual's knowledge acquisition is related to observing others within the context of social interactions and experiences. The theory states that when people observe others perform a behavior and the consequences of that behavior, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviors. Observing a model can also prompt the viewer to engage in behavior they already learned (Bandura, 1986).

The finding is in line with (UNESCO, 2020) and (UNICEF, 2020) which reveals how many students were not coping after several months of lockdown.

**4.2.2.17 The next theme was on the measures the school put in place to ensure that all the students were following the lectures and understanding them and that no student was left behind.**

The next theme the researcher asked the Lecturers was on how they ensured that all the students were gradually following the lectures and understanding the lecturers and that no student was left behind.

Lecturers (L6 and L8) explained that:

“To ensure that all the students are on the same page and that nobody is left behind during the COVID-19 pandemic? They submitted recorded videos of the Lecturers explaining the Power Points they use. They would also include a video to show practical information and examples from either YouTube or ones that they made. They would assign formative tests using quizizz.com to test students’ knowledge and then allow them to review their results. They would communicate all of this via WhatsApp and engage with them on my group”.

The understanding here is that efforts were made to assist all students and to ensure that no one is left behind in terms of accessing their lecturers due to the migration to online. The strategy was to ensure that all students are on par with their peers in terms of access to lecturers and access to learning materials. The students were also assisted in their practical exercises. The intention was to ensure that social learning theory of (Bandura, 1961) is implemented where he conducted his Bobo doll experiment to study patterns of behaviour by social learning theory, and that similar behaviour was learned by individuals shaping their behaviour after the actions of models. By bringing the students through these platforms it was intended to ensure that though they are missing out studying together they can still catch-up with their classes through these new channels.

### **4.2.3. Sub-Objective Three**

**To investigate how these measures impacted on Education at the Northlink TVET College?**

This section of the report would assist in illuminating the measures taken by the Senior Managers of the College, and how it impacted on learning and teaching and also on the ability of the students to do practical.

#### **4.2.3.1 Impact on the Senior Managers (Administrators)**

When the researcher asked the Senior Managers how these measures impacted on managerial activities in campus?

Senior Managers (SM1, SM3, and SM5) explained that:

“Since the campus was closed for three months it therefore meant that school administration, official duties were reduced and effective teaching was halted. Therefore, they could not function optimally and all their earmarked projects had to be postponed. Many of them also suffered from stress, anxiety and depression due to this closure.”

The understanding here is that many of these Senior Managers faced series of challenges like stress, anxiety and depression as an outcome of the closure of schools.

The finding reveals that many of them faced a series of challenges like stress, anxiety, and depression due to these closures. (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) agree that the closure of educational spaces like TVET Colleges affected the Senior Managers.

#### **4.2.3.2 Impact on the Lecturers**

When the researcher asked the Lecturers how the return to online teaching affected them?

Lecturers (L2, L4, L5, L7, L8, and L10 ) revealed that:

“The problem is that not all staff possesses the necessary resources like good cellphones, laptops, computer desktops and data to connect to the internet and deliver lecturers online.”

The finding reveals that many Lecturers do not have the right teaching gadgets to connect online and deliver lectures. This finding is in line with the research of by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who

notes that many lecturers do not have Android phones, computer laptops and desktops with internet connectivity to connect and deliver lectures remotely to the students.

#### **4.2.3.3 The challenges the Lecturers faced in delivering online lectures from home?**

The researcher asked the Lecturers on the challenges they faced in delivering lectures from their homes?

Lecturers (L1, L3, L6, L7, and L9) explained that:

“Many Lecturers explained that they faced a lot of challenges. Some lecturers explained that they do not have electricity in their homes. Others do not have comfortable homes where they can organise and deliver these lectures. Some do not have good phones and laptops to connect online and deliver these lectures. Some do not have access to the internet infrastructure. Also, not all staff members have safe environments to organise online teaching and learning platforms (Secured environment, quiet environment, noisy family, not being able to separate task at home).”

The understanding here is that many of these Lecturers face socio-economic challenges which inhibits them from delivering these lectures online.

This finding is also supported by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) and (UNESCO, 2020) who notes that the socio-economic conditions of the teachers inhibits them from delivering these lectures online.

#### **4.2.3.4 The hesitancy by some Lecturers or resistance to adapt to these new teaching platforms.**

When the researcher asked the Lecturers what are the other challenges experienced at Northlink in delivering lectures online or remotely.

