A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE CURRICULUM

BY

ZACHEUS NGCEBO DUMISANI ZUNGU

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ZACHEUS NGCEBO DUMISANI ZUNGU
B.PAED (COM); B.ED.; M.ED.; (UZ) STD

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DECLARATION

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE CURRICULUM

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION 2002

I, Zacheus Ngčebo Dumisani Zungu, do hereby declare that this thesis which is submitted to the University of Zululand for the Degree of Doctor of Education has not been previously submitted by me, for a degree at any other university. It represents my own work both in conception and in execution. All the sources that I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Signed by me ..... **on this** 25 **day of** JAN **2002.**

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my wife Duduzile, sons Lethukuthula and Mholi, cousin Nelson, my late father Andreas (Nqe) and my mother Mary-Jane.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

A GENERAL ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Motivation of the study	4
1.3	Statement of the problem	6
1.4	Objectives of the study	7
1.5	Delimitation of the field of study	7
1.6	Significance	8
1.7	Definition of operational terms	8
1.7.1	Economic Sciences	8
1.7.2	Secondary School	10
1.7.3	Corporate World	11
1.8	Chapter breakdown	11
1.9	Conclusion	12
1.10	Summary	12

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction 13

2.2 The concept curriculum 14

2.2.1 Interpretation of the curriculum 15

2.2.2 Content or subject matter 17
2.2.3 Role of curriculum in commerce and industry (corporate industry) 18
2.2.4 Role of economic science educators, parents and learners in the school curriculum 19

2.2.5 Who decides what the curriculum should be? 19
2.2.6 The nature of the secondary school economic science curriculum with reference to the South African situation. 22

2.2.6.1 The nature of the secondary school economic science curriculum 22

2.3 Didactic principles applicable to economic science subjects 27
2.3.1 The principle of planning 28
2.3.1.1 Definition of planning

2.3.1.2 Planning in an educational (school) situation

2.3.1.3 Planning in a corporate world

2.3.1.4 Relationship between planning in a school situation and corporate world

2.3.2 The principle of assessment 34

2.3.2.1 Assessment criteria in a job and school situation

2.3.3 The principle of experience 41
2.3.3.1 Definition of the term experience
2.3.3.2 Role of experience in both the school and the corporate sector
2.3.4 The principle of mastering 45
2.3.5 The principle of purposefulness 47
2.3.6 The principle of individualization and differentiation 50
2.3.6.1 Definition of the term individualization
2.3.6.2 Definition of the term differentiation

2.3.6.3 Individualisation and differentiation in a school and working environment
2.4 Views on skills expected in the corporate world with special reference to secondary school economic science graduates 55

2.5 Entrepreneurship education in secondary school 64
2.5.1 Definition of the term entrepreneurship
2.5.2 Entrepreneurship education and it's role in the economic upliftment of a country
2.6 Teaching of economic science within an outcome based education (OBE) system 68
2.6.1 What does the term 'OBE' really mean?
2.6.2 Economic science education in realizing the objectives of outcome based education.
2.7 Conclusion 76

CHAPTER THREE
COLLECTION OF DATA

3.1 Introduction 77
3.2 Sampling 77
3.3 Literature Review 78
3.4 Triangulation 79
3.5 Interviews 80
3.6 Focus Group Interviews 81
3.7 Questionnaires 82
3.7.1 Open Ended Questionnaire 83
3.7.2 Closed Ended Questionnaire 84
3.8 Data Processing 85
3.9 Data Analysis 85
3.10 Conclusion 86

CHAPTER FOUR
THE PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1	Introduction	87
4.2	Interview questionnaire for secondary school economic science learners	87
4.2.1	General interpretation	
4.3	Interview questionnaire for secondary school economic science educators	95
4.3.1	General interpretation	
4.4	Interview questionnaire for the corporate world	106
4.5	Conclusion	114

CHAPTER FIVE
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1	Introduction	115
5.2	Interview questionnaire for secondary school economic science learners	115
5.2.1	General interpretation	
5.3	Interview questionnaire for secondary school economic science educators	125
5.3.1	General interpretation	
5.4	Interview questionnaire for the corporate world	142
5.5	The objectives of the study and the results of the study	155
5.6	Conclusion	166

CHAPTER SIX
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1	Introduction	167
6.2	Recommendations related to secondary school economic science learners	167
6.2.1	Career guidance	

6.2.2 Transition to the work place
6.2.3 Relevance of curriculum to vocation
6.2.4 Sufficient learning materials
6.2.5 Skills based education
6.3 Recommendations related to secondary school economic science educators 172
6.3.1 Staff development courses
6.3.2 Career exhibition at the school
6.3.3 Allowing learners and educators freedom of choice with reference options
6.3.4 Professionalism by economic science educators
6.3.5 Innovations in the work programme and textbooks
6.3.6 Role of media in economic science education
6.3.7 Visits to the workplace
6.3.8 Market related curriculum
6.4 Recommendations related to the corporate world 180
6.4.1 Financial assistance
6.4.2 Adoption of a school
6.4.3 Corporate world standards
6.5 Recommendations for the education department 182
6.5.1 Culture of learning, teaching and services
6.5.2 Provision of facilities
6.5.3 Skills based education curriculum
6.5.4 Adequate training of educators
6.5.5 Aptitude tests
6.6 The new curriculum and its implications to secondary school economic science curriculum and its relevance to the study 186
6.7 A final remark 190

Bibliography

ANNEXURE:

A : Interview questionnaire for Grade 12 (Std 10)
B : Interview questionnaire for secondary school economic science educators
C : Interview item for people in the corporate world
D : Application letter to the Chief Director: Empangeni Region
E : A letter of acceptance from the Chief Director: Empangeni Region

SUMMARY

The economic sciences curriculum is supposed to equip learners with skills that would be readily recognised and acceptable to the corporate world. Yet it became obvious from the high unemployment rate of learners with economic science background that the expected skills were less developed than expected. School leavers need to be retrained for them to be able to carry out elementary tasks like bookkeeping. It is the inadequacy of the present secondary school curriculum to produce employable school leavers that prompted this inquiry.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the relevance of the economic science curriculum to the needs of the corporate world. The study revealed that lack of participation by all relevant stakeholders in the development of a curriculum creates the gaps between the schooling system and the corporate world. The lack of resources and poor communication between business and education also contributed to the unemployability of school graduates. There is, therefore, very little congruence between what is taught and the world of work.

Several recommendations to address the problem were put forward. The most important of these recommendations is the establishment of partnerships between education and vocational skills may be fused. Economic science education needs to be given prominence in all schools including those in rural environments where given subject advisors seldom visit.

CHAPTER ONE

A GENERAL ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The strength of nations is measured to a significant degree by their rate of economic growth and economic development. Swanepoel and Van Zyl (1994:19); Mc Carthy, Archer, Smith and de Villiers (1993:41-42); Swanepoel, Levin, Assan, Bean, Cele, Garbharran, Gouws, Mjana, Nogela, van Rooyen and Wiesner (1995:25-26); and Pearce (1985:123) all agree that economic growth is the process through which the productive capacity of the economy increases over time so that there is an increase in the level of national income. They further emphasise that economic growth can be determined by, among other things, the following factors: technology, the availability of natural resources and the size and quality of the labour force. Economic growth is a long- term phenomenon as the production capacity of a country cannot be increased overnight. It is a process which takes many years and needs a long - term plan to be achieved properly. Therefore, a developing country whose objective is to grow its economy needs to build the capacity of her people in economic, financial and business skills. Relevant education would be one of the areas that a country could focus on to achieve this objective and in this case economic education would need to be the focus.

The strength of education curriculum, therefore, can be the answer to economic growth in South Africa if education is structured to meet the demands of the twenty-first century. It is doubtful whether the present curriculum followed in schools meets these demands. The economic science subjects have become very important for the secondary school learner who wants to pursue a career in the economic field. Moreover, the phenomenon of globalisation that is sweeping the world threatens to swallow weak

economies, and technological advancement appears to be the direction pursued by many countries. The only way these countries can develop skills in technology is by having viable education programmes. UNESCO (1961:10), in Dahwa (1986:181) stresses that, if education is to be integrated with economic development and play its part in purely economic terms, one of the principal changes must be a shift in curricula. This view has also been expressed by Annette Lansink (1997:8) who further stipulates that, in South Africa, the curriculum was used as a most effective weapon in reproducing the colonial apartheid system by shaping the mindset of the population in sustaining this system. As in any other country, the education curriculum in South Africa is supposed to serve as an effective tool not only to produce and promote the values, cultural norms, and beliefs of society but also as an instrument to maintain and legitimise economic power relations.

South Africa needs an economic sciences curriculum that is skills based and career oriented because almost all job opportunities or corporate industries desire workers who are in possession of appropriate skills. A person who possesses academic qualifications only still needs extensive training before he or she starts work. The researcher believes that the recently introduced Curriculum 2005 will meet UNESCO's suggestions in that it is intended to focus on an education based on life skills. It would appear, therefore, that the government is beginning to view the curriculum of school development as vital to the building of a strong South African economy. Prospective workers produced by the new education system should hopefully be able to fit within the corporate world. However, an over-supply of workers in one field, while there is an under supply in another, needs to be avoided as it may result in a bottleneck. Supply and demand must be the guiding factors which underpin the economic development of a country. It is the duty of educators in the economic sciences, planners in education departments and employers in the corporate world to think of strategies to impart the kind of economic knowledge to all the citizens of South Africa that will have an effect on the

economic development of the country. Even basic knowledge of economic literacy may go a long way to help people develop money sense, and this can have a positive effect on economic growth if economic science educators develop good educational programmes.

As a result of the ideology of apartheid, which put whites at an economic advantage over blacks, there are economic imbalances between the racial groups in South Africa. Setai (1990) in Nkomo (1990 : 400) believes that the unification of post-apartheid society will require that these imbalances be redressed quickly. This is supported by Nkomo and Mokate (1990) in Nkomo (1990:405) who assert that foreign investors believe that more investment in Black education will result in a more educated population, higher earnings, and economic opportunities. Adam Smith (in Bannock, Baxter and Davis, 1992:395) a great economist of yesteryear, believed in human capital investment as it is tied in with economic wealth and economic development. Smith further stated that the wealth of the nation could be increased by the skill of the labour force. Like Smith, Roode (HSRC, 1993:180) also states that education can contribute to economic development and raise the incomes of the poor. It is important to invest in human skills because education contributes directly to the growth of national income by improving the skills and productive capabilities of the labour force. In this regard, a worker with a higher income has also a higher productivity as a result of additional qualifications and skills acquired through further learning.

It must be noted that although higher education institutions in South Africa were engaged in educating learners, before 1994 very few institutions other than technikons and technical institutions concentrated on developing career focussed skills. Schools and universities focussed on general skills, which did not make learners employable. Therefore, education that does not empower learners to participate actively in developing a country's economy fails to meet the country's objectives.

1.2. MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Although the recent educator audit claims that there is a surplus of educators, in the economic science subjects there is a serious shortage, whether they are qualified, unqualified or under-qualified. The shortage extends beyond the education field. There is a chronic shortage of black managers and qualified black artisans. As a result a problem of "job trotting" is emerging as businesses are compelled to work towards achieving equity and affirmative action. The qualified black economists, lawyers and accountants are selling their services to the highest bidder even though at times their employment is seen as tokenism. Swanepoel, Van Zyl, Naude and Miller (1991:36) note that a marked characteristic of the South African labour structure is the relatively large supply of unskilled labour (mainly blacks); and the relatively limited supply of skilled labour (mainly whites). It can be highlighted that unemployment is found generally more in certain groups of people:

- About 70 percent of the unemployed are black people younger than 35 years of age.
- The unemployment rate among black women is twice that of black men.
- Approximately 60 percent of unemployed blacks have an educational level of less than Standard 5 (Swanepoel and Van Zyl, 1995:2.

This, however, does not mean that only black learners are unemployable but statistics about black labourers are relevant to this study as the sample schools are all from historically black schools. A country which has a population of about 37,9 million based on the census held in South Africa towards the end of 1996, and a paucity of professionals in economic science, will not develop economically to acceptable standards unless drastic

measures are taken to correct the imbalances in the labour force (Chetty, 1997:10).

As a result of the imbalances in the labour force the researcher became interested to establish the underlying causes thereof. Since there were few schools which offer economic science subjects and therefore few school leaves in that strand but who still could not find jobs, there was a need to investigate the reasons for the unemployability of the learners. There was a need to look at what the schools were offering in the light of the needs of the corporate world. Once learners have completed their studies they should have skills that will help them to make a living and thereby contribute to economic development of the country.

Ideally, the gross domestic product (GDP) and the national income should rise by not less than five percent per annum if the economy of the country is to grow. There are several factors responsible for the rise in gross domestic product (GDP) and a skilled labour force is one of them. Therefore, the problem of the shortage of skilled people in the economic sciences needs to be addressed vigorously so as to help build the economy of our country. It is interesting to note that changes in the curriculum are being forecast with the introduction of a non-racial education system. It is not yet clear what the curriculum will look like when it is reviewed probably by year 2005, or whether the curriculum will equip learners with the essential skills to build the economy.

The interim economic science syllabus for standards, 8, 9 and 10 is meant to address the imbalances caused by the past system. Such a curriculum will have to reduce the number of unskilled workers and will have to meet the needs of the learner, community, country and the corporate world, and to establish whether the economic science programme offered in secondary schools has the

potential to develop skills needed especially by the corporate world, which is the employer. This study examines the potential of the interim economic science syllabuses to meet the needs of the South African Economy.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The aim of education is mainly to create a society that will be able to lead a better life, that will imbibe worthwhile values they will pass on to the next generation. Society owes it to future generations to continually improve the living conditions by adding value to life through innovation and creativity. When an education system fails to deliver these ideals there is a need to question the relevance and appropriateness of that education system.

When the business world finds it difficult to employ the economic science school leavers or when the school leavers are not able to use their skills to create their own employment it becomes necessary to investigate and assess the relevance and nature of the economic science curricula to the needs of the business world.

In South Africa the unemployment rate is approximately twenty five percent (25%) and this number includes university and high school graduates. Most employers prefer to employ experienced people rather than newly qualified graduates because they claim inexperienced graduates need further training and at times risking. This creates a dilemma for the new graduates who find themselves in a catch twenty-two situation - How will they get experience if they are unemployed?

This dilemma has led the researcher to realise that there is a problem between the skills learners acquire through their studies and the relevance of these skills to the work situation. Therefore, the problem, which this research seeks to investigate, is: "How relevant is the economic sciences

curriculum that is offered in the secondary school to the corporate world?" This issue is a bone of contention the researcher aims to investigate and this study will attempt to seek answers to the problem.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to assess the appropriateness of the secondary school economic science curriculum in meeting the economic needs of the country.

The main objectives of the study are:

- to assess the relevance of secondary school economic science curriculum to the economic needs of South Africa.
- to identify skills the corporate world needs from learners of economic sciences.
- to find perceptions of the corporate people about the state of the economic science education in the country.
- to establish the role of the corporate world in economic science education.
- to establish whether schools work collaboratively with the corporate world.

1.5. DELIMITATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

The study was conducted in secondary schools within the Empangeni region. The region has five districts: Eshowe, Hlabisa, Lower Tugela, Lower Umfolozi and Mthunzini. Economic science subjects are not offered as an option in all the schools in these discricts. Therefore, only those schools which offer economic science subjects, were included in the research. The study was also conducted with businesses within the Empangeni/Richards Bay area. The Empangeni/Richards Bay region was chosen because of its industrial

development as well as its accessibility to the researcher. The study also involved grade 12 learners because the researcher believed that it was important to include those who had been studying economic science subjects for more than four years.

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study has a significant value to the country because there is a definite need to boost the economy of the country. A curriculum that seeks to deal with and uproot its problem from where it starts at school cannot be overlooked. The kind of information derived from this study will hopefully lead to lifelong learning and a better future for the young people of South Africa.

1.7. DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

The definition of concepts and terms in the study are presented in this section. The aim is to reduce vagueness or ambiguity and give clarity to the study.

1.7.1. ECONOMIC SCIENCES

Hodkinson and Whitehead (1986:305) define economic sciences as the established group of subjects concerned with developing learners with a knowledge and understanding of the operation of the industrial discipline, accounting and economics.

In this study, research will be conducted in Accounting, Business Economics and Economics education at a secondary school level to find out the skills needed by corporate industry from economic science graduates who have passed Grade 12. The word economic science will be used interchangeably with words like business subject, economic education, business studies and commercial subjects.

Accounting deals with the principles and methods of recording business transactions. Archer, Clarkson, De Jager, Snyman, Stander and Van der Merwe (1995:26) define accounting as the recording of monetary values of financial transactions of individuals and business and reporting the results with the main purpose of supplying financial information by submitting statements as a basis for decision making. Accounting entails accepted methods of keeping orderly and systematic records of all activities and events affecting a business concern or an individual expressed in terms of money.

Business Economics deals with practical ways in which man=s needs are met. Eksteen (1986:1) in Bisschoff (1995-10) defines business economics as: the science concerned with the study of how private enterprise, as one of the several institutions providing goods and services for satisfying human needs, can best be led or managed so that the free market system can function as efficiently as possible and achieve its objectives to the best of its ability. It can be noted that a study of business economics is concerned with two areas, viz, business and economics. Business is the activity of producing goods and services for the satisfaction of human needs by private enterprise in the free market system, and economics being the science that investigates production, distribution and consumption of goods. Business economics studies how business enterprises should be managed in order to achieve their set objectives and make, a profit while doing so. In Business Economics theory is put into practice.

