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**Exploring the South African PSET
system policy reforms for access,
equity, transformation and
marketization of Tertiary Education**

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Overview of the presentation

- Abstract of the study
- Research Methodology
- White Paper Analysis (Stakeholders' roles in PSET sector)
- Purpose of the study: Promotion of Access, Equity and Fun in PSET system
- Weaknesses of the PSET sector in RSA
- Strengths of PSET sector
- Recommendations
- Conclusions



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ABSTRACT

Over the past decade, the public education system in South Africa has made strides in providing wider access, equitable access, access with success, and demographic transformation leading to enhanced economic and societal development.

The South African education system has two sub-systems AND Ministries: Basic Education, under the Department of Basic Education (DBE); and Post Schooling Education and Training (PSET) under the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).



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- In response to the educational reform and promotion of transformational agenda in South Africa, a White Paper for Post Schooling Education and Training was approved in 2013.
- PSET sectoral stakeholders such as Council on Higher Education (CHE), South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), Universities, National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Sector Education Training Authority (SETAs), National Research Fund (NRF); as well as Community Colleges respective roles are explored.



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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DESIGN: - The research approach and design in this study follows a comprehensive plan of collecting data in an empirical research project (based on direct or indirect observation);

The paper highlights some of the gains, challenges and constrains within PSET sector including a **review of secondary data** including use of existing literature and documents, research reports and journal articles in higher education;

Empirical research aimed at answering specific research questions and testing of hypotheses by making use of the following:

□ Data collection processes:



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White Paper Analysis: Stakeholders' roles

Various stakeholders' respective roles are meant to promote **access with success, quality assurance systems, work place skill plan** and graduate placements.

- **TVET & Universities** – promote access for further education and training, technical and vocational education; and tertiary education.
 - **TVET** are established in terms of FET Act 16 of 2006 and amended in HET Laws Amendments Act 25 of 2010;
 - **Universities** are established in terms of Higher Education Act 101 of 1997;



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- **CHE** – meant for quality assurance and programme accreditation; established in terms of **Section 4** of HE Act; complies with HEQF/HEQSF policy on higher education.
- **SAQA** – registration of accredited university and other providers' programmes; established in terms of **Section 3** of South African Qualifications Authority Act, No.58 of 1995 and National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008.
 - NQF is meant to promote an integrated national framework for learning achievements, access to, mobility and progression within education, training and career paths



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- **NSFAS** – established in terms of NSFAS Act 56 of 1999;
 - promotes access with success through funding of deserving students by means of funding criteria;
 - Meant to provide for the management, governance and administration of loans and bursaries to eligible students at TVET and public higher education institutions;
 - Established to expand affordable and sustainable national student funding aid;
 - Allowed by law to use National Credit Act to recover defaulters who don't pay back the study loans – done in consultation with SARS agencies for the employed graduates;



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- **SETAs** – meant to address the **skills needs** of established employers, business and government departments;
 - **NSDS III** – tool to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development within the sector
 - It also serves as a linkage of skills development to career paths, career development and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression. (NSDS III, 2011: 5)



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- **National Skills Fund (NSF)** – is meant to facilitate skills development and to support National Skills Authority (NSA) in promoting Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS);
 - It further support the White Paper on PSET and NSDS III by supporting universities, Universities of Technology, Community colleges and TVET Colleges by providing additional resources and serves as catalyst fund to the PSET sector;
 - NSF partnered with the private sector in piloting the Generic Trade Test Preparation Programme (GTTTP) in preparing TVET College learners for apprenticeship;



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- **QCTO** – established in terms of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998;
 - set up to ensure that occupational qualifications, involving workplace training, were registered, quality-assured and offered by reputable service providers;
- **Skills Development Act primary purpose -**
 - to develop the skills of the South African workforce;
 - to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve the return on that investment;
 - to encourage workers to participate in learning programmes;



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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- The study promote White Paper for PSET and created an alignment to labour market that could easily absorb graduates;
- Is a vehicle with which to drive and deepen transformation of the entire PSET sector in RSA;
- It further provide framework to build on the achievements of South African democracy since 1994 – and further meant to eradicate the legacy of apartheid system;
- The study further analyse the simplification of vocational pathways within PSET, building partnerships between vocational training, economy and labour market in order



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- The study further analyse the simplification of vocational pathways within PSET, building partnerships between vocational training, economy and labour market in order to achieve marketization of PSET sector;
- The analysis in this study is further meant to explore constrains, causes and concerns as the skill gaps widens, pressures on funding exceeding resources, and reforming PSET sector through widening access with success, enhancing quality, promoting equity, transformation and marketization of tertiary education.



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CHALLENGES OF PSET

- An increased number of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) youth between 15-24 years; (over 3 million);
- Lack of effective transition from school to work;
- Growing unemployment among youths and readiness of labour market absorption;
- Strengthening labour force, professional development for vocational teachers and college leaders;
- Insufficient focus on helping students to complete – thus affecting graduation rates/success rates negatively at



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- The role of universities in providing quality education with the focus on the diverse purpose of higher education, management of tertiary institutions, improvement of pass and graduation rates, the changing roles of academics, and international students enrolled at South African tertiary institutions; (Mouton et al, 2013).



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STRENGTHS OF PSET SECTOR

The following areas of PSET strengths are noted from the recent OECD studies of 2014:

- Openness and committed approach to strengthening different roles within vocational systems; teacher development; institutional autonomy and leadership; trade union roles and free unionization; openness to debate and seeking of alternative points of view
- Creation of Ministry of Higher Education and Training integrating vocational education, SETAs, NSF, NSFAS and training policies;



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- A turnaround strategy to address quality of college sector;
- Willingness to take lessons from weakness and development of improvement plans;
- Reprioritization of trades and occupational qualifications and training; (OECD reviews of Vocational Education and Training – Field, Musset and Galvan, 2014).



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RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The improvement of pass and graduation rates is a great concern; therefore, it is recommended that the selection procedures of students to be admitted to first-year studies should be revisited in order to select students with the potential to succeed in tertiary education (Mouton et al, 2013:295);
- ❖ Promotion and introduction of more distant learning university offerings to combat resource strain; this could be supported by online courses, blended learning and a stable e-learning platforms and investment in modern technology.



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- ❖ Less violent disruptions by the students in demand of free higher education;
- ❖ Manipulation of access to tertiary education to be manipulated based on abilities of students and opportunities of labour market to absorb them; and



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- ❖ It may be, however, that the internal efficiency of the higher education sector – in particular, the relationship between improved funding (for institutions and students) and improved graduate output – will become a significant consideration in negotiations on additional higher education funding with the Treasury and other stakeholders.
- ❖ In any event, an account of what return on investment might be expected should presumably form part of any case made for additional funding.



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CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Whilst there are obvious systemic inefficiency in HE – there is rising enrolments/low throughput rates, cost v/s value; staff/student ratios and loan recoveries –
- ❖ Promotion of National developmental imperatives and priorities (PSET – TVET-CC and HE) promotion;
 - ❖ PSET sector system requires consistent funding;
 - ❖ PSET sector has to overcome competing developmental goals (increased access **AND** maintain success;
 - ❖ Strive to improve quality **AND** advance expansion;