Lecturers (L1, L3, L4, L5, and L7) explained that:

“Some middle-aged Lecturers were very hesitant to use the new technologies and in some cases outrightly rejected the notion of using these technologies for pedagogic purposes. Whereas the middle age Lecturers were hesitant to use these technologies the younger Lecturers embraced and celebrated these new teaching methods as innovative and smart.”

The understanding here is that these teaching methods were not accepted by all. Many of the middle age Lecturers did not embrace the transition to online lecturing as they were hesitant to use new teaching technologies, whereas their younger colleagues embraced these new teaching models. The challenge for the middle age Lecturers is that many of them were hesitant to learn new teaching skills and therefore resisted these methods, while the younger generations of Lecturers who are familiar with cellphone technologies were upbeat about these methods.

This view is also shared by existing literature which agrees that many old Lectures are hesitant to learn new teaching techniques and turn to resist all attempts at introducing it in the teaching whereas the younger ones are more receptive to these new methods.

#### **4.2.3.5 The next issue was the sustainability of these online courses.**

The next question the researcher asked the Lecturers was how they could work well in the long run to improve staff development and easing of the delivery of these courses.

Lecturers (L2, L4, and L7) responded that:

“The problem is that these online courses and their teaching programs are constantly changing and therefore making it difficult for some to keep the pace of these changes”.

The challenge here is that ICT products are constantly being upgraded and therefore the lecturers need to be trained continuously as new products are developed. This has emerged as a challenge to them as they expressed their reluctance to always attend new training programs.

This finding is in line with (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who note that many middle-aged lecturers have explained their hesitancy and frustration to use these new teaching methods.

#### **4.2.3.6 Impact on the Students**

To gain insights on how the pandemic impacted on teaching and learning the researcher had to turn to the Students at Northlink TVET College.

When the researcher asked the students (S1, S2, S4, S6, and S9), they explained that:

“Following the closure of Northlink College and the commencement of online teaching many of us could not come to school to attend classes and do our practical as we are stuck in houses and in communities”.

The understanding here is that many students are facing the impact of these closures and the migration to online studies at Northlink College.

The closure of schools made it difficult for many learners to learn from their peers. This is in line with the Social Cognitive Theory which holds that portions of an individual's knowledge acquisition is directly related to observing others within the context of social interactions and experiences. The theory states that when people observe a model performing a behavior and the consequences of that behavior, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviors. Observing a model can also prompt the viewer to engage in behavior they already learned (Bandura, 1986, 2002).

The existing literature enumerates the various teaching methods practiced by students in technical and vocational education. The literature reveals these students have different teaching methods. (Hattie, 2009) explains that the key in this case, to attainment, is what happens at the ‘learner end’, through the day-by-day reflective, pedagogic decisions teachers make that develop learners into their coaches and teachers. Learning and teaching methods that work for the technical and vocational colleges are quite different from those in other schools.

(UNICEF, 2020) agrees that faced with such exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic in a context in which schools have closed their doors in 185 countries and governments have ordered the transition to tele-training of students and many students are not coping.

#### **4.2.3.7 How were the online courses assisting students?**

The researcher asked the students how the online courses were assisting them.

The students (S1, S3, S4, S7, and S9) explained that:

“The intent of these courses was to assist them to continue learning during the pandemic and the lockdown but some of the Students have problems accessing these lectures due to

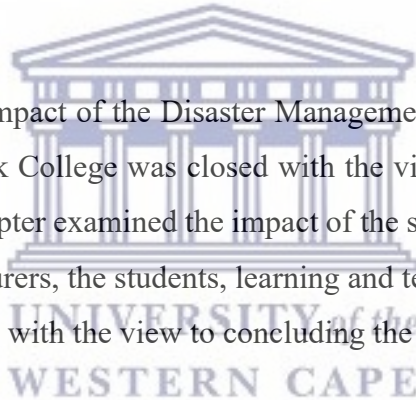
the absence of computers, others do not have internet connectivity and some do not have the data”.

The explanations here are that the grotesque inequalities that have bedeviled the country during apartheid again resurfaced as many Students do not have the resources like Android phones, computers/laptops to connect to the online lectures.

This finding is in-line with existing literature by the (UN, 2020) which points to the fact that some students could not access lectures due to their socio-economic conditions as most of them do not have resources and exams had to be postponed or canceled. The study also revealed that social learning theory of (Bandura, 1961) which he conducted his Bobo doll experiment to study patterns of behaviour by social learning theory, and that similar behaviour was learned by individuals shaping their behaviour after the actions of models as many students could easily learn from their peers was not possible due to the pandemic. The closure of many schools made this impossible.