Economics is the study of man's efforts and activities to satisfy his needs and to accumulate wealth. Stanlake and Grant (1995:1) define economics as a study of the ways in which humankind provides for its material well being. Economics is concerned with the study of

behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means, which have alternative uses. Swanepoel et al (1991:1) defines economics as follows: "A science which studies the aspect of human behaviour that is concerned with acquiring and utilising limited means". These limited means are used in various ways to provide goods and services which are to be divided among individuals and groups in such a way that maximum satisfaction of their wants is obtained". Tregarthen (1996:2) defines economics as the study of how people choose among the alternatives available to them". Economics is the study of little choices and big choices, individual choices, choices by the firms, and choices by the governments. Life presents each of us with a wide range of alternative uses of our time and other resources; economists examine how we choose out of those alternatives. In economics a theoretical approach is taken into account.

1.7.2. SECONDARY SCHOOL

The secondary school phase spans the final three years of schooling from standard 8 to standard 10 (Grades 10-12), which culminate in the Senior Certificate Examination. The educational programme for this phase is fairly extensive, providing learners with the opportunity to choose a variety of approved subjects, within specified fields of study, at the Higher Grade and Standard Grade. Although learners are free to choose different subjects and subject groupings according to their needs, aptitude, and interests, the extent to which a school is able to cater for the needs of learners depends on the availability of suitably qualified educators for the various subjects. The feasibility of introducing certain subjects in terms of the size of teaching units and the availability of specialist facilities and resources within the school are also factors considered by the schools.

For the purpose of the study, school shall mean secondary school unless otherwise indicated. Secondary school shall mean all schools which have grade ten to twelve classes.

1.7.3. CORPORATE WORLD

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1987:212) defines corporate as, "forming a corporation, corporate body, forming one body of many individuals, of or belonging to a corporation or group". In this study, the term corporate world means all sectors of employment which an economic sciences secondary school graduate may enter. Corporate world will be used interchangeably with words like industry, firm, trade business enterprise or work environment (situation).

1.8 CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

The chapters in this study are broken down as follows:
Chapter two focuses on the principles on which the study is based together with the value of skills based education, as well as a literature review.

Chapter three deals with the Research Methodology employed in this study.

Chapter four, presents the data collected.
A sample of respondents has been drawn from schools which fall within five districts of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture around the Empangeni Region, with about one hundred secondary schools that offer economic science subjects.

Chapter five focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Chapter six deals with the recommendations and conclusion of the study.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The value of education in the economic sciences for secondary school leavers is unquestionable as this education prepares learners to enter the world of work with skills that enable them to be employable. The learners acquire not only specific job skills but also occupational intelligence. The specific skills they acquire enable the learners to work in the corporate world, in government sectors and, if trained well, the learners may be able to create jobs for themselves and for other people. At this time in our economic development where the growth is slow and very few jobs are created entrepreneurs seem to be the answer to unemployment. Therefore, curriculum developers should ensure that they formulate relevant curricula and the schools should relate these curricula to real life situations so that learners may assign meaning to them.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on the problem of the unemployability of learners with economic science skills. The country needs manpower that is skilled in areas like accounting, business economics, and economics. However, the learners that are produced by secondary schools find it difficult to be absorbed into the corporate world. The objectives of the study aim to investigate the reasons for the unemployability of the learners and to look at the suitability of the curriculum for promoting employability. Learners, educators and personnel from the business world were interviewed.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

If a changing society requires an emphasis on skills and abilities rather than on knowledge, and if economic science education has no unique skills and abilities to offer them, one can point out that it's contribution to society at large is minimal. Hodkinsons and Whitehead (1986:288) point out that in 1982 the Scottish Central Committee on Economic Science Subjects identified a number of broad aims of economic science education in Secondary Schools. Amongst, the aims set out were, to prepare learners for entry into post-school society and the demand of the society, to increase learner's knowledge and understanding of the working of the modern industrialized society in which they live, to improve skills and to develop in learners certain life skills, to develop cognitive, interpersonal and psychomotor skills. Hodkinson and Whitehead (1986:288) further elaborate that economic science represents a revolutionary approach to curriculum design because there is no fixed syllabus of content that is laid down. The Scottish Secondary School curriculum is skills based and a number of learning skills may be identified. Educators are free to construct and select appropriate content, which will adequately develop the skills involved.

The education system used in Scotland appears to be similar to what is proposed in the Curriculum 2005, the new system of education, which was introduced in South Africa. This new curriculum is community or people designed because the educational authorities consult all stakeholders. In fact it was expected that the new curriculum will be reviewed and assessed in the year 2005. Already, in 2001 it has been reviewed, its' merits and demerits identified, and is being revised.

An ideal economic science curriculum for schools will probably never exist. However, every educator should attempt to approach the teaching of economic science in a way that will develop skills and competencies. In general, the South African economic science curriculum should possess the following characteristics: an understanding of the corporate world, the ability to produce learners who will be job creators (entrepreneurs), learners who will fit in with the demands of the twenty first century, be career directed, and able to generate sound employment techniques.

This chapter provides a theoretical background of the study. For that reason the focus is on the following aspects: the concept "curriculum" the principle on which the economic sciences are based, skills expected from the secondary school economic science graduate in preparation for job entry in the corporate world, contextualising within Curriculum 2005, and the role of entrepreneurship education in preparing economic science graduates for job creation.

2.2 THE CONCEPT CURRICULUM

Gatawa (1994:5) points out that it is disturbing to notice that there is lack of consensus on the precise meaning of the term "curriculum" even among people directly involved in education. Parents generally see it as an academic programme offered by the school. They invariably try to send their children to the school with a tradition of good results in the final examination. It is not uncommon to hear parents speak disparagingly of a headmaster who has a regular timetable of afternoon sporting activities. They regard sporting activities as time wasting without considering the fact that to some learners this will form part of their future careers. Secondly, sport enhances thought processes and physical well-being. Parents regard the curriculum as being about the experiences which happen within the four walls of the classroom. A

misconception of some stakeholders is the tendency to regard the school curriculum as those educator-directed classroom activities, which constitute a programme and which end with a summative examination. The position of the majority of educators, including secondary school economic science educators, in regard to the curriculum is not very different from the views of the parents. The same lopsided view is also found among education officials, including curriculum designers who are involved in curriculum development and curriculum materials. Some education officials regard the curriculum as being synonymous with subject syllabi, an educator's guide and learners' books. They often define the school curriculum in terms of their own subject specialisation.

Gatawa (1994:8) further maintains that the school curriculum is what happens in real school situations as a result of planned programmes. It is what happens to learners as a result of what educators do. It represents the totality of the experiences of learners for which school are responsible, whether these experiences are for an individual learner or groups of learners or take place within classrooms or school grounds or outside the school.

2.2.1 INTERPRETATION OF THE CURRICULUM

Over the years there have been many interpretations of the concept "curriculum". The researcher believes that, Oliva (1997:4) interprets the curriculum in accordance to the view that this study follows. His interpretation may be broken down as follows:

- curriculum refers to what is taught in school
- it is a set of subjects
- it is content
- it is everything that is planned by school personnel.
- it is a program of studies

- it is a set of materials
- it is a sequence of courses
- it is a set of performance objectives
- it is everything that goes on within the school, including extra-mural activities, guidance and interpersonal relationship
- it is a course of study
- it is that which is taught both inside and outside of school directed by the school
- it is a series of experiences undergone by learners in school
- it is that which an individual learner experiences a result of schooling.

This interpretation of the curriculum indicates what any learner should go through and experience on his/her way to adulthood. These aspects of the curriculum have to do with the development of ability, skills, values and attitudes towards life in general.

For an economic science curriculum these elements of the curriculum are pertinent, as this field of study is directly related to the real world. In their interaction with members of society, economic science learners will be expected to have good interpersonal skills, also known as 'people skills'.

2.2.2 CONTENT OR SUBJECT MATTER

One of the elements of the school curriculum is content or subjects to be taught. Gatawa (1994:10) and Kelly (1989:44-46) emphasise that the content represents a selection of bodies of knowledge, attitudes, values, processes and skills cherished in the culture and society concerned. One of the criticisms levelled against prescribed content or subject matter is that fixed content encourages educators to concentrate only on what is prescribed and in the textbook. The challenges that are going to be faced by the educator in future are enormous, as they touch on the inadequacy of concentration on fixed knowledge. Learners are being challenged to find, discover and create new meanings for themselves. The approach of the educator should, therefore, be to trust learners by giving them the opportunities to interact with information. It goes without saying that in economics, for instance, where answers to economic problems depend on critical thinking rather than existing answers, new ways of finding information need to be explored.

There is a major weakness in the content-based model adopted by many schools in South Africa. In school economic science subjects in particular, that approach does not meet the needs of the stakeholders, as indicated in section 1.3. There is growing consensus that people must go well beyond content and consider questions of the purposes or the objectives of the curriculum. So far, although decisions about the content of the curriculum are determined by prevailing theories of knowledge, identifiable general needs of society and the interests of learners, only curriculum planners and not all stakeholders are involved in curriculum development. It is important to note that

decisions on the content of the curriculum should be made by curriculum planners drawn from all stakeholders seeing that the future careers of learners could be a major guiding principle towards what the curriculum should comprise.

2.2.3 ROLE OF CURRICULUM IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (CORPORATE INDUSTRY)

In developing, as well as developed countries, education is regarded as an investment. Gatawa (1994:17) points out that the school curriculum should be able to produce the skilled manpower needed for the production of goods and services. Curriculum designers, through the implemented curriculum, should be able to answer these two related questions:

- Does the curriculum provide the nation with the basic skills necessary to maintain and expand the economy?

- Does the curriculum provide the working population with the skills and productive capacity for employment in society?

If the answers to these questions are in the affirmative the curriculum could serve to produce the people needed in corporate industry. Such a curriculum could meet not only the needs of the individuals but those of the country as well. It may be speculated that the majority of secondary school economic science graduates or school leavers will make a living by being employed in the corporate industry, as their skills and interests are so inclined. It is therefore important for the curriculum

planners to make a good decision on what economic science learners should learn, in order to realise the aspirations of all the stakeholders.

2.2.4 ROLE OF ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATORS, PARENTS AND LEARNERS IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Educators are seen as the implementers of the school curriculum. Their attitudes, quality of training and preparedness to implement a given curriculum are important variables. It is common knowledge that the curricula, which are planned without the participation of relevant stakeholders is usually ineffective as it was with the case of Bantu Education. To make economic science curriculum effective it is important to involve all stakeholders including economic science educators when the curriculum is designed. Their participation ensures that national and individual imperatives are considered and such consideration is likely to be responsive to economic growth.

It is encouraging that at present everyone including parents, learners, educators, corporate industry and other stakeholders have a say in the drafting and strengthening of curriculum 2005 in preparation for the national curriculum statement (EMS National Curriculum Statement, 20 May 2001). This move will ensure commitment to the programme and acceptance of it by all with positive spin offs.

2.2.5 WHO DECIDES WHAT THE CURRICULUM SHOULD BE?

It is function of educational planners through broad consultation, to draw up aims, goals, objectives and policies,

and syllabi for examinations that will give direction to those experiences that the learners encounter while in school. Nacino-Brown, Oke and Brown (1990:32-38) point out that in Nigeria, as in many other countries throughout the world, there are many bodies that influence the type of curriculum that must be followed in schools. National bodies like the Federal Ministry of Education, the Nigeria Education Research Council, the Joint Consultative Committee, the Interim Joint Matriculation Board in consultation with the West African Examinations Council, and University and State Ministry of Education representatives help to draw up national policies on education, syllabi and examinations for use within the country. Their comparison with other countries shows that in the United Kingdom there are also numerous bodies that are identical to the West African Examinations Council in Nigeria. Each of these bodies draws up its own syllabi and course objectives for those learners who choose to take their examinations. Usually a school district or country will select which board of examiners is to be used in their area.

Nacino Brown et al further maintain that in Nigeria educators have a say in the drafting and setting of the curriculum. Officials conduct surveys in which educators identify parts of the syllabi that need to be adopted and scrutinized. In the United State of America each state enjoys the freedom to experiment with its own curriculum and examinations. Each school district can pursue its own programmes within certain limits set down by the state Board of Education. Schools are still responsible for preparing learners for tertiary institutions as well as for the college aptitude test. Educators are also allowed to design their

own syllabi without being told what to teach by education officials.

The Ministries of Education throughout Nigeria are responsible for ensuring that there are adequate facilities for learning. These facilities include classrooms, laboratories, playing areas, a school auditorium/theatre, dining rooms and hostels for boarding learners, textbooks, exercise books, sports and other recreational equipment that is needed to ensure that a curriculum becomes a reality. Educators employed by the ministries are satisfactorily paid to ensure the successful implementation of the curriculum. Parents who are working nearby industries arrange field trips for learners. Businesses help schools by supplying them with needed equipment freely or at cost price. Educators also play a major role in curriculum designing. The curriculum can be a great success or a dismal failure if designers do not take note of the views of educators. Educators are key persons who alone can make the curriculum design achieve what it was designed to achieve. Of all the people involved in curriculum implementation and design, the educator is almost certainly the most important. He/she is the one who implements the ideas and aspirations of the designers. Beside educators, parents and learners should be consulted because the curriculum is a joint venture, which involves many stakeholders including corporate industry.

The trend followed in these countries would be useful in bringing about radical change in the South African secondary school economic science curriculum to ensure effective teaching and learning. The competence of learners and the standard of education in these countries is well documented in a statistical

analysis of results from Mathematics and Science Olympiads published recently, which showed South African learners to be at the lower end of the scale. Although a similar study has not yet been done in economic sciences, it is reasonable to assume that similar results could be found. Therefore, the sooner the curriculum is revised, the better for the economy and the communities of South Africa.

2.2.6 THE NATURE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE CURRICULUM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

2.2.6.1 South Africa's education system is in the process of change, encompassing widespread change that is involving not only the essential remodelling of an outdated system but a shift in the attitude that is adopted to the entire education process. The Department of Education (1997:4-6) emphasizes that the changes in the curriculum are aimed at making South Africans more competitive in an increasingly competitive world. The changes are aimed at elevating the real skills and learning levels of the South African learner by encouraging a thirst for knowledge, a love of learning and a determination to succeed to enable learners to possess marketable skills that will help them to be employable in corporate industry.

2.2.6.2 THE NATURE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE CURRICULUM

There is a general feeling amongst many education stakeholders who are interested in the secondary school economic science curriculum that drastic measures should be taken to ensure that the learner is successful beyond school education.

Critics of the present curriculum highlight the inadequacy of the curriculum in meeting the desired standards. There is still a shortage of qualified educators in the field of economic science subjects. In some schools, especially in rural areas where the need to offer economic sciences has been identified, a grave shortage of resources militate against the meeting of this need.

The inadequacy of the curriculum in meeting the economic imperatives of the country is not peculiar to the economic sciences only. The whole South African school curriculum is undergoing a major philosophical shift from content based to outcomes based education. As this recurriculation process advances, changes in economic science are to be expected. This study seeks to ensure that this process does not overlook the major concerns necessary to bring about a desirable curriculum.

There are schools which are offering part of the economic science package e.g. accounting only and not business economics and economics and vice versa. The main reason for not offering all the options can be attributed to the shortage of qualified educators. Where these subjects are taught, even if qualified teachers are found, the educators have to make do with a few outdated textbooks. The promise by government to

give schools free books has not been fulfilled. As a result learners find themselves having to learn wrong information. The shortage of textbooks has far reaching consequences as educators struggle to complete the syllabi and as a result decrease the chances of learners to be successful in completing Grade 12. This was also mentioned in the Grade 12 business economics final examination report of 1999 when the examiner complained about educators who "spot" or focus on certain chapters instead of teaching the whole syllabus. "Spotting" leads to learners being drilled to memorise answers and while they remain ignorant of the rest of the work.

Some schools do not have Heads of Department for economic sciences because these subjects are taught by one or two educators to a small number of learners. As a result, in some schools this option is put under the department of languages. This has serious implications for the supervision and guidance of educators. Even the scheme of work, preparation, tests, assignments and final examinations are not properly assessed.

This option also lacks sufficient subject advisors. For instance, there is only one subject advisor for accounting, one for economics and none for business economics for the whole of Empangeni region with more than one hundred and twenty schools that offer economic sciences in five districts. Even these subject advisors are expected to do other tasks assigned to them by the department, apart from economic science education. There are economic science educators especially in rural schools who have never been visited by their subject advisors as they are overworked. Apart from being too few in

number, subject advisors also complain of the shortage of transport that can is needed to reach some schools.

The problem of unqualified or underqualified educators is at times marked by the over reliance they have on the textbook method. They are uncomfortable with trying out innovative and learner centred teaching methods and strategies. As a result the learning experience is often limited and does not develop critical thinking and creativity in learners. The media is often a great resource for economic sciences.

In schools generally, there is more focus on Grade12 learners to the detriment of learners in lower grades. Foundations need to be laid to prepare learners to deal with more complex concepts in higher grades. Educators in lower grades do not teach certain topics and expect them to be dealt with by Grade 12 educators. This results in gaps in knowledge between different grades, which may be frustrating to both the learner, and the educator as neither can proceed with their work.

Some educators who qualified a long time ago may not want to upgrade themselves. This tendency could be assigned to the fact that they may be demotivated or lack the vision needed to keep abreast of developments in their field. An economic science educator needs to be at the cutting edge of developments in his/her field otherwise in these years of globalisation he/she may be left behind.

The unemployability of school leavers is highlighted by Bird (2001:03) when he points out that about 37% of South African secondary school graduates (including those who took the

economic science option) are discouraged and unemployed. They are tired of looking for jobs that are not there. They are turned down again and again. The majority of these people are young. They want to work but find that they do not have the skills and experience that employers are demanding. Employers on the other hand are complaining that they cannot find qualified people. Good packages are offered but suitable takers are simply not there. The curriculum will have to introduce learning materials that will cover subject matter that causes confusion in both educators and learners. This is clearly needed, because of the incompatibility between what the school offers and the needs of the employer.