#### **4.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the impact of the Disaster Management Act that was implemented in 2020 to ensure that the Northlink College was closed with the view to prevent more COVID 19 infections in this school. The chapter examined the impact of the senior managers, then proceeded to explore the impact on the lecturers, the students, learning and teaching in the school. The study would now transit to chapter five with the view to concluding the study





## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This Master's Thesis is an assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic at Northlink College in Cape Town. To gain these insights the study evolved from the research question as explained in chapter one and this was: What are the impacts of the Disaster Management Act on the pandemic at the Northlink College?

In this concluding chapter the researcher will summarise the previous chapters of the study, present a summary of the research findings, present conclusions and finally, draw recommendations that could assist Northlink TVET College on how to better deal with future pandemics. The discussion of the research findings of this study has been guided by the research themes that emerged from the results, based on the following research objectives and research questions of this study.

#### The Research Aims/Objectives of the Study

##### Objective 1:

To examine what were the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College to slow the transmission of the virus?

##### Objective 2:

To explore what were the major changes introduced to learning and teaching to adapt to the pandemic spread Northlink TVET College?

##### Objective 3:

To investigate how these measures impacted on the teaching and learning in the Northlink TVET College?

### **The Research Question:**

The overarching research question this study would seek to address is: What are the impacts of the Disaster Management Act on the pandemic at the Northlink College?

### **Research Question One:**

What were the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College to slow the transmission of the virus?

### **Research Question Two:**

What were the major changes introduced to learning and teaching to adapt to the pandemic spread at Northlink TVET College?

### **Research Question Three:**

How these measures impacted the teachers and the students in the Northlink TVET College?

## **5.1 Summary of chapter organisation**

The central research problem this Master's Thesis sought to address was to assess the impact of the Disaster Management Act of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning at Northlink College, Protea Campus. The study found that following the outbreak of the pandemic and its spread to South Africa, the government feared that it could spread and lead to the death of many, so it was compelled to invoke the DMA of 2002 to place the country on a lockdown. This, therefore, meant all schooling activities had to close and this led to senior managers at Protea Campus designing alternative avenues to continue teaching and learning. This led to the introduction of online teaching, which is against face-to-face direct teaching. These changes in the methods of teaching and learning impacted education at the college and led to ramifications like some students not coping, others dropping out of school, postponements of exams, and cancellations of exams in some cases. This delayed the throughput and graduation times for most students.

Chapter one presented a general introduction to this study. The chapter serves as a critical plan for this Master's Thesis as it laid a solid foundation for the rest of the study.

Chapter two unpacked concepts like public administration, social policy, coronavirus, the notion of lockdown, and social distancing, the concept of education, the notion of teaching, and learning and the legislative framework which is the Disaster Management Act and the theoretical grounding of the study.

Chapter three presented the research methodology that was utilised to collect the data on the study. These were necessary for directing the study and providing claims and evidence. Moreover, the researcher provided and explained the thematic analysis approach which was used to analyse data to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. Furthermore, the research design assisted the researcher to focus on a given study area and the collection of data. The researcher took cognisance of the limitation, which in this case cannot be used for generalisation as the information might not be the same in the other higher educational institutions.

Chapter four presented and analysed the data collected from the College through telephonic interviews and secondary literature. Document data collected from the institution were analysed.

Chapter five presents a summary of the previous chapters as well as recommendations to the Northlink College based on the findings outlined in the previous chapter. Concluding remarks of the study were given as well as implications for future studies. Conclusions and recommendations were made due to the gaps identified in this chapter.

## **5.2 Summary of the research main findings/conclusions**

The central research problem of this Master's thesis was to assess the impact of the Disaster Management Act of the COVID-19 pandemic on the educational sector at Protea, Northlink College. The literature and the findings reveals that since March 2020 many educational centres were subjected to lockdown regulations due to the Covid-19 Pandemic as the South African government invoked the Disaster Management Act as both a social and public policy to protect citizens to stay at home and schools were closed to curb the surge and spread of the pandemic. The closure of this institution impacted on the Senior Managers, the Lecturers and Students and on general learning and teaching.

It is these impacts that this study sought to highlight. To achieve this goal the study adopted a qualitative research design through telephonic interviews with 5 Senior Managers, 10 Lecturers

and 10 Students and reference to policy documentary evidence. This was to provide a coherent sequence in answering the overarching research questions. In this section, I have aligned the research questions of this study to the main research objectives and to the main findings of the study.

### **5.2.1 RQ1 was: What were the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College to slow the transmission of the virus?**

The themes emerging from this research question were to gain insights into the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College to slow the transmission of the virus.

The three themes are:

- What is COVID-19?
- What were the main restrictions put in place at the Northlink TVET College Campus to slow transmission of COVID-19?
- Why the restrictions?

The study found that the Senior Managers had an understanding of the basic concept of what COVID-19 is, as they revealed it is a severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), but it is commonly referred by the label assigned the disease it causes: coronavirus disease 2019 or “COVID-19”.

The study revealed that due to the COVID pandemic some main restrictions were put in place at the Protea, Northlink TVET College to slow its transmission. Hence, government invoked the DMA of 2002 and placed the country on Lockdown Level 5, which closed down the country and all educational spaces to prevent the spread of the pandemic. The purpose of these restrictions was to slow the spread of the pandemic in schools.

The study revealed that there was a meeting on the 24th of June 2020 and they started engaging with lecturers and students via WhatsApp. The second step was that lecturers sent notes, activities etc., to the student community. The study found that there was an online platform in place, the Learning Management System (LMS) to assist students to have additional access to their learning content. The study found that the Lecturers received the message in a positive manner as they all agreed that there was the need to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus and to save lives. This is

in line with the (WHO, 2020) and (UNICEF, 2020) which notes that many schools worldwide had to close their door to learners to protect the lives of the Senior Managers, the Lecturers and Students.

**5.2.2 RQ2 was:** To explore what were the major changes introduced to learning and teaching to adapt to the pandemic spread at Northlink TVET College.

- What were the specific measures that were taken to slow the spread of the Pandemic at Northlink?
- What were the reasons behind these school closures at Northlink TVET and others?
- What measures were taken to assist the lecturers to adapt to this "new normal" or the COVID-19 teaching model with Northlink closed?
- What were the efforts towards ensuring staff / Lecturer professional development or training teachers to adapt to working with these new training methods?
- The Role of training facilitator (s) or Campus Manager and whether they experienced any challenges during their training sessions?
- What other problems did Senior Management experience when rolling out the plan for teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic at Northlink?
- What were the other teaching methods introduced apart from the online teaching at Protea Campus, Northlink College?
- How these measures taken at Campus impacted on teaching?
- How these measures impacted on Lecturers?
- How they ensured that all the students were gradually following the lectures and understanding the lecturers.

The study found that the Senior Management at Protea started engaging with lecturers and students in online meetings, additionally information was cascaded to the relevant lecturers in their departments via WhatsApp. This led to many Senior Managers, Lecturers and Students staying at home (UNESCO, 2020) and (UNICEF, 2020).

The study found that the Senior Managers migrated from a face-to-face meeting to an online or remote teaching where they had to use online teaching training to staff on LMS Moodle platform, how to record lessons, how to embed audio in power points, how to download and use WhatsApp

web on our pc, how to use Quizizz.com to conduct formative assessments and shortly staff will be trained on teams to engage with students.

These online teaching platforms are in line with extant literature by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) which reveals that many centres of learning have resorted to online teaching and learning through the use of ICT to be able to stop the number of infections. The other finding is that the college provided lecturers with money for the purchase of data to engage students and other online platforms were used to assist the lecturers. The findings reveals that teacher professional training became vital during this period to ensure that the Lecturers have the requisite skills in ICT to deliver courses using these web-based application training programs and systems.

The finding notes that teacher professional training became vital during this period to ensure that the Lecturers have the requisite skills in ICT to deliver most of their courses. Hence training the staff and teacher development became central in these educational centres to up-skill them to deliver their lecturers. This view is shared by (UNESCO, 2020). It emerged from the study that the Training Facilitators who did the staff development training had some challenges like issues of wifi, accessibility, and inadequate infrastructure. This finding is shared by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who notes that internet connectivity and inadequate ICT infrastructure were challenges faced by many developing countries.

The finding reveals that many teachers faced challenges like stress and depression during this period. This finding is shared by existing literature by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who agree.

The study notes that there were no resignations at the College. The study found that the training of lecturers has emerged as a problem as some were hesitant to adapt to these new systems. This finding is shared by (Espino-Díaz et al., 2020) who notes that a survey of some teachers revealed many suffered emotional exhaustion, stress, anguish, or anxiety due to confinement and distance education. Excessive bureaucratic tasks, unclear instructions, lack of support in teleworking, and lack of technical means were the main problems pointed out by teachers. Also, the teachers faced other difficulties like poor online teaching infrastructure, lack of teacher training, information gap, and complex home environment in some cases.