Derek Rowntrea in Matseke (2000:13) maintains that the following are important principles of learning that can contribute to the success of the current secondary school economic science curriculum:

- the learner must be motivated to pay attention
- the learner must be led to the learning goal through a sequence of steps
- the teaching must adapt itself to the needs of the individual learner
- the sequence of instruction must challenge the learner yet allow him/her to succeed often and only rarely frail
- the learner must be an active participant rather then a passive reader or listener
- the learner must be led to discover principles for him or herself rather than simply be told of them

- the learner must be given immediate and continuous knowledge of result, i.e. continuous assessment
- meaning must be stressed more then manipulation

With the introduction of Curriculum 2005, currently in operation in lower grades, there is hope that classroom educators implementing Curriculum 2005 will follow Rowntrea's views to ensure effective teaching and learning.

2.3. DIDACTIC PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO ECONOMIC SCIENCE SUBJECTS

It is generally accepted that the teaching of economic science is underpinned by certain guiding principles, which direct the focus as well as the effective teaching of the economic sciences. A curriculum, which is to develop career paths and life skills for learners, therefore, needs to be founded on principles, which enhance optimal learning. If a curriculum is to develop career and life skills, that curriculum needs to reflect the principles on which the field of study is based.

The following principles, therefore, are adopted in this study:

- the principle of planning;
- the principle of individualisation and differentiation;
- the principle of evaluation;
- the principle of experience;
- the principle of mastering;
- the principle of purposefulness.

2.3.1. THE PRINCIPLE OF PLANNING

This principle is important in both the school situation and corporate industry to ensure that there is a routine that is followed to achieve a specific goal, that is, producing economically literate secondary school graduates.

2.3.1.1. Definition of planning

Gordon (1984: 55-56) and Garfield (1962:710 in Piek (1992:11) define planning as a way of achieving a particular goal. It can also be defined as a decision with regard to a course of action. In an education situation, Coombs (1974:14-15) defines education planning as the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its learners and society. Educational planning deals with the future while drawing enlightenment from the past. It is the springboard for future decisions and actions. Planning is a continuous process, concerned not only with where to go but with how to get there and by what best route. One of the central tasks of educational planning is to determine how best to keep these intricate internal and external relationships of the educational system in reasonable balance under dynamically changing circumstances, and to bend them constantly in the required direction.

Archer, du Plessis, Lambrechts, Oosthuizen and Zungu (1997:219-220) define planning as a process of making

decisions about the future. Planning helps an organization to define it's goals and establish the procedure of reaching them. It involves choosing tasks that must be performed to reach the goals of the organization, outlining how the tasks must be performed and indicating when the tasks should be performed. A major advantage of planning is that it helps managers to be future-oriented.

Hossler, Bean and Associates (1990:21-23) emphasise that definitions of the term planning are abundant. People differ in emphasis but typically refer to these elements:

- planning is planning for change. There is no need to plan to remain the same.
- planning is future oriented unlike decision making, which is oriented towards the present.
- planning involves choosing between alternatives. It is a means to determine which alternatives are preferred.

The researcher's definition of planning extends to including background knowledge of what the term really means. The researcher believes that once planning has been developed, it should be put into action in both the school and the work situation.

2.3.1.2. Planning in an educational (school) situation

Lewis (1987:3) points out that planning minimises the degree to which education administrators and educators will be caught by surprise and enables them to revise goals and objectives by reacting to dynamic variables within the school-community environment. The educational authorities should no longer judge the effectiveness of school personnel solely on the basis of their having reached an objective.

Developing a plan of action is a way to respond to changes within a school organisation. The most important reason to plan is to build a process of reaching mutual agreement in the setting and revising of goals and objectives. Educational planning is the process of identifying, collecting and analysing essential and critical internal and external data about a school. This leads to current and useful information for preparing and executing long and short-range plans in an effort to help realize the school's basic purposes, mission and operational goals.

The researcher believes that a secondary school economic science graduate is expected to know that planning refers to what should be achieved and how it should be achieved. Planning can be regarded as a determinant of a programme that is future-directed. If a student wants to become an entrepreneur, it is wise for him to do subjects that should be followed under the

economic science stream at the secondary school level to be a successful business organiser.

Bisschoff (1995:18-20) states that the principle of planning is of the utmost importance if order and orderliness are aimed at in education and the ordinary life of both the parent and the learner. Educational planning is divided into two, viz., long-term and short-term. Curriculum and work programmes are designed for the whole year or for years and they belong to long-term planning. A lesson plan for a particular lesson belongs to the short-term because it is designed normally for one day or one week. In introducing a lesson, it is necessary that an economic science educator should plan exactly which teaching methods, techniques and media will be used.

It is important for the learner to be a good planner. In future the learner may become an entrepreneur. One of the main tasks of an entrepreneur is to conduct a proper coordination of the other three factors of production to make a corporate world more profitable. An economic science educator may also be needed to prepare his scheme of work properly in order to finish his or her work programme in time.

2.3.1.3. Planning in a corporate world

Du Plessis (1989:301) describes planning as the management function which deals with the precise development of appropriate objectives that must be

achieved by a corporate world within a specific period of time, for example, a year. Planning is perhaps the most difficult part of a manager's function and is probably the one that is most neglected. The success of a corporate organisation depends upon the ability of a manager to run it properly. One believes that proper planning results in maximum profits and a healthy atmosphere between the employer and the employees.

Eksteen, Miller, Ledwaba and Eksteen (1997:355) emphasise that planning is done with the aim of working out means of reaching a definite goal. They further maintain that a manager in a corporate industry looks to the future, and devises plans to tackle specific operations and executes them successfully. Planning is regarded as the most important function of management. In planning the manager decides about:

- what is to be done in the future
- how to do it
- when to do it
- who should do it.

(Eksteen, *et. al.* 1997:356)

Another important aspect of planning is that it refers to the method that will be used in doing something. A manager in a corporate organisation must be familiar with its business plan to create long-term, medium term or short-term structures in his areas of concern.

2.3.1.4 **Relationship between planning in a school situation and corporate world.**

As a process, planning involves gathering information and gathering people together to define the situation. During formal planning, people come together and talk about what is important to them, exchange views, ideas, and pleasantries, exercise dominance and learn about others' thoughts about how a school should look like. Through a continual planning process, ideas emerge around which different groups can coalesce, new rules are passed or new roles are created and a guided evolution of the institution (like a school or industry) takes place.

Archer, Clarkson, Lambrecht, Oosthuizen and Zungu (1996:163) point out that senior people (top level management) are chiefly responsible for seeing that the planning function is carried out. The higher the manager in the organisation, the more time he or she normally spends on planning. The type of planning also changes as managers move up in the organisation, as management at a low level plans on a day-to-day basis. In an educational (school) situation, the government, through the department of education, employs educational planners to determine the future goals of our education in the curriculum. Educational planners are part of top-level management seeing that they have more of an influence on the approval of the curriculum more than other stakeholders. The school principal is part of the top-level management in his school. A school principal that is

against the curriculum that includes economic science education in his school may disapprove of the teaching of such subjects in his institution.

Secondary school economic science education plays a major role in teaching learners how to run a business concern. Learners should acquire skills to coordinate the factors of production and maximise their profits. They should also have a theoretical background of how a business plan is drafted. Educators should encourage learners to develop life skills based on entrepreneurial education to ensure that they are capable of being good planners who are able to start their own businesses to reduce the high rate of unemployment in the country.

2.3.2. The Principle Of Assessment

The principle of assessment is the method which an educator in a school and the employer in a corporate order uses to determine if the learner or employee has competency in the material being taught or work being done. A broad range of assessment indicators should be used to measure the progress of the learner or employee. This principle measures the competence of a learner and the skills he or she has acquired. Skills need to be assessed so as to achieve efficiency or effectiveness at school or at work.

2.3.2.1 Assessment criteria in a job and school situation

Decision makers in almost all situations are responsible for assessing the people who work for them. Even educators are responsible for assessing learners in their classrooms, an aspect of their work that some find unpleasant. Assessment processes consume a fairly large portion of an educator's time. For instance, a review by Shaefer and Lissitz (1987) as cited by Arends (1994:211) reported that educators spend as much as 10 percent of their time on matters related to assessment. Stiggins (1987) also in Arends (1994:211) found that educators could spend as much as one-third of their time on assessment activities. For these reasons, it is critical that beginning educators build a repertoire of effective strategies for performing the executive functions of learners' assessment.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (1995:2-3) points out that assessment represents continuing awareness by an educator of the development and knowledge of learners over a period of time. An educator that is using assessment is looking for signs that show growth of thinking processes, development of skills and acquisition of knowledge and understanding.

Continuous assessment involves an evaluation of learner's activities such as exercises, assignments, class tests and practical and oral work on a continuous basis throughout the year. Unlike assessment which has to take place on an on-going basis throughout the academic

year, examinations are designed and applied to ascertain the level of achievement of individual learners at a given point in time during the school year, e.g. in June and in December.

Lemmer (1994:19) emphasizes that educators can determine whether learners understand the work through assessment. Assessment can be done through testing, homework, assignments and class or group discussions. Economic science educators should decide whether to assess learners according to:

- the learner's previous results,
- other learners' results,
- other criteria.

Assessment enables educators to determine whether:

- their approach to the teaching situation was correct
- they used the most effective teaching methods and techniques
- the standard of teaching was maintained
- a learner has shown progress.

Assessment is also a system used in a school situation to promote learners to the next grade, for example, from Grade 10 to 11.

It is important that an educator monitors learners' work and assesses progress through a systematic record-

keeping procedure. Bull and Solity (1992:36-37) specify that a considerable amount of information needs to be gathered, assimilated and recalled to assess a learner's progress in response to selected teaching procedures. Record keeping requires attention to detail and a regular time commitment. The busy educator who is concerned with preparing and conducting effective learning sessions will want a record keeping system which places minimum demands on time and yet contains all the necessary information. Record keeping will develop an economic science student in that he or she may acquire knowledge of how to control the financial affairs and administration of the business sector.

Bisschoff (1995:35-36) maintains that assessment is an integral part of the instructional programme because it shows educators whether their work is successful and whether the aims of their teaching have been fulfilled. It also shows learners how successful they are and how the school evaluates them. Assessment can also take place on a continuous basis. In the classroom an educator can assess whether the lesson objectives have been achieved. This can be done through questions, written work and discussion.

Lemlech (1988:85 and 272) points out that students' progress should be routinely and cooperatively assessed in terms of cognitive understanding, skills, attitudes and values. Through the assessment process educators learn how to improve learning and how to improve teaching; while learners learn what it is that is important to learn

and how successful they are at it. Many educators share their teaching outcomes with learners in order to clarify the relationship between what is taught and what is assessed. The assessment process should be a community system that keeps everyone who is a member and everyone who is involved - (learners, parents, community members and educators) informed about the effectiveness of the educational programme.

Assessment occurs continuously in the classroom in both formal and informal ways. Parents can also evaluate teaching performance by examining the papers that come home and by questioning their child's understanding of what was taught. The examination of homework papers is another way to learn about teaching. It should be noted that by assessing teaching performance using the afore-mentioned evidence, parents do not have to step into the classroom. Even some principals assess teaching performance of a particular educator through this method. Teaching can be assessed by what learners reveal in terms of learning performance and their feelings about school and the educator. Other ways to assess teaching include observing what an economic science educator does in the classroom and observing what economic science learners do while the educator teaches and also observing the classroom environment.

Duminy, Steyn, Dreyer, Vos and Dobie (1995:-3-4) maintain that an important aim of assessment is to show educators whether or not their work is successful and whether or not the objectives and aims of their teaching

have been fulfilled. Another aim is to show learners how successful they are and how they are assessed by the school. It is necessary for educators and learners to know how much progress has been made in their schoolwork. Assessment indicates where there are gaps, difficulties and shortcomings, which can then be diagnosed and put right. Assessment in the form of school tests and examinations are often used. Effective assessment also serves a useful function for parents as well as employers.

In summary assessment aims at:

- showing educators whether their work is successful
- showing learners whether they are making satisfactory progress in school
- assisting school administrators and employers in their selection of tasks
- showing parents whether their children are making the desired progress at school.

In assessment, economic educators can play an important part in judging and assessing the learners with whom they are in close contact every day. In the work situation, a corporate manager can assess the perception of people about the image of his undertaking through what people say in the media. Success is also determined by the amount of turnover, and profits gained by the business.

In a work situation (the corporate world) a job seeker is assessed through an interview or a prescribed test before he or she can be employed. Eksteen, Naude, Miller and Eksteen (1995:41) together with Archer, *et. al.* (1996:36-37) agree that an applicant must be assessed to determined his or her suitability for the job on offer. The following type of tests may be used together with an interview:

- *Trade tests* to determine competence and ability, usually conforming to specific standards.
- *Ability tests* to indicate the tasks the applicant already knows. Ability tests can also be used to determine vocational potential, aptitude and latent skills.
- *Personality and interest tests* determine personality traits essential for certain positions.
- *Psychometric test* to identify certain characteristics on the basis of the way in which the applicant handles certain objects.

Archer, *et al.*, (1996:36-37) and Eksteen, *et al.*, (1995:41) emphasize the ability to cope effectively with assessments needs to be developed in learners during the secondary school phase before they enter the tertiary or job situation. At the secondary school level an economic science educator is expected to play a major role in helping learners to choose streams that are relevant to their skills and aptitude. This can be done through assessment to determine the future career that should be undertaken by different learners.

2.3.3. THE PRINCIPLE OF EXPERIENCE

There is a general feeling amongst many people that executives in the corporate world prefer to employ people who possess experience in any vacant post. Promotion in both the education and the corporate sector is also determined by the degree of experience an individual possesses.

2.3.3.1. Definition of the term "experience"

Duminy, *et. al.* (1996:290) define experience as the acquisition of knowledge, ability, attitude, and skills, through one's own perception and direct participation. To gain experience, the researcher believes, one must be practical in what one prefers to know or do, for example, a secondary school economic science student must visit an industry to see for himself of herself how production is monitored.

2.3.3.2. Role of experience in both the school and the corporate sector

Van Rooyen and Van der Merwe (1996) in Jacobs and Gawe (1996:245) emphasise that it is a fact that what learners experience and how they experience it will affect the success of their learning. They further point out that it is the duty of on educator to organise effective learning

experiences for the learners so that they learn about the world around them.

Bull and Solity (1992:12) maintain that this process of learning can be applied to more complex behaviours, for example, to explain the process by which an educator learns, through personal experience, the most effective ways of managing children in school. Learning alone through direct experience requires many repetitions of relevant learning opportunities and takes time. Children learning to say their first words copy examples that other people deliberately give them. An educator is advised to watch other educators who are more experienced in managing class groups. An economic science educator is also expected to consider the experience that the learner has, i.e., he or she must start from the known before moving to the unknown. The researcher can highlight that a large number of corporate organisation require workers who possess experience when recruiting new employees.

Bisschoff (1995:30-31) emphasises that it is important that learners should experience the learning content during the lesson to the extent that they can identify themselves with it, so that their perceptible world can be increased and this promotes their thoughts. An economic science educator should plan carefully to ensure that audio-visual material is suitable for the learners'

intellectual developmental stage, and that it links up with their frame of reference. An economic science educator should be able to differentiate various classes in the teaching-learning situation, e.g., to ensure that secondary school business economics learners are actively involved during a visit to an organisation to examine stock taking. An educator should inform learners in advance of the visit what is expected of them and what they can expect to see and experience. After such a visit, some form of discussion or report back should take place so that learners can relate to their experiences. When, for example, in accounting, the income statement is discussed with Grade 10 and 12, it will differ considerably for the two classes to suite their level of development. In economics also, the educator should also start from the known to the unknown. A topic on the stock exchange should be linked with a public company and different forms of ownership.

Norton, Webb, Dlugosh and Sybouts (1996:60) maintain that some educational superintendents have experience as classroom educators in at a fundamental or building level to obtain leadership positions. Teaching experience provides the basis for understanding the connection between educators, learning and learners. School superintendents must understand and support the relationships needed to make a classroom effective and thereby successful for the learner.

While experience at the building level may be important, it is not the only route to executive school leadership. A growing numbers of candidates for the superintendency have leadership experience that does not include a principalship, but come instead from central office experience in budgeting, staff development and curriculum development.

Schumuck and Wyant (1983:93-94) put forward the notion that selection of school administrators is based on successful experience as a classroom educator along with administrative experience, strong management skills, the ability to evaluate staff performance, and expertise in planning. Experience is often the prime factor. Normally, people who have advanced from one stage to the next have had more teaching and administrative experience than those who have not advanced.

Experience seems to be a telling factor that determines an aspirant's chances for advancement through the selection process, just as lack of experience is the reason most frequently cited for not advancing. Experience is an increasingly important criterion for advancement. Experience seems to be the key to being hired. At each stage of this research, the people who had advanced were older and had more teaching and administrative experience than those who did not.

The researcher believes that there must be a link between a school and the corporate world. The corporate world must participate in school life and vice versa. Secondary school economic science learners must do in-service training during weekends and school holidays to gain experience in what will be expected of them when they become secondary school graduates. This will equip them with the skills needed to fit into a job that may be available in the corporate world.

2.3.4. THE PRINCIPLE OF MASTERING

Gagne, Briggs and Wager (1992:261) maintain that mastery learning means essentially that if proper conditions can be provided, perhaps 90-95 percent of the learners can actually master most objectives to the degree only reached by good learners. The mastery-learning concept abandons the idea that learners merely learn more or less well. A learner usually requires one of the following measures: more time for learning, different media or materials and a diagnosis to determine what missing prerequisite knowledge or skills he or she must acquire to master the objective. The personal knowledge of an educator can be added to form decisions concerning learners whose performance is not acceptable even when these methods have been fully utilized. An economic sciences learner needs to be told when he or she has performed well or badly in achieving a particular objective. An economic science educator needs to determine the remedial instruction needed for improvement. The researcher can highlight the fact that mastery learning refers to error-free performance in school and work situations.