The study found that there was face-to-face classes, as they were projected via screens and these were mostly practical classes. This is vital since TVET colleges have several teaching methods.

The study revealed that despite the challenges faced by these methods it allowed them to become creative, innovative and flexible with the teaching styles. It emerged that many students faced challenges adapting to the new methods after several weeks at home due to the lockdown. This challenge was due to Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura which maintains that portions of an individual's knowledge acquisition can be directly related to observing others within the context of social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences. The theory states that when people observe a model performing a behavior and the consequences of that behavior, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviors (Bandura, 1986, 2002). Hence school closures created challenges for many learners. Also, some female students were pregnant others even dropped out of school. (UNICEF, 2020) reveals how many students were not coping after several months of lockdown.

**5.2.3 RQ3** was to investigate how these measures impacted on Education at the Northlink TVET College?

- Impact on the Senior Managers
- Impact on the Lecturers
- Impact on the Students
- Impact on teaching and learning



The study found that since the campus was closed for three months, it meant that many Senior Managers struggled with school administration, and official duties were reduced and effective teaching was halted. Therefore, they could not function optimally and all their earmarked projects had to be postponed. Also, many of them suffered from stress, anxiety and depression due to this closure. The study also found that not all Lecturers at the College had Android phones, computer laptops and desktops with internet connectivity to connect and deliver lectures online to the students.

The study revealed that many Lecturers faced challenges as some do not have electricity in their homes. Others do not have comfortable homes where they can organise and deliver these lectures. Some do not have access to the internet infrastructure. Also, not all staff members have safe environments to organise online teaching and learning platforms (Secured environment, quiet

environment, noisy family, not being able to separate tasks at home). The understanding is that many of these Lecturers face socio-economic challenges which hinder the delivery of lectures.

It emerged that not all Lecturers knew how to install these technologies, connect to the internet and deliver the lectures to the students through these online platforms.

It also emerged that some middle aged Lecturers, those above 50 years were very hesitant to use the new technologies and in some cases outrightly rejected the notion of using these technologies for pedagogic purposes.

The study found that the younger Lecturers embraced and celebrated these teaching methods as innovative and smart. Many of the Senior and matured Lecturers did not embrace the transition to online lecturing as they were hesitant to use new teaching technologies, whereas their younger colleagues embraced these new teaching models.

The study found that since these online courses and their teaching programmes are constantly changing and therefore making it difficult for some to keep the pace of the changes they were problematic as ICT products are constantly being upgraded or changing and therefore the Lecturers need to be trained all the time with these new products. This has emerged as a challenge to some of these Lecturers as they expressed their reluctance to always attend new training programs. This finding is in line with existing literature.

The study revealed that many students are facing the impact of these closures and the migration to online studies. It emerged that though the intent and purpose of these courses were to assist them to continue learning during the pandemic and the lockdown some of the students have challenges accessing these lectures due to their socio-economic background. The study found that the grotesque inequalities that have bedeviled the country during apartheid again resurfaced as many Students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds do not have the resources like Android phones, computers/laptops to connect to the online lectures.



## **5.3 Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 Recommendations for Northlink College**

The Senior Managers at Protea Northlink College should ensure that staff/lecturer professional development is mandatory for all to ensure that there is improvement in their skill levels to ensure that they deliver lectures through online platforms.

Also, the college should train learners on how to use these ICT infrastructures as this is a challenge to many students. The college should assist learners to share learning material with those who can-not afford as some students do not have the resources.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations for the Government**

The South African government has to implement policies that enhance remote learning in these higher educational institutions like the universities and the TVET colleges like Northlink.

The government also has to train special teams of ICT Lecturers to assist these universities and TVET colleges in the implementation and working with these institutions as relying on external institution and consultants is always a huge burden and in some cases expensive.

The government has to assist in providing each student in higher educational institutions with a laptop and data to assist them in connecting to these remote courses. This approach had been successful in Brazil in the One Learner One Laptop program which ensures that all learners are equipped with computer laptops to facilitate their studies.

The government can also assist students in townships and informal settlements who are socio-economically disadvantaged as they do not have access to ICT Infrastructure in their communities while middle-income and rich suburbs have these facilities.

### **5.3.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

Future researchers can investigate the challenges facing remote or online teaching and learning at TVET Colleges in Cape Town to compare how it affected different institutions.

Future researchers can conduct a comparative study between a TVET College and a university in South Africa on the impact of remote teaching and learning. This is vital to gain insights into the

different ways it impacted on the different learning spaces. Future researchers can investigate the challenges faced by teachers in remote learning. Future researchers can explore the challenges faced by students from low-income areas as they do not have access to ICT technology.

Future research can focus on understanding how many students are coping with these challenges of using remote learning as a tool for instruction and its difficulties in the technical and vocational sector.

Researchers can also focus on how these challenges are leading to many students dropping out of school. Also, the fact that many exams were postponed and other canceled scholars can investigate these impacts.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presented a summary of the previous chapters, the main findings and recommendations of the study to Protea, Northlink TVET College, the national government and to future researchers. The use of the DMA of 2002 as a social and public policy act was to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ramifications on the College, Senior Managers, Lecturers, Students and for teaching and learning. These ramifications are vital as the schools resorted to remote learning involving ICT tools and web-based applications.

The study concluded that many Senior Managers were affected as their work schedules were disrupted due the closure of schools and some developed stress and anxiety due to these closures.

In the case of Lecturers their teaching programs have to be restructured as they now had to teach remotely. In this case staff and/ or Lecturer development or training became an essential part of the program as most of them needed to be trained in ICT to cope with the new teaching methods.

For the students the DMA created challenges for learning and teaching as most of the teaching now was remotely and in some cases these students could not access the lectures as most of them do not have ICT infrastructure to connect to the courses. In most cases students in Townships who could not have ICT access had to miss out and in some cases others dropped out of school.

Also, since technical and vocational training students need special teaching and learning methods the shift to ICT and online teaching could not assist them immensely in their school work. Apart

from the challenges experienced by the lecturers and students these disruptions led to most exams being postponed and some were canceled. This impacted the graduation time for many students.



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## 7. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SENIOR MANAGEMENT AT NORTHLINK COLLEGE, PROTEA CAMPUS.

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INTERVIEW: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:** Good Day, I am Cassey Benito. I am currently enrolled as a student at UWC, undertaking a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

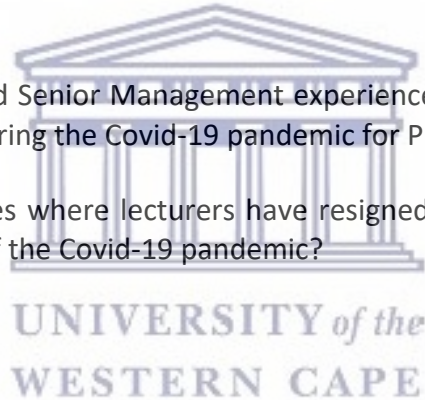
**Purpose:** This interview is being conducted as part of my research study “An Assessment of the impact Disaster Management Act had in the Education Sector of South Africa during a Pandemic: A Case of Northlink College in Cape Town.”

**Process:** Before participating in the interview, participants should sign the consent form and the information sheet as an indication of agreement. Participation is voluntary and participants are allowed to withdraw consent at any time by advising the researcher. The identity of participants will not be disclosed. Participants will be made aware that the interview should take approximately 30 – 45 minutes. The researcher will record the conversations via a tape recorder, to have access to the information. Post-interview, the researcher will send a copy of the key points made and if there are any important points missed, the participants can send comments to the researcher. The purpose of this is for the researcher to record all the details.

#### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was the immediate directive from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to Northlink TVET College, on the Covid-19 pandemic for the level 5 lockdown?
2. What was the reaction of the Campus Manager and Senior Managers at Protea Campus with regard to DHET's instruction?
3. The president announced the country's hard level 5 lockdown in March 2020, as of this date, how many months was the institution closed for?
4. The Department of Higher Education and Training later engaged with all universities and colleges to pursue and conduct online learning modalities. How was this to be operated at Protea Campus?

5. The Senior Management at Protea Campus convened a meeting to communicate the message around remote teaching and learning to lecturers, when (date) did this meeting take place and in which venue or platform
6. Who were those in attendance?
7. How did the lecturers receive the message?
8. What measures were taken to assist the lecturers to adapt to this "new normal" or the covid-19 teaching?
9. Who was responsible for coordinating training to ensure teacher professional development?
10. How was the training organised?
11. Did the training facilitator(s) experience any challenges in training the lecturers?
12. If the respondent answered yes in Question 11, identify the challenges experienced by the training facilitator(s).
13. What other problems did Senior Management experience when rolling out the plan for teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic for Protea Campus?
14. Has there been any cases where lecturers have resigned or retired, due to the fear of being at work because of the Covid-19 pandemic?