Economic science learners are expected to be able to perform certain activities at the end of instruction. A grade eleven accountancy learner should be able to prepare an income statement and the balance to indicate that he or she has mastered the topic thoroughly.

Fraser, Loubser and Van Rooy (1991:65) point out that the learner should master the subject matter step-by-step as it is demonstrated by an educator to enable the learner to master and be skilful in the topic under discussion. This may also be applicable to both the learner and an employee in a job situation.

Bisschoff (1995:31 and 33) emphasises that in the learning process an educator must make sure that the learner has attained real knowledge of the content to which he or she is exposed. It is only when the learning content has been fully mastered that aims and objectives have been achieved with regard to all its categories, i.e. cognitive, affective and psychometric. Mastering starts with the teaching-learning situation and relates to the extent to which didactic principles and exposition methods are implemented. A further aspect which should be considered with regard to mastering, is that learners must be assisted in developing effective study methods. It is part of the responsibility of the educator to guide learners in effective study methods, habits, attitudes, techniques and skills (Cawood, *et. al.*, 1982:205 in Bischoff, 1995: 33), bearing in mind that subjects differ and each learner should develop his own study methods. Only when learners have mastered the learning content through their studies and it has

become meaningful knowledge to them, have the educative aims of teaching and learning been achieved.

The researcher believes that this can be linked to outcomes-based education in which the new education system emphasizes skill based learning rather than simple academic learning.

The researcher believes that it is important for an economic science educator to monitor his/her learners in such a way that he/she checks that learners have mastered their work properly. This can be done through the continuous assessment of learners by utilising a test in the classroom during revision when a particular task has been accomplished. In a job situation mastering of a particular task can be seen through the productivity of each employee, in view of the fact that the task experts productivity is normally high.

2.3.5. THE PRINCIPLE OF PURPOSEFULNESS

Sergiovanni (1990:55-56) maintains that purposing can be viewed as a compass that points the direction for a school or as a road map that details the way. Purposing can be defined as that continuous stream of actions by an organization's formal leadership which has the effect of inducing clarity, consensus and commitment regarding the organisation's basic purposes. An identity for the school emerges to help differentiate it from other schools and, as a result, the school is transformed from as secular workplace to a sacred enterprise. Purposing is concerned with leader's hopes, dreams, shared values, expectations and the development of the school's share

purpose. A secondary school economic science learner is expected to know the career direction of his or her stream of learners.

One of the functions of the school is to accomplish the development of critical thinking, effective communication, creative skills and occupational competence in the learner. Thompson (1973:246) points out that during the secondary school years nearly all learners have left the fantasy of development and are in the tentative sub-stage of the exploration of vocational development. During this development stage the learner is expected to begin to formulate ideas as to fields and level of work that are appropriate to him or her. A learner is also expected to formulate concepts about self and occupation that will enable him or her to commit himself or herself to a type of education and training that will lead him or her to a specific occupation. A student who wants to be a chartered accountant, economist, economic science educator or banker will follow subjects that are relevant to his or her future career, that is, he or she will enrol in economic science subjects. A student who graduates at a secondary school level is likely to have a tentative occupational choice.

Kahler, Morgan, Holmes and Bundy (1985:6-7) emphasise that each change in occupation or job usually necessitates acquiring new skills. Those who remain in the same job must update themselves concerning new technology and skills associated with their employment. An average person must know something about different fields to enable him or her to have a fair chance of getting employment. The huge amount of knowledge required cannot be acquired in a few years but takes

an entire lifetime. Secondary school economic science learning should be regarded as the beginning and not the end because it lays a foundation for future occupations.

Jacobs (1996) in Jacobs and Gawe (1996:63) define purposefulness as a behaviour by teacher and pupils, which shows that they are committed to the achievement of specific lesson aims and/or objectives. It should be emphasised that purposefulness refers to learning with the aim of achieving a particular purpose. A grade twelve accounting student may enrol for such a subject with the intention of becoming a future accountant.

Bischoff (1995:16) puts forward the view that it is necessary to pay more attention to the relationship between purposefulness and the aim of secondary school education. It is generally accepted that secondary school education is aimed at educating the learner as a whole and as a result it immediately becomes of the ultimate aim of education. Every educator, including a secondary school economic science educator, must have a clear view of the ultimate aim of education before entering the classroom.

McNell and Willes (1990:145) maintain that learning does not occur by mere repetition of an act or exposure to a situation but there must be motivation i.e. the learner must be willing to learn. Learners may be willing to learn because of interests, needs, attitudes and aspirations. Individuals pay attention to events that predict satisfaction. Thus, the expectancy of positive consequences is an important aspect of instruction. It increases

attention to learning tasks and leads the learners to expect positive consequences from future tasks.

Schooling is education organized with the intention of achieving certain goals. Teaching has ends which are the goals we seek to reach. The purpose of teaching economic science to the secondary school learners is to prepare them for jobs in the corporate world or to prepare them to be job creators. A certain section of learners may be prepared for the tertiary level of education at technikons and universities.

2.3.6 THE PRINCIPLES OF INDIVIDUALISATION AND DIFFERENTIATION

In real life even twins cannot have totally similar lifestyles, attitudes, character, skill or ability. It has been generally emphasised that it is important for a secondary school economic science educator to take note that there are individual differences amongst learners in every class and amongst people in general.

2.3.6.1. Definition of the term "individualisation"

Duminy, *et. al.* (1996:292) define individualisation as differences between one individual and another. Learners in a class need to be assisted according to their ability in order to be successful in the teaching and learning situation.

2.3.6.2. Definition of the term "differentiation"

Duminy, *et.al.* (1992:327) defines differentiation as a term which refers to the selection of a curriculum which is matched to the capabilities of learners. In differentiated teaching, the planning is such that learners are selected into more homogeneous groups for maximum challenge and stimulation within the separate groups.

2.3.6.3. Individualisation and differentiation in a school and working environment.

Differentiation results from individualisation (Lemmer, 1994:12). Total individualisation is not possible, so differentiation occurs as a link between individualisation and formal teaching. Differentiation provides equal opportunities for learners with the same potential ability. Each learner is of equal importance, but instead of each learner working independently as in individualisation, learners with the same ability are grouped together and taught as a unit. Various forms of differentiation exist in schools. There may be differentiation of study courses, work programmes or curriculum examinations are differentiated depending on the purpose, requirement and standard of the different courses. An economic science educator can also differentiate by means of assignments, giving simpler assignments to the below average learners

so that they will not be discouraged. One problem of differentiation is that it makes the educator's task more complex because attention has to be paid to each individual rather than gearing all work to the level of the average learner. As time goes on the below average learner will be able to do the same work that has been done by the intelligent student. This exercise may be a problem in large classes because an economic science educator may not be able to give individual attention because of time constraints.

Lemmer (1994:11) specifies that individualisation is based on the educator's acceptance of each learner's unique ability and potential. This principle can be implemented in all aspects of teaching, such as outcomes, methods and assessment. An economic science educator must assess the interests, background, needs and intelligence of the learners. An economic science educator will proceed more slowly with the less intelligent learner and faster with the more gifted. Where there are computers, educators may develop programmes, which cater for individual needs, and remedial education. Ample time is vital to the success of individualisation because less gifted learners will need more attention than the gifted ones. Individualisation leads to differentiation and can be promoted by giving individual or group projects, as well as by encouraging and helping learners to determine their own rate of progress.

Bisschoff (1995:24-26) maintains that it is necessary to take into account these individual differences in the teaching-learning situation. Due to the fact that the differentiated education system is not perfect and the learners do not receive sufficient individual attention, the educator must endeavour to create opportunities in the classroom situation for learners to develop their full potential. As far as individual teaching is concerned, reference can be made to remedial teaching where attention is given to a specific problem of a learner under particular circumstances, e.g. the accounting educator can, during an accounting period, attend to the problems encountered by learners while the rest of the class continues with class work or the business economics educator can make an appointment with a learner after school hours and attend to his or her particular problem. This kind of individual attention can only be given to a limited degree because of lack of time and the number of learners in the class.

It is important that an educator take the principle of differentiation into account when planning for the different levels of presentation. The aims and objectives for each level will have to be formulated separately. In the case where higher and standard grade learners attend lessons during the same period, the demands placed on an educator are much greater, because during a lesson provision

must, for example, be made for questioning on the different levels without neglecting either of the groups. Higher grade learners become bored if the questions are too easy and the standard grade learners will be discouraged if the work is too difficult. During tests and examinations, it is necessary to set separate question papers and memoranda for each level to ensure that the general aims and objectives of the subject are achieved. The highly talented learners take subjects on a higher-grade level while the less gifted take it on a standard grade level.

Gawe (1996:39-42) in Jacobs and Gawe (1996:39-42) advises that there may be learners who are highly gifted and those who are less gifted. An economic science educator must undertake to apply different teaching strategies when planning lessons because of this difference. Economic science educators in traditionally black schools, because of big numbers, must divide learners into several groups. In these groups the mixture of abilities must be taken into account and each learner must be given a task according to his or her ability and skill. Individualizing instruction increases private contact between educator and learner and results in greater understanding in both parties.

The researcher wishes to emphasize that allocation of duties in the corporate world is also

done according to individualisation and differentiation of different workers. Workers may differ in skill, ability, qualification and attitude. The employer may assign the job of a financial manager of the business to a person who possesses financial skills, for example, a certificate, diploma or degree in accounting. Learners must be aware of the skills needed for a particular life situation.

2.4 VIEWS ON SKILLS EXPECTED IN THE CORPORATE WORLD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE GRADUATES

Dostal, Bennel and Swainson (1990:19) are of the opinion that in South Africa the private sector is reluctant to train large numbers of young people looking for jobs. They further point out that it has been noticed that governments world-wide, for example in the United Kingdom, Kenya and Zimbabwe have generally had no alternative but to adopt a more interventionist, training role which often manifests itself in a marked shift towards pre-service. Without direct state involvement, this practice seem unlikely to succeed and the curriculum need to be adjusted to fulfil corporate needs.

According to Nkomo (1990:393-394) post-apartheid South Africa will be faced with a problem of unemployment especially for the dropouts and school leavers. It is a challenge faced by the government to ensure that skilled personnel are provided for existing industries. This can be achieved through education which combines academic learning with productive work, and which will seek to restore the organic relationship between labour and the intellect. Nkomo further emphasises that education with production should be seen as a viable option in the education mix to be adopted by a post apartheid South

Africa. The advantage of education with production is that it combines learning with productive work while it makes an individual self-reliant and self-sufficient. The researcher has realized that, almost four years after the end of the apartheid era, South Africa is faced with a problem of unemployment which is adversely affecting many people of different racial groups, both qualified and unqualified.

Secondary school economic science subjects can certainly play a major role in the upliftment of the economic life of many South Africans. If this is properly handled, the country will be able to produce job creators instead of job seekers and the country will reduce, depending on foreign investors for job creation. Mthembu and Bruwer (1997:1) maintain that many Black graduates struggle to find jobs because the curricula do not appear to equip graduates to enter the job market as skilled and trained personnel. South Africa has a shortage of skilled personnel. Developing human beings in it will not lead to higher economic growth. Unemployment is a national crisis for black graduates. Tertiary institutions produce graduates annually who struggle to find jobs. Graduates are left unemployed because stakeholders (the government, the corporate sector, and other organisations) believe that their qualifications are not market-related. Curricula generally focus on academic content as opposed to skills development and training. This means that an important part of our community is under-utilised. The researcher believes that curriculum designers should ensure that market-related subjects like economic sciences receive special attention.

Morgan and Williams (1990:10) illustrate that there is an increasing demand from many sectors of society for greater co-operation between education and industry. They further point out that the successful school of today is often seen as the one that does something with industry, and industrialists are often asked what they are doing with schools. It is more important to bring industry to school than to take school to industry. Learners need to adapt to their

working environment. It is also important that schools understand the skills industrialists are looking for, and industrialists must know what is being taught in schools and the reason for this.

Rowlands (1991:6) is of the opinion that accountants need to be educated in the broader sense. Technical skills alone are insufficient if they are going to perform a meaningful role in society. An accountant must not possess technical skills only but he or she should have the ability to think analytically and critically, with an understanding of the political, economic and social dynamics of his or her environment. Accountants are also expected to teach society how it must handle its finances.

Mayhew (1989) is of the opinion that great changes in socio-economic structures are occurring in South Africa. The need for educated people, especially business leaders, is increasing. It is for these reasons that business management at secondary school should form an effective basis for further tertiary development. Commerce and industry can negotiate with the education authorities to promote greater emphasis on small business and entrepreneurship in the curricula for economic science subjects. The business economics educator can play an important role in the training and education of the future workforce. To do so, he or she should be thoroughly acquainted with the latest developments in this field. There is a cause for concern regarding the adequacy of subject knowledge that is not keeping pace with a steadily changing business world. The relevance of the business economics secondary school work programme and the lack of connection between the business economics educator and the practical aspects of business life are pertinent areas which need to be the focus of attention.

Business economics, the science which deals inter alia, with the principles of how business firms should be managed in order to achieve their objectives, must conform to certain requirements of scientific endeavour as well as those

of business practice (Bosch, Radder, Tait and Vens, 1995). This implies that business economics should seek the establishment of a worthy academic structure with distinct dividing lines between good theory and bad theory and between good practice and bad practice. As a result of the shortage of high-level human resources in South Africa, the business sector has been demanding that the products of business economics departments be practical and of immediate use.

Becker (1987) maintains that the business economics educator of today is compelled to follow new working forms through which every learner can develop to his or her optimum. He further warns that a teaching strategy where learners are required to work in the classroom only cannot be permitted anymore. Outside the classroom there are various information sources (non-classroom education) that are accessible to the business economics learners. Co-operation between the educator and the corporate world is important in view of the fact that the corporate worked can constitute an important source of information and a training field for the economic science classroom. Thus, the corporate world functions as a study space where the classwork can be supplemented and where the economic science learner, with the assistance of suitable media, can explore more current fields. The expectation is that such theoretical models will serve as guidelines to the educator in actual practice.

Ntshoe (1993) in the South African Conference on the Restructuring of Education, (1993:12) specifies that many transitional developing countries including South Africa have been unable to structure a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of the country. He further argues that in line with the need to reform education, there has been an argument that diversified and vocationalized curricula which prepare learners for specific occupations in the labour market are better than a general programme. Ntshoe (1993) is of the opinion that restructuring of a curriculum has never been researched but can

be of benefit to South African educational planners and will prepare learners adequately for the labour market. Shaw (1993) also in the South African Conference on the restructuring of Education (1993:46-47) argues that the development of competence is an important goal in the secondary school curriculum. It must bring about a change in attitudes and self-motivation that will provide the learner with the resources to become self-sufficient. The challenge is to devise a policy which will, without lowering standards, offer the majority of teenagers in our country an opportunity to prepare for a satisfying adult life.

The secondary school accounting work programmes should be reviewed and assessed so as to establish whether they fulfil their stated objectives i.e. of developing learners' logical thought process and analytical abilities and encouraging a judicious and systematic approach (Friedman, 1987). In his research Friedman (1987) discovered that the first year accounting learners at the Witwatersrand University who had done accounting at secondary school and those who had not showed no difference, especially during the second semester in learners' academic performance. The secondary school accounting curricula should be structured in such a way that there is a distinction between a learner who had previously, the subject and one who is studying it for the first time at a tertiary level or in the work situation.

A shocking report shows that long-term career goals are the least influential of the factors affecting the career choices of black learners. These were the findings of research conducted by Barry Ngobeni (1997:17). The findings reveal that long term career goals and economic needs do not receive sufficient consideration. Many black graduates enrol for the traditional disciplines such as education and the social sciences. The results suggest that Black learners are mainly interested in acquiring certificates, diplomas or degrees, and that life beyond campus seems not to matter. Such trends also occur at secondary school level where the learner realizes after passing grade

twelve that he or she has chosen subjects or a stream not relevant to his or her future career. Ngobeni's research findings further reveal that it is disturbing that job opportunities and long-term career goals emerged as the least influential factor affecting career choice.

Another disturbing finding centres on the timing of career choice decisions by learners. Most learners decide on their tertiary studies after writing Grade Twelve examination. Should the current trend of the mass production of educators and social science graduates continue, the skills shortage resulting from lack of alignment between the demand for and supply of skilled labour will cause a serious strain on the economy. Companies with sincere employment equity policies will find it difficult to meet their equity targets due to an undersupply of black graduates from fields such as the economic sciences. A better understanding by learners of the link between the demand and supply of skilled labour is most likely to provide a long term solution and increase the employability of post school learners.

Basson (1984:8-9) emphasises that economic science subjects are the backbone of the economy in a capitalistic country like South Africa. He further maintains that curriculum designers do not pay enough attention to these subjects. The status and popularity of economic science subjects, i.e. accounting, business economics and economics in secondary schools is hardly commensurate with their importance to the country's economy. Basson also highlights the fact that economic science subjects are included only as subjects in the list of options available to learners and have to compete with traditionally high status subjects like history and geography. There is a general belief that economic science subjects are seldom taken as a first choice but because learners have been judged unable to cope with high status subjects hence by default are compelled to study accounting or another economic science subject. Economic science education contributes to skills

development in the learner, which the researcher believes is needed by the corporate world. It also prepares the learner for the labour market.

Cole (1993:81) recommends that economics education must be concerned with developing abilities, interest and skills by which people living in a democratic society are able to understand their experiences in a changing world, and are able to interpret economic issues with some insight. Learners must be taught to analyse such issues as price formation, demand and supply curve, inflation and economic development. Cole further points to Bloom and Krathwohl's analysis of the development of logical thinking, in which they suggest that learners should (i) know the facts, (ii) understand the facts, (iii) apply the facts, (iv) take the facts apart and (v) put the facts together again in such a way that new perspectives are revealed. Teaching economic science subjects would not only be about developing an economic perspective in the minds of learners but would also foster an ability to examine critically an economic science debate.

When a new non-racial democratic government came into power in South Africa in 1994, an affirmative action policy was introduced. The main aim of affirmative action is to allow qualified and competent blacks to fill top positions in all fields where such positions exist e.g. health and education. In the past black South Africans were denied entry in certain positions through job reservation. Some corporate stakeholders are failing to comply with this deal to affirm Blacks. Johan Jooste (1997:3) said the Housing Ministry is finding it hard to implemented affirmative action because of a lack of suitably qualified people to fill vacancies. These vacancies need people who possess good managerial skills.

Van Rensberg (1989) emphasizes that accounting education not only helps to form the child as a developing adult, but it has also the added advantage of being beneficial to the child personally and to the community as a whole. The aim of teaching accounting at secondary school level is not purely academic but also to contribute to the development of learners on the road to adulthood where they will be able to judge between good and bad. In studying accounting at a secondary school, learners must be able to solve financial crises if a need arises. they must also be able to reconstruct and develop their business. It is the duty of a person who has studied accounting to review the financial statements of a business on a daily basis. They may be able to identify mismanagement and the misappropriation of funds so that these mistakes can be corrected with immediate effect. The knowledge gained in accounting in problem solving can also be beneficial in both business economics and economics because they work hand in hand with accounting.

Jerling (1996:7) specifies that there is a clear tendency to employ more highly skilled rather than lower skilled people in the South African labour market. This tendency, together with the fact that the economy is becoming less labour-intensive, suggests that the South African economy will experience a growing surplus or oversupply of low-skilled labour unless serious attempts are made to create work opportunities for this group. Low-skilled labour also needs skill based training to make it marketable. Productivity in South Africa

compares badly with the achievements of most industrialised countries. Economic science education at the secondary school level can play an important role in producing quality labour that will be more marketable.

Jamieson (1989) in Dale (1989:27-28) observes that it is not easy to determine the skills, attitudes and knowledge that must be imparted to learners in preparation for work in an industry. Employers complain that school leavers are poor in interviews, listening, following instructions and social and interpersonal skills at the workplace. Employers put the blame on the education system. Our schools are not producing young people who are practically capable in the modern world.

Holmes (1987) in Atkinson (1987:179) maintains that the debate about how schools should prepare learners for life in an industrial society is not new. The debate has often been confusing and schools have found it difficult to frame a response to the question. However, educators see themselves, as providing education for learners of all abilities rather than training learners for a particular job. Corporate industry has always found it extremely difficult to specify the needs of its workforce in general. Even so, the emphasis is on education in the technical and more general skills relevant to the world of work and training for specific careers, which must be incorporated into the secondary school curriculum.

High skill that is possessed by a worker opens the way to good performance at work. There is a high demand for skilled workers in various working centres. The vast majority of workers looking for jobs are unskilled. There are few companies that are able to invest in training and skills enhancement. Even among corporate industries which are able to afford investment in human resources development, many are more likely to buy skills in the labour market rather than develop them. One could assume that more highly skilled workers will be more productive but in practice the degree of skill required depends on the tasks needed to do particular jobs. For many companies, it makes sense to train workers in the specific tasks required in

their production processes. The role of highly skilled labour in enhancing productivity must be seen in relation to the structure of industry in particular countries. (South African Labour Bulletin, Volume 19 Number 4 September 1995:74-76). Outcome based education (Curriculum 2005) recently in operation in South Africa, if implemented successfully, may address the problem of skills development in our country.

2.5. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A person who decides to start a particular business is normally one who is prepared to take risks because he or she may either get a profit or a loss. The person who decides to start a business is not afraid to take risks and put ideas into practice. Eksteen, Miller, Ledwaba and Eksteen (1997:1) maintain that many South Africans are part of a business system in this country. South African citizens should understand the critical importance of reconstruction, development and economic growth for a sustainable economic future. Citizens also need to be equipped with entrepreneurial and managerial skills.

2.5.1. DEFINITION OF THE TERM ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Du Plessis (1989:76) defines an entrepreneur as a person or group of people who, by virtue of their individual talents and abilities, take the initiative in acquiring capital, labour and land with the aim of starting a business. The word Entrepreneur is a French word going back to the fifteenth century. It was applied to a person who displayed enterprise or leadership qualities and who was prepared to take risks. An entrepreneur carries the risks of the business and claims profits or is responsible losses.

McCarthy, Archer, Smit, Cele, Burger and Fransman (1997:29) define an entrepreneur as a specialised type of human resource with the personality traits required to combine the other factors of production with the aim of producing goods and services. The

availability of entrepreneurs is therefore very important for economic progress. The country may have enough natural resources but the researcher believes that proper economic growth and development may only take place if there are enough entrepreneurs. The success of any undertaking largely depends on the skills and decisions taken by the entrepreneur.

2.5.2.1 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION'S ROLE IN THE ECONOMIC UPLIFTMENT OF A COUNTRY

Zondi (1985:6-7) specifies that academics, certainly in the field of economic sciences, need to clarify in their own minds whether the overriding objective is to teach entrepreneurship or train management expertise. There is a need to develop an economic science programme for schools that will equip learners with the entrepreneurial skills to be the leaders and decision makers of tomorrow. Continuous research may assist in establishing the current needs of the business community. One can argue that the changing circumstances have an effect on the relevance of the curriculum and these circumstances may dictate the topics that are demanded by the market place.

Eli Eisenberg in (The Educator, November and December 1996:21-23) emphasizes that the transformation system with regard to the training and education of the nation in South Africa is under way. If South Africa wants to become a player in the world economy, curriculum designers need to achieve exponential growth in education. Students need to be taught relevant education to ensure that many options are available to school leavers should they choose to go into industry, establish their own businesses, or continue studying at a tertiary level. Whatever their choice, they

should be equipped with the necessary skills. It is those entrepreneurial skills that have aided educators in pursuing initiatives to assist their local communities in becoming economically literate. Entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and values will enable an economic science secondary school graduate to find employment, earn an income and ultimately live an independent life, rather than depend free government support. If an entrepreneur is able to create job opportunities there will be a healthy economy that will benefit all South Africans.

Leon Louw, the executive director of the Law Review Project and the Free Market Foundation, outlines positive factors and possible solutions to the problem of unemployment in South Africa (Entrepreneurship Update, August 1998). He advises that South Africans must create self-employment. The youth should, therefore, not be prepared for jobs, but rather for self-employment. The answer to the unemployment problem and is to provide vocational, practical skills and entrepreneurship education and training. If we succeed in this, the youth can become very optimistic about their future, Louw maintains. An experienced Canadian outcome based education educator, Ken Agar (Entrepreneurship Update August 1998), illustrates that the key skills needed by a future entrepreneur or a person who will look for a job in the corporate world are the following:

- using information in all its forms of academic and technical knowledge,
- developing skills in the communication of ideas and concepts,

- using management skills to make decisions and solve problems,
- becoming skilled in working with others in teams and groups,
- using occupation-specific requirements.

Learners also need to consider values, flexibility, validation and networks. James Thomas, managing director of Triple Trust Organisation (Entrepreneurship Update, August 1998) who conducted a forum to brainstorm outcomes, critical to the success of a self-employed entrepreneur, outlined the following outcomes in the workshop:

- initiative
- good teamwork
- being able to read the context
- problem solving
- the ability to evaluate
- risk taking
- good negotiation skills
- motivation
- leadership
- the ability to spot the gap
- having a dream
- being innovative
- creativity
- stick ability
- confidence,
- adaptability/flexibility
- time management.

Many of these outcomes were found to be common to both an entrepreneur and an employee. Joe Ramsay, KwaZulu-Natal Superintendent of Education and the then KwaZulu-Natal Grade Twelve Accounting Examiner (Entrepreneurship Update, August 1998) said the outcome based education system encouraged entrepreneurial thinking and taught students skills which would be useful in starting their own businesses. There is a need for the generation of more active interest in entrepreneurial education amongst school educators. The researcher believes that entrepreneurial education has a major role to play in preparing secondary school economic science graduates for the world of work.

Manning (1997:11-12) maintains that entrepreneurs start planning with a review of where they are. They look back at the previous budget and actual performance (profit or loss), at current strengths and weaknesses, and at the environmental trends that are clearest. This focus on the present and future is very important to a prospective entrepreneur. Business plan development skills need to be taught to secondary school economic science students to help them in their businesses and private life as consumers.

2.6. TEACHING OF ECONOMIC SCIENCES WITHIN AN OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION (OBE) SYSTEM

Outcomes based education (OBE) is a new education curriculum in South Africa. It was implemented in January 1998 with the hope that it will be reviewed in the year 2005 after all grades had introduced it.

2.6.1. WHAT DOES THE TERM "OBE" REALLY MEAN?

Outcomes-based education (OBE) is a flexible, empowerment - oriented approach to learning. It aims at equipping learners with the knowledge, competence and orientations needed for success after they leave schools or have completed their training (National Department of Education, February 1997:21). Outcomes-based education means focussing and organising an education system around what is essential for all learners to be able to succeed at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for learners to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, teaching and assessment to make sure the learning ultimately happens. Outcomes are the cornerstone of OBE. They are clear learning results that learners demonstrate at the end of a significant learning experience. An outcome represents the ultimate result of learning i.e. what is achieved after learning.

Gultig (1998:26) emphasizes that OBE is based on three key assumptions:

- All learners can learn and succeed, but not on the same day in the same way. Understanding a particular topic or activity differs in students' learning rates and learning styles. Some students (gifted learners) are capable of understanding

quickly while others (less gifted learners) may take time to understand.

- Successful learning promotes even more successful learning. Successful learning rests on students having a strong cognitive and psychological foundation of prior learning success. The stronger schools can help to make both foundations, the easier it will be for students to continue learning successfully.

- Schools control the conditions that directly affect successful school learning. Educators are capable of changing how they operate to allow and encourage all learners to be successful learners. Schools can function differently than in the past if the educators, learners, parents and all stakeholders choose to implement the needed changes.

2.6.2. ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATION IN REALISING THE OBJECTIVES OF OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION

An amended document by the Curriculum Development Working Group (National Department of Education - July 1996) on which the new curriculum (Curriculum 2005) is based, emphasizes that it is the duty of the government, community and the private sector to formulate an educational curriculum framework for pre-tertiary education (Grade 1 to Grade 12) in preparation for the

21st century. It further maintains that a healthy partnership between state and authorities and parents is absolutely essential for the establishment of a culture of lifelong learning which is people centred. This is unlike the era of National Party rule in South Africa where people were not given a chance to voice their opinion on the curriculum for the education of their children.

The education system in South Africa has often been criticised for its weakness in preparing learners for life and the world of work (Department of Education, 1997:77). This challenge has to be addressed within the curriculum to ensure that what is taught is relevant to life and the world of work. The new curriculum (Curriculum 2005) has, as one of its aims equiping all learners with knowledge, competencies and orientations needed to be successful after completing their studies. Members of the corporate world and general community should be far more involved in the various aspects of institution and curriculum development to ensure that relevance to the world of work is achieved.

The link between education and work becomes even more important with learners who experience barriers to learning and development. They need to be prepared for and accepted within the working environment. Providing work placements for learners while they are still in school or in higher institutions is one important role that can be taken on by the corporate world.

Mechanisms and programmes that facilitate the transition of learners to work need to be provided in centres of learning. This should be one of the roles of the life skills educator. While the outcomes based education approach (Curriculum 2005) is geared tow[71] ıanaging transition to work, other strategies will have to be developed where exclusion of important aspects is likely to occur. The Department of Labour's Skills Development Strategy suggests some specific services for learners, which are aimed at transition from school to work.

Spady (1993:1) points out that the outcomes based education on which curriculum 2005 is based, is concerned with preparing learners for life, not simply getting them ready for university or employment. The main purposes of outcomes-based education are:

- to equip all learners with the knowledge and competencies, and orientations needed for future success
- to implement programs and conditions that maximise learning success for all learners. This focus is fundamental in preparing the citizens of South Africa to understand the critical economic situations of this society and how they relate to other countries. It will also prepare and equip the citizens of South Africa with the financial skills and competencies that will enable them to be responsible and accountable for funds that have been invested for a specified objectives.

The South African Deputy Minister of Education, Smangaliso Mkhatshwa (1997:22) maintains that in Scotland outcomes based education has been in place for over a decade. The Scottish Ministry of Education is satisfied that the system focuses the learners' attention and efforts on knowledge and skills which are required in life after school. There is also a strong emphasis on skills in the workplace. This builds self-esteem. It indicates that outcomes-based education is valuable for preparing learners for jobs and leadership positions in the corporate world. What characterises the success of outcomes based education is the fact that the success of this type of education depends on the proper formulating of specific results (learning outcomes). It also needs educators and learners who are hard working.

One of the most compelling descriptions of the changing face of the global economy and workplace is on Alvin Toffler's 1991 book Future Shock, (Gultig, 1998:32), in which he describes in great detail the impact that continuously emerging technologies have on what used to be a fairly stable and predictable economic world. That world of the steady job and a lifetime career seems to be over. In its place has emerged the complex, highly technological, competitive, unpredictable and globally interdependent marketplace that is demanding constant change, adaptation, learning, innovation and quality from its members. Yesterday's right answers are not today's absolute solutions. Futurist David Snyder (also in Gultig, 1998:32) illustrates that what have traditionally been regarded as unskilled and semi-

skilled jobs currently require data manipulation and computer skills. Today's workforce needs to be made up of people with high levels of communication, collaboration, interpersonal and leadership skills. The researcher believes that Curriculum 2005, which is already in place in our country, will be able to ensure that life skills are developed in our students and many of the learning areas seem to equip students with the skills that will enable them to compete with the rest of the world.

The editor of the Sowetan newspaper (Curriculum 2005 - Supplement dated 16 September 1997) maintains that it is understandable that some corporate businesses in South Africa do not wish to employ people straight from school. Under the new education system (Curriculum 2005), however, the learners will be encouraged to be creative, critical and confident. This will not only assist them in seeking employment, but will give them the skills needed to start their own businesses. Learners must realise that there will never be enough jobs to accommodate all school-leavers, and that they have to look to their own resources and initiative. The learning programmes for Grades 10, 11 and 12 have not yet been written, but it is very likely that learners will be encouraged to develop knowledge and skills that will directly relate to future careers. This new system will be able to produce people who will get jobs because they will have the skills which are normally required by the world of work. Learners will be also encouraged to decide on careers while they are still at the secondary level. They must

enrol for economic science subjects if they want careers that are associated with economic and management sciences.

The challenge facing educators in the economic science profession is to ensure that the contents of subjects are designed and taught to minimize any differences that may exist between the school and the work environment. Such a mode of instruction requires great skill, open mindedness and a spirit of inquiry to ensure, as far as possible, that market failures do not rise.

The issue of the economic science curriculum has gained considerable momentum in recent years. The educational authorities have shown a willingness to improve the status and quality of economic science subjects at both the tertiary and pre-tertiary level. There is hope that drastic changes in the offering and presentation of these subjects during the 21st century will occur especially when Curriculum 2005 is fully implemented. Some scholars are fully behind Curriculum 2005. Dr Helen Van der Horst and Professor Ria Donald from the University of Pretoria are in favour of the curriculum (Sunday Times Newspaper, 1997:22). They emphasize that after studying the instructional systems of some states in the United States of America, in the United Kingdom, Singapore, Japan and other European countries, it became clear that Curriculum 2005 has a place in the South African education system.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented a literature review. The nature of the curriculum was discusses. Principles of the study have been mentioned and views of different scholars on skills needed by the corporate world from economic science secondary school graduate have come into focus. The role of entrepreneurship education has also been emphasized and the role of Curriculum 2005 with special reference to secondary school economic science education in South Africa has been considered.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two focussed on the literature review of the concept of curriculum in general and economic sciences curriculum in particular. The review highlighted the didactic principles which are applicable to economic science subjects. These principles highlight the need for educators to plan their teaching to bring about optimum learning. Lack of literature which shows stakeholder involvement in curriculum design emphasises the relevance and the need for a study of this nature to be undertaken. The discussion of the nature of economic science curriculum also suggests the necessity of this study and has helped to inform the methodology chosen to undertake the study.

3.2 SAMPLING

Research is often conducted on the basis of a sample from which the researcher derives certain generalisations applicable to the population from which the sample is taken. Gay (1976:85) defines sampling as the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the group from which they were selected. The individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population. Behr (1983:11) states that the sample is used for the reason that the population may be too large, or simply unavailable for the study so a relatively small section from within the population has to be selected. Wallen and Fraenkel (1991:30) support this idea by stating that the actual population to which the researcher is entitled to generalise,

therefore, is the accessible population. They further state that the former is an ideal choice and the latter is a realistic choice.

The drawing of a sample from a large target population has an advantage in that it saves the researcher time and the expenses of studying the entire population are minimised. For the purpose of this study, the entire sample comprised 96 learners from schools in the Empangeni region, 60 educators and 17 respondents from industry.

3.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:90-91) emphasize that literature review plays a vital role in any research endeavour. They further maintain that literature review has the following value and functions:

- A literature review broadens and refines existing knowledge.
- It can highlight gaps in under-researched areas, help to sharpen and clarify research questions.
- In addition a literature review helps to clarify theoretical, methodological, and analytical issues.
- It identifies current debates and controversies.

The researcher reviewed the literature by consulting relevant books, periodicals, magazines, addresses and Internet sites. By reviewing the literature the researcher aimed to develop a conceptual framework within which the problem investigated was placed. The literature review also provided depth to the study by drawing on several views and perspectives. Economic science subjects are dynamic disciplines and these theories deserve to be constantly reviewed and tested.

3.4 TRIANGULATION

Triangulation refers to the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour. The use of multiple methods helps the research to obtain information from various points of views of respondents and thereby achieve objectivity and depth. In its original and literal sense, triangulation is a technique of physical measurement. Maritime navigators, military strategists and surveyors, for example, use several location markers in their endeavors to pinpoint a single spot or objective (Cohen and Manion, 1994:233). By analogy, triangular techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data (Cohen and Manion, 1994:233).