**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LECTURERS AT NORTHLINK COLLEGE, PROTEA  
CAMPUS.**

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INTERVIEW: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:** Good Day, I am Cassey Benito. I am currently enrolled as a student at UWC, undertaking a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

**Purpose:** This interview is being conducted as part of my research study "An Assessment of the impact Disaster Management Act had in the Education Sector of South Africa during a Pandemic: A Case of Northlink College in Cape Town."

**Process:** Before participating in the interview, participants should sign the consent form and the information sheet as an indication of agreement. Participation is voluntary and participants are allowed to withdraw consent at any time by advising the researcher. The identity of participants will not be disclosed. Participants will be made aware that the interview should take approximately 30 – 45 minutes. The researcher will record the conversations via a tape recorder, to have access to the information. Post-interview, the researcher will send a copy of the key points made and if there are any important points missed, the participants can send comments to the researcher. The purpose of this is for the researcher to record all the details.

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Do you consider the state of South Africa's Educational System in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic to be good or bad?
2. Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, what were the new steps taken by Northlink College to continue teaching and learning amidst the pandemic in line with DHET's instruction?
3. What measures were introduced by Senior Management or Executive Management to ensure that Lecturers are equipped to continue teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic at Protea Campus, Northlink College.
4. What new training was introduced at Protea Campus, Northlink College to ensure Lecturers are ready to lecture in the "new normal"?
5. What challenges were experienced by Lecturers regarding the implementation of the new teaching methods at Protea Campus, Northlink College?

6. Identify the various support systems provided to Lecturers that experienced difficulties.
7. What other teaching methods were utilised apart from the introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Protea Campus, Northlink College.
8. Explain how the measures taken at Northlink, Protea Campus has impacted on teaching?
9. Explain how the measures taken at Northlink, Protea Campus has impacted on the lecturers?
10. When students were allowed back on campus after the hard lockdown level 5, were students experiencing difficulties adapting to the "new normal"?
11. As a Lecturer, what methods did you take to ensure that all your students are on the same page and that no one are left behind during the Covid-19 pandemic?



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**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AT NORTHLINK COLLEGE, PROTEA  
CAMPUS.**

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INTERVIEW: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:** Good Day, I am Cassey Benito. I am currently enrolled as a student at UWC, undertaking a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

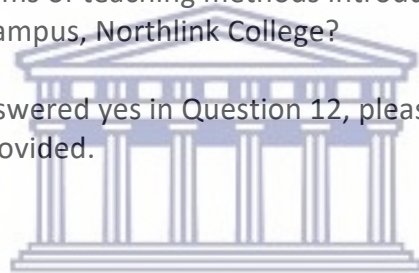
**Purpose:** This interview is being conducted as part of my research study "An Assessment of the impact Disaster Management Act had in the Education Sector of South Africa during a Pandemic: A Case of Northlink College in Cape Town."

**Process:** Before participating in the interview, participants should sign the consent form and the information sheet as an indication of agreement. Participation is voluntary and participants are allowed to withdraw consent at any time by advising the researcher. The identity of participants will not be disclosed. Participants will be made aware that the interview should take approximately 30 – 45 minutes. The researcher will record the conversations via a tape recorder, to have access to the information. Post-interview, the researcher will send a copy of the key points made and if there are any important points missed, the participants can send comments to the researcher. The purpose of this is for the researcher to record all the details.

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. As a student, would you consider the state of South Africa's Educational System in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic to be good or bad?
2. How was learning to be continued at Northlink, Protea Campus during the Covid-19 pandemic level 5 lockdown?
3. What new teaching methods were introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic at Protea Campus, Northlink College?
4. How were students trained to cope with the new teaching methods during the Covid-19 pandemic?
5. Were any challenges experienced using these new teaching methods in the "new normal"?

6. What challenges were experienced while using these new teaching methods in the "new normal".
7. Were there any form of support provided by the College to the students?
8. What form of assistance was available to students who had difficulties with the new teaching methods?
9. What happened to the students who experienced difficulties with the new way of learning?
10. Based on the measures taken at Protea Campus to continue teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic, explain how the measures taken has impacted on learning?
11. Based on the measures taken at Protea Campus to continue teaching during the Covid- 19 pandemic, explain how the measures taken has impacted on the learners?
12. Were there other forms of teaching methods introduced apart from the online teaching at Protea Campus, Northlink College?
13. If the respondent answered yes in Question 12, please identify the other forms of teaching methods provided.



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## APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS



### FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

### SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

#### CONSENT FORM FOR SENIOR MANAGERS, LECTURERS AND STUDENTS (INTERVIEWS)

**RESEARCH TITLE:** An assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town.

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Cassey Benito towards the Masters in Public Administration Programme at the School of Government (SOG) at the University of the Western Cape.