The advantages of triangulation in educational research are manifold. Firstly, whereas the single observation in fields such as chemistry and physics normally yields sufficient and unambiguous information on selected phenomena, it provides only a limited view of the complexity of human behaviour and situations in which human beings interact. Exclusive reliance on one method, therefore, may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality she/he is investigating. The researcher needs to be confident that the data generated are not artefacts of simply one specific method of collection (Lin, 1976:97). This confidence can only be achieved, as far as normative research is concerned, when different methods of data collection yield the same results. The more the methods contrast with each other, the greater the researcher's confidence. If, for example, the outcomes of a questionnaire survey correspond with those of an observational study of the same

phenomena, the researcher can be more confident about the findings (Lin, 1976: 97-98).

Secondly, the use of triangular techniques will help to overcome the problem of method-boundness. The researcher gains an opportunity to validate information and test hypotheses. In this study triangulation occurred in the use of questionnaires, interviews and focussed group interviews.

3.5 INTERVIEWS

Powney and Watts (1987:6) define interviewing as conversation initiated by the interviewer, for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information and focused by him or her on content specified by the research objectives of systematic descriptions, prediction or explanation. Many research reports are written by people who have themselves done the interviewing which may make it difficult or apparently unnecessary to pursue rigorous appraisal of their interviewing skills and what they bring to an interview. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:153-154) illustrate that in educational research, interviews have been conducted by the research technique, which may be examined in terms of three aspects, viz, the interview situation, methods of recording interviews and the analysis of interview and conversational materials. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:154) further maintain that an educator researcher using the interview in school-based research must consider the four basic questions:

- Why interview?
- Where to interview?
- Whom to interview?
- When to interview?

Walker (1990:90-91) maintains that an interview is conducted to people with the intention of testing their behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, practice and actions on the topic being investigated. Interviews include a wide range of techniques, from the structured questionnaire through to the unstructured conversation.

Anderson (1990:222-223) specifies that an interview is probably the most used method of data collection in educational research. Interviews can be conducted on all subjects by all types of interviewers, and they can range from informal incidental sources of data to the primary source of information used in a research study.

Interviews were conducted with economic science educators teaching Grade 12 economic science learners in the Empangeni region schools. Interviews were also conducted with people from the corporate world who were experts in the field of economic science subjects. The aim of these interviews was to solicit the respondents' views and perceptions on the role of the corporate world and the schools in uplifting economic science education.

3.6 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Focus group interviews differ from other interview methods in that a number of respondents, and not just one, are interviewed at the same time. The advantage of this method is that the group interview saves time. However, if the choice of respondents in a group is not carefully made, the quality of the data may be compromised (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:192). They suggest that in order for the interview to be successful the following points should be borne in mind:

- There should be enough participants so that the discussion is kept alive.
- The participants should be able to give enough information.
- Get participants who will be able to co-operate as equals in the group.
- Participants should not form small groups within the group.
- There must be between three and five groups.

On the whole focus groups are conducted in the same way as individual interviews. Care must be taken that all participants get an equal opportunity to contribute to the debate.

In this study focus groups were held with learners from the economic science stream.

3.7 QUESTIONNAIRES

Sibaya (1989:70) points out that a questionnaire is not just a list of questions or a form to be filled in. It is essentially a scientific instrument for the measurement and collection of particular kinds of data. A questionnaire has to be specially designed according to particular specifications and with specific aims in mind and the data it yields are subject to error. The questionnaire serves two major purposes, viz., it translates the research objectives into specific questions and it motivates the respondent to communicate the required information. There are two types of questionnaires, viz., the open ended and the closed questionnaire.

3.7.1 Open ended questionnaire

Sibaya (1989:71) specifies that an open-ended questionnaire is designed to permit a free response from the subject rather than one limited stated alternative. The respondent is given the opportunity to answer in his own terms and his own frame of reference.

In this study, open-ended questions were used in order to give respondents a chance to express their own opinions on the topic being investigated and to provide more depth and insight to the issue discussed.

Interviews were conducted through the use of an interview questionnaire presented to secondary school economic science educators from the Empangeni region. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out from educators whether the interim curricula for economic science subjects were compatible with the needs of the country. A structured interview questionnaire was also administered to Grade 12 economic science learners to gather their views about the state of the economic science curriculum in their schools.

Another questionnaire was designed and distributed to corporate industry around the Empangeni/Richards Bay area to solicit the views of their employees. The responses were important in providing more depth to the study seeing that the questions sought to probe the nature of the relationship between business and the school environment.

3.72 Closed ended questionnaire

Both Mahlangu (1987) and Sibaya (1989:72) as cited by Zungu (1994:77) point out that a closed questionnaire calls for short and quick responses, for example, "yes" or "no" responses. This type of questionnaire is easy to fill in, takes little time, keeps the respondent on the subject, is objective, and easy to tabulate and analyse. It is also simple, inexpensive, relevant and directive to the research that is conducted. The provision of alternative replies helps to make clear the meaning of the questions. The closed questionnaire produces uniformity among respondents along the specific dimensions in which the investigator is interested. Structured questions were included in order to get responses that could be compared so that frequency and generalisability could be possible. This is a more formal type of interview, which is used to establish some information or to evaluate an outcome. McNiff, J' Lomax, P. and Whitehead, J. (1996:101) define an interview questionnaire as a face-to-face delivery of a questionnaire. The interviewer (researcher) is in a position to ask questions exactly as they appear in the interview schedule. The aim is to ask exactly the same question, in the same order and style of delivery, to all interviewees. Isaac, S. and Michael, W.B (1995:145) regard an interview questionnaire as an item that follows a well defined structure resembling the format of an objective questionnaire, allowing clarification and elaboration within narrow limits. This tends to be factually orientated, aimed at specific information, and relatively brief.

Interview questionnaires are suitable when accurate and complete information from all respondents is important and when the type of

information sought fits readily into a structured inquiry. The researcher used an interview questionnaire to seek factual information that revealed opinions on the topic being investigated. Interview questionnaires were designed for secondary school economic science learners and secondary school economic science educators as well as the corporate world.

3.8 DATA PROCESSING

Cohen and Manion (1989:116) maintain that data processing consists of coding data in preparation for analysis by hand in the case of a small survey and by computers when size is large. Prior to coding, questionnaires have to be checked and this is called editing. Editing is done to identify and eliminate questionnaires with errors. In this study the researcher edited all questionnaires before the data was processed. The coding of questionnaires was done in all the questionnaires that were used in the study, that is, all questionnaires that were used in the study.

All questionnaires received were code numbered as follows:

- 001 to 060 for economic science educators
- 001 to 016 for the corporate world
- 001 to 096 for the Grade 12 economic science learners.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

The main aim of data analysis was to extract all the relevant data that was hidden in the raw information collected in the interview questionnaire. This was conducted after edition, coding and data had been captured. After data preparation was completed, the masses of raw data were grouped

together to facilitate interpretation.

3.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the methodology used to undertake this study was outlined. Although the study was empirical, the instruments used contained qualitative items. The focus group discussions carried structured questions of an open-ended nature to allow probing. In the following chapter collective data is presented.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the main objectives of the study as mentioned in section 1.5 was to ascertain whether there was compatibility between the curriculums taught in secondary school economic science and the needs of the corporate world. The study also sought to establish the perceptions of stakeholders about the state of the economic science education in the country. The researcher also needed to establish the role played by the corporate world in promoting economic science education. Another objective was to establish whether secondary schools worked collaboratively with the corporate world. Finally, the researcher wanted to design a curriculum that would best meet the demands of the corporate world, so that learners could easily be absorbed into the work situation and be in a position to contribute meaningfully to the economy of the country.

In fulfilling the above mentioned main objectives, the researcher decided to use the range of methods discussed in chapter three. In this chapter the data collected is presented.

4.2 INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE LEARNER: FOCUS GROUPS

The researcher decided to administer questionnaires to secondary school economic science learners with the intention of getting their views about the curriculum. The interview questionnaire was conducted with 96 Grade 12 secondary school economic science learners from the following schools: Zimeme High School, Umdlamfe High, Siyabonga High School, Hlakaniphani High School, Khula High School, Tisand Technical High School, Dlangezwa High

School and Lethimfundo Finishing School. The researcher personally visited these schools during June and August 1999. The interviews took the form of focus group discussions. The aim for using focus groups in this study was to establish the extent to which learners were in agreement with or even understood the value of studying economic sciences at school.

The learners were divided into two groups of six learners per group. Focus group discussions in these centres took a period of forty-five minutes to one hour. The responses, although given in different ways, fell mainly within the broad responses described below. It would be difficult to quantify responses in view of the fact that within a group differences of opinion were noted and recorded. The questions and summarised responses (answers) to interview questionnaires were as follows:

QUESTION 1

Why did learners choose to do economic science subjects?

The respondents were expected to mention the main reason why they decided to enroll in economic science subjects. Their responses were:

- There are many job opportunities available for people who have enrolled in these subjects.

- They wanted to do the following jobs, which need people who have done these subjects, viz., office work, auditors, economists, entrepreneurs, chartered accountants, bookkeepers and economic analysts.

- These subjects were easy to understand, practical, contributed to economic growth in the country and were

relevant to their future careers.

- There were still a few blacks that are economically literate.

- A person who had enrolled in these subjects was highly paid.

- They were good at figures, calculations and counting.

- Apart from that, these subjects need a person who is dedicated to his or her work, which they believed they were.

QUESTION 2

If learners did not do these subjects what other option would they have chosen? Why?

The respondents were expected to mention their second option and the reason.

Their responses were as follows:

- Science and technical subjects were chosen by almost all focus groups. Amongst subjects or careers chosen were electronics, agricultural science, physical science, motor mechanics, plumbing, electric engineering and fashion design.

- They also pointed out that this stream also has many job opportunities in the country.

QUESTION 3

What do learners like most about their stream? Why?

The respondents were expected to mention what they liked most in their stream and the reason. Their responses were:

- The main reason was that economic science subjects were relevant to their future careers

- It taught them to control their wealth, it was enjoyable, it taught them about the things they saw in their daily lives that concern them, it was useful because it deals with money which everyone wants to possess.

QUESTION 4

What would learners like to see change in their subjects? Why?

The respondents were expected to identify areas that needed change in their subjects. Their responses were as follows:

- All secondary schools must offer the entire economic science package, viz, accounting, business economics, economic, commercial law, typing or computer studies.
- There must be upliftment in teaching and learning through teacher retraining.
- Practicality in the subject needed to be introduced through encouraging learners to visit the corporate world to explore and see what was actually happening there
- The state must provide professionally qualified educators to eliminate the shortage.

- They liked their schools to be provided with sufficient education equipment to ensure effective education.

QUESTION 5

Where would learners like to work?

The respondents were expected to mention their destiny after finishing of their studies.

- it was clear that their destiny was in the corporate world and the type of Profession(s) they preferred are those mentioned in question 1.

- Amongst the places of employment they preferred are the following: Iscor, JSE, Richards Bay Minerals, Alusaf, Banks, De Loite Chartered Accountants, South African Reserve Bank, Mondi Paper Mill, Richards Bay Coal Terminal, etc.

QUESTION 6

Will learners' education help them to work there? How do they know?

The respondents were expected to mention whether there was any help they got in their education that will have an effect in their jobs in future.

- All groups were of the opinion that economic science subjects would help them in their future careers.

- Their future careers needed economic science background which they possessed.

- What they did at school was what was actually done in the job situation.

QUESTION 7

If learners were to get an offer for a job how would they sell themselves? What skills would they say they have acquired from the course?

The respondents were expected to advertise themselves in order to stand a chance of being employed first as compared to learners from other streams.

- Amongst the skills they believe would be to their advantage were bookkeeping skills, problems solving skills, business skills, typing skills and computer literacy
- They would also mentioned that they were capable of handling the financial resources of any business entity.
- They were also accurate in figures, able to use a calculator and count money.

QUESTION 8

Do learners think they could have acquired these skills without the learning of economic sciences?

The learners were expected to mention whether the skills they posses were as result of an economic science education.

- They all agreed that the skills they already possessed were only acquired by learners who were enrolled in economic science subjects.

QUESTION 9

How many years did it take learners to acquire the skills?

The respondents were expected to mention the time it had taken them to acquire the skills they already possess.

Their responses were as follows:

2 years = 20%
3 years = 34%
4 years = 8%
5 years = 38%
Total = 100%

QUESTION 10

Is there time of the year that learnesr feel was wasted?

The respondents were expected to identify the time of the year where work was not done.

- Their response differed, Sixty percent of the groups felt that was no time wasted while forty percent said there was time wasted. Although if is difficult to quantify this, there was clearly a division from school to school and from group to group which indicated the 60:40 ratio.

- They believed that the wasted time might be attributed to the following: teacher absenteeism, subjects without educators, many holidays then schools days lost etc.

QUESTION 11

What do learners want most from their education?

The respondents were expected to identify areas they felt

needed to be filled in their education.

- Promotion of the culture of teaching and learning in educators, learners and the community at large.
- Fluency in English to be able to communicate in business.
- More practical work and less theory.
- Increase in economic science schools and economic science educators.
- Equality in education.
- Future orientated type of education, i.e. education for survival.
- Education that would provide them with decent jobs in future.
- Education that would enable them to earn more income.

4.3 INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATORS

An interview questionnaire was conducted with secondary school economic educators to obtain their views about the state of the secondary school economic science curriculum.

QUESTION 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Gender

The respondents were expected to mention their gender.

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	34	57
Female	26	43
Total	60	100

The majority of the respondents, 57%, were men. Although there were more men than women, the margin is small. Economic sciences are mainly dominated by men.

1.2 Age

The respondents were expected to indicate their age. Their responses are indicated in the table below:

Age	Respondents	Percentage
25 years	8	14
26 to 30 years	14	23,3
31 to 35 years	18	30
36 to 40 years	14	23,3
41 to 45 years	4	6,7
46 years and above	2	3,3
Total	60	100

There were many educators between 26 years and 40 years, that is, 76,6%. This is an energetic group of people who are still full of enthusiasm. There is a general belief that they are capable of encouraging learners to focus more on their studies.

1.3 How long have you been teaching?

The respondents were expected to mention their teaching

experience

Period of teaching	Respondents	Percentage
5 years and below	20	33
6-10 years	28	47
11-15 years	6	10
16-20 years	4	7
21 years and above	2	3
Total	60	100

Only 33% of the respondents had teaching experience of less than five years.

1.4 Professional Qualifications

The respondents were expected to point out their profession qualifications.

Teaching qualification	Respondents	Percentage
Educators with diplomas or teaching certificates	56	93
Educators without teaching certificates or diplomas	4	7
Total	60	100

The majority of educators, that is, 97% who responded, were qualified educators.

1.5 Academic Qualification

The respondents were expected to mention their academic qualification.

Level of education	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Degree(s)	44	73
Matric	16	27
Total	60	100

The majority of the respondents, that is, 73% were in possession of a university degree(s).

QUESTION 2

What careers do you think your students should pursue?

The respondents were expected to identify careers they thought must be followed by the secondary school economic science graduates.

The careers that were mentioned by educators are the following; financial management, human resource management, secretarial courses, chartered accountant, educators, auditors, entrepreneurs, bookkeepers salesmanship, and jobs that require a person with a commercial background.

QUESTION 3

Does the economic science curriculum offered allow them to pursue these careers?

The respondents were expected to indicate whether their curriculum was relevant to careers mentioned in question 2 above.

Educators agreed that the programme offered to learners

covered everything in the field of commerce and was relevant to commercially related jobs. One hundred percent of educators were positive.

QUESTION 4

What are the outcomes or goals that you set for the programme?

The respondents were expected to reveal the outcomes of economic science education in secondary schools.

Amongst the things earmarked by educators as outcomes or goals for secondary school economic science education were:

- To enable learners to apply the knowledge gained in real life situations.
- To help learners to qualify as future entrepreneurs.
- To help learners become marketable in the world of work/business.
- To produce competent learners.
- To have a background for tertiary level.
- To let learners be creative, independent and possess an analytical ability.
- To enable learners to put into practice what they have been taught.

QUESTION 5

Are these goals achievable?

The responses to this question indicates the following:

- most learners were doing well at tertiary level as well as

in the job situation.

- They could be achievable if facilities are available in all schools and that the retraining of educators is a necessity

QUESTION 6

What problems do you experience as you strive to help learners realize their goals?

Educators raised quite a number of factors that retarded progress, for example:

- Shortage of textbooks and education facilities.
- Lack of networking.
- Learners failed to relate what they learnt at school or in the classroom to a real life situation.
- Shortage of role models especially amongst the blacks.
- High teacher pupil ratio.
- Lack of guidance by educators and parents.
- Lack of parent's motivation.
- Lack of vision on the part of educators and learners.
- Lack of commitment in educators, parents and learners.
- Laziness in all stakeholders, including educators.
- No contact between school and industry.
- Environment factors, for example, long distance to and from schools.
- Learners from disadvantage communities failed to pay for or buy education materials like textbooks.

QUESTION 7

How can these problems solved?

To solve problems at schools the respondents said the solutions

might be the following:

- Bringing back the culture of teaching and learning e.g. prize giving.
- Upgrading of educators.
- Education excursions for both educators and learners.
- Provision of enough teaching equipment/facilities, for example, videos, television, textbooks, etc.
- Co-operation between the school and industry.
- Extra classes, for example, Saturday classes.
- Offer of bursaries to needy students.
- Teacher interchange of programmes.
- Career orientation.
- Allocation of more funds to the Department of Education.

QUESTION 8

Do you have a syllabus for the course you teach?

All educators specified that they did have the syllabus for economic science subjects.

QUESTION 9

How relevant is the syllabus to the needs of society?

Their responses towards this question were as follows:

Ninety percent of sixty educators who responded stressed that:

- The syllabus lacked direction.
- It did not allow space for practical.
- It was not up to date.
- Some parts were irrelevant.