This study has been described to me in a language that I understand and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate. My questions about the study have been answered and it has been explained that the research will take place remotely as per COVID regulations. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time by advising the student researcher.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree to participate in this study.

Participant Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

I give consent for recordings to be taken: 

Agree	Disagree
-------	----------

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Place : \_\_\_\_\_

Student Researcher : Ms Cassey Benito

Student Researcher Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Student Number : 3740017

Mobile Number : 079 905 6452

Email : casseybenito@gmail.com

I am accountable to my supervisor : Dr. Msuthukazi Makiva

Department : School of Government

Telephone : 021-959-3832

Email : mmakiva@uwc.ac.za

## APPENDIX 3: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS



### FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

### SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

#### Participation information sheet for Senior Managers, Lecturers, Students (*Interviews*)

**RESEARCH TITLE:** An assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town.

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in a research study by Cassey Benito. It is in partial completion of the researcher's thesis towards the Masters in Public Administration Degree at the School of Government, at the University of the Western Cape.

Before you decide to participate, it is important for you to understand the purpose of the research and what it would entail. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If you are unclear of anything, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research project is an assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT**

We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you meet the set criterion for the population of interest and your participation will help other people. The study will be done remotely. The interview will take approximately 30 – 45 minutes.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY & ANONYMITY**

Please be advised that the results of the study will neither divulge the organization's particulars nor the individual particulars, as to maintain confidentiality at all times. Any information that can connect the responses to an individual or organization will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. The researcher shall keep all records and documents of your participation, including a signed consent form, which is required from you, should you agree to participate in this research study, locked away at all times.





## FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

### SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

#### **RISKS OF THE RESEARCH?**

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this research as your responses will be used for the sole purpose of this study. In addition, the research will be done as per COVID-19 regulations (Social Distancing; Mask Wearing and Sanitizing).

#### **BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH**

The Benefits of this research are outlined as follows:

- It seeks to gain insights on a micro basis on how specific educational institutions mobilised staff and resources to be compliant with state specifications on Covid-19.
- The study would reveal how the institution addressed the issue of delivering lectures to students face-to-face to attending courses online and/ or were attending courses on specific schedules.
- Illuminating these impacts would address the existing gap in the literature and will provide recommendations to government and policy to address local educational systems during the new normal.

#### **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary, which means that you are free to decline from participation. It is your decision whether or not to take part. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind - and without giving a reason. You may also choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study. If there is anything that you would prefer not to discuss, please feel free to say so.

#### **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There are no costs to the participant for partaking in the study.

#### **INFORMED CONSENT**

Your signed consent to participate in this research study is required before I proceed to interview you. I have included the consent form with this information sheet so that you will be able to review the consent form and then decide whether you would like to participate in this study or not.



## FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

### SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

#### QUESTIONS

Should you have further questions or wish to know more, I can be contacted as follows:

Mobile Number : 079 905 6452  
Work Number : N/A  
Email : [casseybenito@gmail.com](mailto:casseybenito@gmail.com)

I am accountable to my supervisor : Dr. Msuthukazi Makiva  
Department : School of Government  
Telephone : 021 959 3832  
Fax : N/A  
Email : [mmakiva@uwc.ac.za](mailto:mmakiva@uwc.ac.za)

This research project has received ethical approval from the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape, HSSREC  
Tel. 021 959 4111,  
email: [research-ethics@uwc.ac.za](mailto:research-ethics@uwc.ac.za)



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## APPENDIX 3: AUTHORISATION TO CONDUCT FIELDWORK



80 Voortrekker Rd  
Protea Campus, Bellville  
Cape Town  
8000  
(T): (021) 946 2250  
(F): (021) 949 0886  
(E): tcoetzee@northlink.co.za  
(W): www.northlink.co.za

### PROTEA CAMPUS

01 JULY 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MS CASSEY BENITO, STUDENT  
NO: 3740017**

I, Tania Coetzee, Campus Manager at Protea Campus, Northlink College hereby grant Ms. Cassey Benito permission to conduct the necessary research at Protea Campus for her thesis "**An assessment of the impact the Disaster Management Act had in the education sector of South Africa during a pandemic: A case study of Northlink College in Cape Town**", in order for her to complete her Master's Degree in Public Administration.

Trust you find this in order.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Coetzee'.

Mrs T. Coetzee  
**CAMPUS MANAGER**

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