This indicates their summarised responses related to the areas where there is need for syllabus improvement.

QUESTION 10

How do you know that these are the needs of the society?

The respondents revealed that:

Society normally reveals its needs and what it regards as essential to its daily life. The country is in need of entrepreneurs who are capable of creating jobs for a number of unemployed people in our community. The syllabus must be able to give learners skills that will help them to run their businesses without any hiccups. Economic science educators believed that the syllabus needed to be altered through the response of society and the economic structure of the country as a whole.

QUESTION 11

What are the limitations, if any, of the syllabus?

Limitations raised by respondents are as follows:

- The syllabus must be able to provide immediate solutions to problems like poverty, unemployment, crime, etc.
- The scope of the syllabus was only limited to the school situation and there was no expansion to point beyond.
- The syllabus did not cater for what is actually needed by the corporate world.
- The textbooks were very limited and parents were reluctant to spend their money on buying such books.
- There were few schools that offered computer studies.

Almost all economic related jobs required a person to be computer literate.

- The syllabus only deals with theory.

QUESTION 12

What have you done to overcome these limitations for the benefit of your learners?

To overcome limitations in the syllabus the respondents had done the following things:

- Teaching other important information that was not included in the syllabus.
- Making syllabus more practical.
- Encouraged learners to start their own businesses.
- Visiting neighbouring industries together with the learners.
- Teaching entrepreneurship to learners.
- Replacing outdated information with the current thinking.

QUESTION 13

What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge faced by your students?

The following were the challenges perceived the majority respondents:

- To be globally competitive.
- To be able to be self employed as a function of the shortage of jobs in our country.
- To keep up with the new technological developments, for example, computer skills.
- To be able to relate the syllabus to what is required by

the corporate world.

QUESTION 14

How can this challenge be met?

Respondents mentioned that challenges could be met through:

- Redesigning the education curriculum in such a way that it produced job creators rather than job seekers.
- Encourage learners to read relevant books.
- Learners should be encouraged to be hardworking, dedicated, studious, to access media resources, participate in intelligent and progressive debates.
- Corporate industry should be brought into the classroom.

QUESTION 15

Have you tried to expose your learners to real life situations in the corporate world?

Respondents were expected to indicate whether or not they had exposed their learners to real life situation in the corporate world or not.

Their responses were thus:

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	48	80
No	12	20
Total	60	100

80% of respondents had exposed their learners to real-life situation in the corporate world while 20% had not. All the

interview questionnaires (interviews) were conducted in the seminars held at Esikhawini College of Education in 1999.

QUESTION 16

If yes, what have you done? If no, why not? Are you planning to do so in the future? Why?

The schools visited had invited people from industry to address learners about what actually happens in industry. Some learners had paid a visit to local industries. Those, which were not exposed to industry, emphasized that this was due to financial constraints on the part of the school and parents but they intended to reverse the trend in the future.

QUESTION 17

Is there a benefit in introducing learners to corporate experiences?

Their responses were thus:

Responses	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Yes	60	100
No	00	00
Total	60	100

All respondents agreed that learners benefited a lot from corporate experiences when they visited an industry because: -

- It developed the love for the subject in the learners.
- It linked the theory with practice.
- Learners noticed that their school (educator) taught them

topics that were relevant to the job situation.

- Learners knew exactly how the corporate world operated.
- When learners enter the corporate world it would not be a strange environment.

The above statements have been summarized by the research to be easily understood by the reader.

QUESTION 18

What opportunities do you see for school leavers in your field?

Their opportunities may be summarised as follows:

- They stood a good chance of getting employment.
- They were capable of competing for the jobs with the people who were already employed.
- They had skills to start their own business.
- With computer skills they may be better employed in the corporate world.

4.4 Interview questionnaire for people in the corporate world.

Separate interviews were conducted with the corporate world. The aim was to get corporate opinions about the state of secondary school economic science curriculum and its relevance to the work situation. Interview questionnaires were conducted in seventeen corporate companies around Empangeni / Richards Bay, which, the researcher believes employ many secondary school economic science graduates within the region.

QUESTION 1

Name of establishment

Members of the corporate institutions that were interviewed:

- Mondi Kraft
- Bayside Aluminium
- Spoornet
- Richards Bay Minerals
- Portnet
- Telkom
- Bell Equipment Limited
- Old Mutual
- Equal Opportunities Projects
- Telkom SA
- Leomat Construction
- De Loitte and Touché
- RBM Business Advice Centre
- Alusaf LTD
- Zululand Chamber of Business
- Media in Education

QUESITON 2

In your establishment what skills would you like your employees with Grade 12 economic science background to have?

The skills highlighted by different corporate business are the following:

- Computer skills, that is, 100%
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Organising, planning and co-ordinating skills
- Report writing skills

- Skills to understand the business environment
- Financial skills
- People skills
- Ability to critically analyze accounts, pick up errors, wrong allocations, invoice errors and company performance skills
- How business operates (micro/macro)
- Business decision making processes
- Good basic understanding of the subjects
- Ability to transfer theoretical skills into the workplace
- Good communication skills particularly in English, which was the most important skill. Many young economic science secondary school graduates lacked proper communication skills in this language
- Determination to continue learning because they have not "arrived" when they had achieved basic qualification
- Broad knowledge about the country's economy as compared to the world
- Knowledge of basic economic science terms.

QUESTION 3

Why is it important to you that they have those skills?

The corporate world was expected to mention the importance of skills in the economic science Grade 12 employees:

- To enable the business to compete internationally with various companies.
- They are basic requirements of any corporate world.
- The establishment will acquire competitive advantage.
- They are the cornerstones of the business world.

QUESTION 4

How many employees do you have with Grade 12 economic science background?

The estimated figure or percentage of employees with Grade 12 economic science background was expected to be mentioned by the corporate world:

All financial department(s) of industries or corporate world contacted had about 95% employees with economic science background. They were also employed in other department(s) of the industry.

QUESTION 5

Do they demonstrate these skills?

- 50% demonstrated these skills and others had to be subjected to intensive training to acquire these skills.
- They needed additional training.
- Others did have skills but they got further company training and in-service training.

QUESTION 6

How do you rate their performance against other Grade 12 school leavers who do not have economic science background?

Twenty percent of the corporate world noticed no difference at all. Eighty percent believed that:

- Learners with economic science background had an advantage over a person without any economic science background because they had a higher performance rate.

- It also depended on specific department in which they had been placed.

QUESTION 7

Do you think there is a correlation between what the learners do at school and what they do at work?

The corporate world differed in its opinion. Half agreed and the other half disagreed. Here is the summary of the responses:

- There was very little or no correlation, that is, mainly theoretical background.
- The school curriculum subject content and teaching methodology did not prepare the learners adequately for the world of business.
- Fifty percent of what they learn was related to the corporate world.
- They fit easily in the corporate world. Any training that was given tended to be additional knowledge.

QUESTION 8

Do you think what learners do at school affects the economy of the country?

Responses	**Number**	**Percentage**
Yes	16	100
No	00	00
Total	16	100

All corporate business agreed that there was a correlation between what the learners did at school and what they did at work. They said that the correlation could contribute to the following factors:

- Skills gained at school would contribute to the high productivity and competitiveness of both the employee and the industry.
- The company would spend less money in training as compared to the person without economic science background but a healthy balance between formative education and occupational development was required.
- People with economic science background were an asset to the country since the country was under a lot of pressure from industrialised countries of the world in as far as business competition is concerned.

QUESTION 9

What would you like to see happening in our schools?
The corporate world was expected to identify items that needed to be included in the secondary school economic science curriculum syllabus which would be more relevant to the job situation.

- Outcome Based Education being phased in was more relevant and practical because it included case studies that are practical and will help the leaner in the working environment.
- Schools should implement life skills programmes such as communication in the workplace, computer literacy and driving programmes so that the learners could be ready for work.
- There must be more focus on economic science subjects at a school and exposure of learners to commercial centres for practical purposes.
- Visit by learners to industries and industries visiting schools was still another important priority to enable learners to have first hand information.
- Education authorities and the corporate world must work together when the school curriculum is drafted to ensure that all topics are covered.

QUESTION 10

Who is responsible for the growth of the economy of the country?

All respondents strongly agreed it was the duty of all the country's citizens, government as well as the business sector.

QUESTION 11

What can corporate industry do to create economic growth in the country?

The corporate world were expected to identify things that must be done by all stakeholders with the intention of creating economic growth:

- By investing in human capital
- Education and training must continue even after work
- People must be developed to make them more productive through intensive education and training
- The environment must be made to be more workable.

QUESTION 12

How many schools/educators in the economic science field interact with you?

Respondents were expected to mention the number of schools they came into contact with. Only 18% of the respondents did come into contact with secondary schools that offer economic sciences.

QUESTION 13

How often does corporate industry interact with schools?

The respondents were expected to mention the number of occasions they came into contact with schools.

Contact happened on only a few occasions.

QUESTION 14

In what capacity did school and corporate industry interact?

Respondents were expected to mention the purposes of contacting schools.

They normally came into contact when they wanted to discuss donations, school projects, Saturday classes and winter schools.

QUESTION 15

What kinds of issues do corporate industry discuss with schools?

In most cases, issues under discussion were the performance of learners, teaching approach, availability of textbooks, relevance of the textbooks to the syllabi (work programme) and funding.

QUESTION 16

What is your opinion from the interaction you have had with educators about schooling system?

- A lot of improvement was needed on the side of educators, that is, they needed to change their approach to teaching and they must be able to assess the knowledge gained by learners.
- School must be able to produce learners with skills that were needed by the corporate world.

- The curriculum must be relevant to what is needed by the corporate world.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the procedure that was followed in the collection of data. The tools that were used have been described and the data collected has been presented. The different views and opinions as expressed by the education sector and the corporate world have also been reported.

The discussion of the data is conducted in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study set out to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify skills the corporate world needs from learners of economic sciences.
- To seek perceptions of the corporate people about the state of the economic science education in the country.
- To establish the role of the corporate world in the economic science education.
- To establish whether schools work collaboratively with the corporate world.
- To design a curriculum that will best meet the demands of the corporate world.

In this chapter data presented in Chapter 4, is analysed and interpreted.

5.2 INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE LEARNERS

QUESTION 1

Why did learners choose to do economic science subjects?

The learners were asked to give reasons for choosing economic science subjects. This question was important in order to establish whether learners were forced by educators, were driven by the prospects of getting good jobs or were interested in the subject taught in the stream.

The main reason cited by learners for choosing economic science subjects was the economic value in the present economic climate of South Africa (refer to chapter 3 Section 3.2.2.1). It is not surprising to find that learners seek economic science option because they believe they will be able to get jobs in future. Learners also mentioned they preferred this option because a person who has enrolled in these subjects is highly paid by the corporate world. In the schools the researcher visited the majority of learners were enrolled in this stream. This suggests that this stream had become popular in schools.

In the past there were few schools that offered economic sciences. Even at college level before the 1990's only Amanzimtoti College of Education in the previously black Colleges trained educators in this stream in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) Province. After the 1994 elections when it was made clear by the government that its aim was to promote economic development, colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal started training educators in this option. Colleges that have introduced this stream include Eshowe, KwaGqikazi, Esikhawini, Gamalakhe and Ezakheni to mention but a few. The number of schools offering this stream is also increasing year by year. For instance, in Mthunzini district schools offering this option were nineteen in 1992 (Zungu 1994:49) while in 1999 there were thirty-five (KZN Department of Education and culture-Mthunzini District 2000).

QUESTION 2

If learners did not do these subjects what other option would they have chosen? Why?

This question was asked with the intention of identifying the learner's second option they would have chosen if the school did not offer the option mentioned in question one above. They were also required to mention the reasons for choosing this option as the second preference.

The second preference given by economic science learners was science subjects. This option also offers better chances of being employable, betterment of the self and high salaries. Both science and economic sciences had become very popular amongst the learners in schools visited and possibly in South Africa as a whole. In some schools these are only two options available because the present needs of the country determine what programmes will be supported even by the government. It is interesting to note that learners are making a connection between what they learn at school and its relevance to the work situation. This trend is fairly new in South Africa because in the past people used to study for the purpose of getting matric certification without thinking about what job opportunities were available. One reason for this new development could be the fact that all jobs advertised are equal opportunities for all qualified people to apply and get the job. During the apartheid era certain jobs were reserved for whites and coloureds in areas like the Western Cape, for instance.

QUESTION 3

What do learners like most about their stream? Why?

Learners were expected to mention their main reasons for preferring the economic stream to other streams. Learners saw the economic stream as being relevant to their future careers. People should be taught skills and they must decide what careers they want to choose at high school level, Paulus Lucas (1997: 4). The learners wanted to escape the pitfall into which the majority of learners fall after passing matric. They realised their options did not prepare them for future careers. They believe economic science education would make them marketable. It is important to stress that in the past, it was not the fault of the learners in choosing the options they took but that of the education system which emphasized content and not skills. The present curriculum aims to redress problems that are inherent in

content based learning by focusing on skills based learning. Learners realise that education should be empowering. Even an economic science programme will fail learners if it does not give them skills.

"I felt forced to point out that the new curriculum being advocated is definitely doomed to fail if it is going to underestimate the importance of career and life skills guidance. If our schools fail to offer guidance services to all students, what are we educating them for", said Thomas Mkhatshwa (1998:11), students counselor at Wits Technikon. Every child is born with abilities and talents. It is therefore important that learners choose streams that will develop their abilities and help them develop worthwhile skills. Learners who participated in this research choose the economic stream because they had the potential for the business world.

QUESTION 4

What would learners like to see change in their subjects? Why?

Respondents were expected to identify areas they felt were not very relevant to their needs. They were expected to mention things that must be included and those that do not fit in their curriculum. They were also expected to give reasons for including new topics and the reasons for excluding other topics in the syllabi.

The learners felt that there must be teacher retraining to meet the current standards of education, sufficient education materials must be offered in all schools and learners must be encouraged to visit the corporate world.

A student from Pretoria Boys High, which is well endowed in terms of resources and positive learning, writes the same paper as a student from Sekitla High in Mathibestad, a rural area where there are no resources and conditions are simply not conducive to learning, said

Cansole Tleane (1999:11). The Pretoria High student is likely to fair better than the Sekitla High one because of the facilities, work environment and human resource available in the school.

Provision of facilities in schools will ensure that the culture of learning, teaching and services as required by all education stakeholders is realised and becomes a reality.

QUESTION 5

Where would learners like to work?

Respondents were expected to mention places they felt would be able to employ them after finishing their studies. The researcher wanted to find out whether these sources of employment would be relevant to the subjects and skills learners would possess as secondary school economic science graduates.

The majority of economic science learners indicated that their future was with private undertakings. A few of the respondents indicated that they would like to open their own businesses so that they could be job creators. Very few opted for work in the public sector. They said that the public industry was known for paying low salaries and if the aim was to be rich and affluent learners would not choose the government sector.

QUESTION 6

Will learner's education help them to work there? How do they know?

The researcher wanted to know whether respondents understood the future destiny of the subjects (streams) they were following.

Respondents were also expected to give a clear picture that they understood the corporate requirements.

All focus groups were of the opinion that their stream was relevant to their future education careers. For instance, they mentioned that to be an auditor or financial manager it was important to have an accounting background which they were doing at school. There are still few schools that offer computer studies but schools have realised that the situation in the industry demands a person to be computer literate. It is rare to find a secondary school economic science graduate without a job over a long period of time, say more than a year, if he or she is serious about looking for employment. Economic science secondary school graduates are also capable of starting their own business and employ other people if they use entrepreneurial skills they gained in economic science education. It is essential therefore that school programmes include entrepreneurial education.

The researcher believes that the secondary school economic science graduates could be an asset to the nation, if they were well prepared at school. They would be capable of uplifting the economic standard of the country with the economic knowledge they possess when they left school.

QUESTION 7

If learners were to get an offer for a job how would they sell themselves? What skills would they have acquired from the course?

It was important to ask the question in order to assess how much learners were aware of the skills they acquired from their stream. Secondly, it would be interesting to find out how well they could articulate their skills. The secondary school economic science learners who responded in this research were able to identify the skills they

already possess and how they would be able to sell themselves amongst potential employers.

The skills employers look for include, typing skills, problem solving, leadership, organising, time management, planning, etc. (Mthembu, 1997:1). Economic science secondary school learners are taught these skills at school and this gave them the urge over learners belonging to other streams to get jobs.

The respondents felt it was important for them to keep in contact with the corporate world to enable them to get first hand information on what was happening in the job situation. They believed that it was possible to get this information if they could get part time jobs in the department that need people who had studied economic sciences. These part-time jobs could be done during school vocations.

It is interesting to note that in their response learners focused only on the academic programmes offered and not on variables like their personality, curriculum vitae and attitude which also play an important role in getting them employed. This may be owing to the fact that schools are eager to help them acquire skills that are technical and neglect interpersonal skills. More importantly to the fact that traditional schooling has seldom focused on anything other than academic subjects.

QUESTION 8

Do they think learners would have acquired these skills without learning economic sciences?

The respondents were expected to give clarity that would enable the researcher to know whether the skills they already possess could be acquired by means other than economic science education.

All respondents agreed that the skills they had acquired from economic science education were not obtainable from other options. Learners believed that secondary school background normally helped them a job level and tertiary education. Many learners realise only in Grade 12 that they were stuck because they had been enrolled in subjects that were not relevant to their future careers (Anstey, 1997:8). The respondents also mentioned that skills acquired in education differed from option to option, topic to topic, syllabi to syllabi, and curriculum to curriculum. The researcher observes that the majority of learners realized after passing Grade 12 that they were in the option that would not help them to fulfill their dreams. They would like to be future accountants, only to find that they enrolled in wrong options during their secondary school education level.

QUESTION 9

How many years did it take to acquire the skills?

The respondents were expected to indicate the time they had taken to acquire the skills they already possessed. The researcher realised that the majority of respondents had been involved in economic science secondary school for more than four years.

Learners differed in their responses as they indicated that it may require a medium term, that is, not more than one year while other skills may require, a long term, that is, more than one year. In other words, the acquisition of basic skills will require a longer period of time

A learner who has enrolled in these subjects over a longer period of about three years may be expected to show a better understanding of skills that are obtained after enrolling in a course. Therefore, the longer a learner studied for a particular skill, the better his/her productivity and performance would be in that skill.

QUESTION 10

Is there time/years that learners feel were wasted?

The respondents were expected to point out whether the length of time was enough, or too much, to finish the work programme for the calendar year. Learners believed that the time allocation to the economic science programme was sufficient for the year because educators were able to finish the syllabus in time and this gave them enough time for revision. The accounting programme in all grades requires dedicated educators and learners who are prepared to work throughout the year to ensure that the whole syllabus is finished on time, and time for revision is available.

Only in Grade 9 accounting does the researcher feel the work was more of a repetition of the Grade 8 work programme. There is a strong belief that these programmes may be combined into one. This will enable curriculum designers to shift work of grade 12 to Grade 11, Grade 11 to Grade 10 and Grade 10 to Grade 9. The programme designed for tertiary institution at elementary stages may be done in grade 12. One believes that this will make secondary school economic science graduates more skilful than before. It will also allow for articulation to the Further Education and Training level (FET) so that learners may acquire vocational skills.

QUESTION 11

What do learners want most from their education?

The researcher wanted to find out from the respondents what attracted them to enroll in the economic science stream instead of the other options that were available in their school. Respondents pointed out that the stream would offer them an opportunity to be employable.

They felt that the majority of secondary school economic science graduates were employed and if not working were operating their own business elsewhere. They were able to operate their own undertakings through economic science secondary school education, which offered them an opportunity to possess entrepreneurial skills. It is no secret that job opportunities are limited with only seven percent of school leavers finding employment in the formal sector. A better education almost guarantees a better future, says one of the country's leading insurance company agents, Gregory Mashilo (1997:29). There is a high demand for practical and specialised skills in the workplace. Economic science secondary school graduates looking for jobs in the corporate world must ensure that they posses skills of acceptable standards because opportunities are limited.

5.2.1 GENERAL INTERPRETATION

The question posed to secondary school economic science learners were discussed in focus groups and the main idea that came forward throughout the group discussions was a clear indication that there was a place for economic science subjects in school. What was further clear was the need to change the syllabus to make sure it suited the current demands. These changes in curriculum should be in line with Outcome Based Education (OBE) and curriculum 21 currently implemented as a new system of education in South Africa. Economic science subjects have specific outcomes that clearly indicate what the learner will be able to do in the future after graduating in these subjects. The skills he or she will possess are those that are needed by the corporate world. Although the curriculum emphasises the need to develop these skills, in reality at school, economic science is mainly taught theoretically and there is very limited focus on practice.

Respondents also felt that the quality of secondary school

economic science educators is not up to the required standard. To reach this standard retraining of educators through seminars and workshops is a necessity. There is also a feeling that the provision of facilities in different schools needs to be rectified by the education authorities. Schools in rural areas in particular are hard hit with the shortage of facilities which include educators, textbooks, stationery, learning equipment and buildings.

It is an established fact that South Africa has a shortage of skilled personnel. Developing human resources by itself will not lead to a higher economic growth but a well-educated and skilled workforce will contribute to economic growth. There is a high rate of unemployment due to the fact that school curricula generally focus on the academic content as opposed to skills development and training. This means that a large portion of our community is under-prepared. The shortage of skills needed in the job market should be addressed soon.

What was even more significant from the group discussions was the fact that learners saw industry and government as the main source of employment. The programmes offered at school are the not geared to equip them with entrepreneurial skills. It was only after prompting, that learners considered the possibilities of self-employment.

5.3 INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATORS

QUESTION 1

General information

The researcher felt that it was important to include economic science secondary school educators in this research. They were expected to

express their own views about the state of secondary school economic science education. It was believed that their opinions would help the researcher in identifying areas that needed to be rectified.

There were more male than female educators that responded to this research. This could indicate that there were many more males than females interested in the teaching of economic science subjects although educator audit reveals that generally there are more female educators than males in the teaching profession. There is also an indication that the majority of educators are inexperienced since they have been in the teaching profession for only a few years. This is attributed to the fact that in the past there were a few colleges of education offering this option. After the 1994 elections the National Department of Education encouraged colleges to introduce economic science subjects in their curriculum.

It was also found that the majority of economic science educators who responded in this research were qualified educators with degrees or diplomas. This sudden increase in the number of qualified economic science educators and the government intervention in ensuring that these subjects are taught give proof that these subjects are getting status in South Africa. Even the number of learners enrolled in these subjects at post primary schools is gradually increasing yearly in Empangeni Region. There is a general belief that throughout the whole of South Africa school learners demanding these subjects in their institutions. This is also shown by recent bulletins, that is, Volume 1 and 2 (1999) distributed by KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture which advertised many posts that need accounting and business economics educators. This is an indication that the country is determined to increase its economic viability.

QUESTION 2

What careers do you think your students should pursue?

This question was included in the research to find out whether there was a common understanding between economic science learners and educators with reference to careers for secondary schools economic science graduates. Careers mentioned by educators were the same as those that were raised by economics science learners. The educators claimed they had played a major role in informing their learners about career that are followed when enrolling in economic science subjects. Careers mostly mentioned by the majority of educators include entrepreneurship, chartered accountants, human resources managers, bookkeepers and auditors. However, it is important to note that there are areas of improvement as evidenced by the lack of knowledge regarding entrepreneurship amongst many learners .The researcher can argue that there is still a shortage qualified people in this field. Highly qualified educators will contribute to economic growth in the country. Economic growth requires a highly qualified human resource that is able to make a contribution in the economic development in this country.

Lekota and Ceda (1999:20) emphasized that career guidance educators should keep abreast with the changing world. Where certain skills become obsolete they need to be replaced by other appropriate skills such as those needed in the booming information technology and cyberspace industries. They further reiterated the need for career guidance at secondary school level. Such career guidance should take cognisance of the skills in demand in the labour market. The researcher believe that career guidance in school needs to be conducted in junior classes, preferable Grade 8, to enable the learners to select his or her future career in the early stages of his or her education. At the moment there is no evidence that career guidance is conducted in school at any level.

QUESTION 3

Does the economic science curriculum offered allow learners to pursue these careers?

Respondents were expected to determine whether the curriculum on offer was relevant to learner's future careers. The careers that had been identified by both learners and educators require a person who has an economic science background. This gives secondary school economic science graduates a slight advantage when they compete for jobs in the labour market. The researcher strongly believes that the main objective of all businesses is to make the highest possible profit. The majority of secondary school economic science graduates may be employed in these businesses seeing that they are keen to employ those individuals who will make a contribution in increasing profits and ensure that there is maximum business growth.

Although most responses had pointed out that the economic science offered at school would enable secondary /graduate learners to pursue careers, there is a belief that the school products will not enable learners to be fully prepared for jobs relevant to the subjects they are specialising in. They will need additional training to enable them to fit into the corporate environment. Such additional training is not provided in the school curriculum. If this view is correct then it is important to establish where the gap lies and perhaps find ways to fill it. This fact also points clearly to the inadequacy of the skills our teaching staff possess.

Gunstock economist James Theeledi (2000:40) agrees with the view that the country's education system needs some scrutiny. A curriculum should be realigned to meet industry's needs; he said .The researcher has observed that some secondary school economic science graduates, especially Africans, are finding it difficult to get jobs as new labour market entrants. In school they are taught theoretical

knowledge, providing them with very little practical background to stake their claim in the labour market. Healthy links between the school and the industry may be a solution because the school may know what to expect in an industry and an industry may give guidance on what they expect from the secondary school economic science graduate.

It is interesting to note that while is accepted that skills and knowledge are needed in the workplace schools still focus more on theory than practice. This goes back to the issue of re-skilling educators.

QUESTION 4

What are the outcomes or goals that you set for the programme?

Respondents were expected to point out the main objective of secondary school economic science education. The views were expected to include the type of product expected to be produced by their programme. Educators who responded in this research emphasized that it was interesting to note that in the past learners were just interested in a matric certificate instead of the careers they would pursue after getting this certificate. There was general consensus that matric was the key to success. Nobody ever thought about skills taught in the programme seeing that education was content based. That trend will be a thing of the past with the recently unveiled new South African Education Curriculum (Curriculum 2005). Outcome Based Education (OBE) lays emphasis on skills based education. If successful, OBE will make secondary school graduates more skilful and marketable.

The important outcomes or goals that need to be set in the economic science programme include empowering learners to be skilful, marketable, competitive, posses communication skills, be trustworthy and have a business vision.

It is encouraging to find that donor-country contributions are shifting from monetary disbursements to skills transfers. Time is not on the side of the new South Africa, which needs as much skills as it can lay its hands on in order to complete the task of being the engine for economic growth in the African continent. Therefore getting help in the area of skills transfer will accelerate the process of development.

The problem with the present education system is that people can't get work when they leave school. This is because they don't have skills, and that leads to frustration. Most bosses from big companies want skills (Paulus, 199:1). Educators of economic sciences have realized that the programme offered at school directs learners to what they will do in the future when they are employed in the corporate world. People should be taught skills which empower them to decide their future careers at secondary school level.

QUESTION 5

Are these goals achievable?

The respondents points out that their goals were not fully achievable. There were many things that retarded progress, for example, issues like the shortage of economic science educators, shortage of facilities in schools, lack of co-operation between the school, government and corporate world, overcrowded classrooms and unqualified educators. Bucks Schutte (1999:1), an engineer, maintains that schools are failing to teach learners the skills needed by the workplace. He emphasises that school leavers are socially inept, schools do not teach learners communication skills and economic science subjects because of the constrains of the curriculum. According to him the pressure of meeting academic targets is such that life skills often get pushed out of the timetable. It is important that learners should be encouraged to take subjects that will open doors for them in the future. Learners must be encouraged not to avoid economic science subjects, especially

accounting, purely because there is a perception amongst of learners saw it as the most difficult subject. The government must also not employ educators who are not well qualified, educators who are not willing to educate and educators who are not prepared to upgrade themselves.

The majority of educators these days, including secondary school economic science educators, are just engaged in the teaching profession with the intention of getting salaries at the end of the month. They do not have the love of the profession at heart. However, it is interesting to note that the Department of Education and Culture, through the National Minister of Education is proposing strict laws that will deal with lazy educators who are a liability in the department.

QUESTION 6

What problems do you experience as you strive to help learners realize their goals?

Respondents were expected to mention obstacles that prevent that learners realize their goals to the fullest. The main problem raised by educators was the shortage of facilities like textbooks, exercise books, libraries and classrooms. This gave rise to problems in the teaching and learning situation. Effective teaching does not occur if there is a shortage of such facilities. Both educators and learners are not motivated to do their work properly due to the shortage of such facilities. The Sowetan Newspaper dated 4 November 1999 revealed that KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education had expressed shock at the existing gap in the allocation of funds for the province's learners as compared to other provinces. At present each KwaZulu-Natal learner is allocated R2 642 while his or her Gauteng and Western Cape counterparts get R4 589. This indicates that the gap results in shortage of facilities in the province. Additional educators may not be employed if the situation remains like this in future. This may also be a

contributory factor to the high failure rate especially in matric.

Dr S K Matseke (1999:11) pointed out that in truth to be an educator these days, particularly in township schools takes courage. Economic science educators must set education goals in spite of difficulties facing them. Parental involvement in schools must also be encouraged. Education is an investment in human capital and human capital is the greatest asset of a nation. Success in this field is of utmost importance and should never be under-estimated by an individual. As educators we cannot motivate learners unless we are motivated. Educators need to motivate themselves to ensure better education of the nation.

QUESTION 7

How can these problems be solved?

Economic science secondary school educators were asked to give solutions to the problems which are obstacles to the success of their teaching practice. Economic science educators who responded to this research maintain that educators must be encouraged to go to class well prepared for their lessons. They should draw up a scheme of work, programme for the whole year at the beginning of the year, and educators should honour their contractual obligations with their employer.

Respondents further emphasise that economic science educators must ensure learners do their assignments, that homework and classwork is finished and submitted on time. Learners are expected to remain in their classrooms during learning periods and mutual respect between economic science learner and educator should be encouraged. Parent must make sure that their children attend school regularly and do school homework. The leaders in our education system must have an interest in uplifting the standard of education in our country rather than being driven by political motives. They must treat everyone as equals.

Equality must be ensured in the provision of facilities in all schools. There is a drastic need to improve facilities in disadvantaged schools, especially those in rural areas.

The President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki in his address to educators at the University of Venda (Mamaila, 2000) emphasised that while demands for the improvement of infrastructure were legitimate, educators should stop giving excuses for failure especially in Grade 12 final external examination. We have to succeed despite these problems. A good teacher will produce good results under a tree. It is not a good classroom that teaches a child but a good teacher, (Mamaila,2000:11). For learning to take place, there should be order and discipline. Discipline should be maintained throughout the year. Economic science secondary school educators must be encouraged to finish the work programme in all classes from Grade 8 to Grade 12. The problem in most of our schools is that educators do not fish the syllabus (work programme) in lower classes yet most educators expect learners to pass matric

QUESTION 8

Do you have a set syllabus for the course you teach?

The researcher wanted to find out whether educators do have a syllabus, which is followed in what they teach at school. All respondents pointed out that they have a set syllabus based on the interim syllabus currently in use by all secondary schools offering economic sciences. Some respondents emphasised that in some cases they had to make some deviation in the syllabus according to their own discretion. The researcher believes that it encourages educators to be flexible and to make changes if it will benefit their learners.

During a discussion with some secondary school economic science educators it transpired that most schools do not follow the syllabus prescribed for

different grades. This normally happens in grades that do not write external examination. For instance, many economics grade 11 educators felt there was no continuity between Grade 11 and Grade 12 syllabus and as a result most schools preferred to use Grade 12 syllabus in Grade 11 with the intention of revising when they reached the next grade where learners are expected to write the external examination. This becomes disadvantageous to the learner in the future, especially if he or she enrolls in a tertiary institution, because there will be topics that will be unfamiliar to him or her. These topics may need secondary school background. Unfortunately, it is quite possible they could have been skipped in the previous grade.

QUESTION 9

How relevant is the syllabus to the needs of the society

Respondents were expected to express their views about the relevance of the syllabus to the needs of the society. The respondents pointed out that the syllabus was relevant to the needs of society. In South Africa today, employers need employees who possess skills in different aspects. A secondary school economic science graduate should possess what is needed by the market, that is, skills. The only drawback of the syllabus is that it concentrates on theory and does not allow for practical skill development. Unlike Technikon students who are supposed to do in-service training while still at school, there is no prescription at secondary institutions. I is felt that educators must encourage learners to pay some visits to the corporate world to get, first hand, what is actually happening there. This will make a syllabus more relevant to societal needs.

QUESTION 10

How do you know that these are the needs of the society?

Respondents were expected to provide proof that things identified in question 9 above were the needs of the society. Respondents see themselves as part

and parcel of society such that they know society's needs. Andrew Mackay, group-managing director of the Kelly group (2000), maintains that secondary school graduates must acquire business skills which are currently in demand in South Africa. He also emphasises that job seekers need to be taught a variety of marketable skills. The researcher believes that secondary school economic science education is an answer to the needs of society because it teaches learners skills that are needed by the corporate world although they will need additional training before they are employed.

QUESTION 11

What are the limitations, if any, of the syllabus?

As indicated in question 8 economic science secondary educators are free to make some changes in the syllabus on offer. They are allowed to determine the subjects that must be offered to economic science learners. They also decide grades in which learners must be taught. The government also gives them a chance to select textbooks they feel are relevant to the syllabus in use. The researcher realized that some schools are not in a position to offer the whole economic science package due to a shortage of educators and facilities.

It can be pointed out that in some instances, due to the shortage of textbooks in schools, educators are sometimes forced to use out dated textbooks that do not follow the current interim syllabus. This is also the case in most schools where the delivery of textbooks, like Business Economics Grade 8 to 12 was done before the introduction of the currently used syllabus. Business economics educators of other economic science subjects are faced with the task of sifting topics that are not relevant to the syllabus. Another problem facing educators in secondary school economic science education is a communication breakdown between educators and the department of education and culture, especially in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Information with reference to changes, particularly in Grade 12 external examinations comes very late to some educators or never comes at all. Some

subject advisors who are expected to communicate with educators on anything pertaining to any changes in the syllabus fail to reach schools in time while others do not get the information at all. This was the case with grade 12 economics final examination in 1998 when most educators received information as late as September 1998 that the examination will be based on nine modules as opposed to seven as earlier indicated by the provincial Department of Education and Culture.

QUESTION 12

What have you done to overcome these limitations for the benefit of your learners?

Some educators had decided to make the syllabus more practical. They had included topics and items that were not part of the syllabus. They had also excluded outdated information and introduced the current information. Some educators were encouraging their learners to enter the economic science Olympiads on an annual basis. This helps learners to get used to competition and promotes their communicative skills. Economic science learners need to be encouraged to make use of different media like television, radio and newspapers to gain further knowledge on topics relevant to their school syllabus.

These types of media are easily accessible to most economic science educators and learners. Some of them are also available in the homes of both educators and learners. Participation of learners in the economic science secondary school Grade 12 Olympiad which was organized by Mehlwesizwe Commercial Teachers Association in the past two years (1998 and 1999) has shown that learners from townships have exposure to current economic news as compared to those who are from rural areas. Township school learners have access to the media mentioned above and they show signs of awareness about the economic affairs of the country and the world as a whole.

QUESTION 13

What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge faced by your students?

Respondents were expected to point out challenges that will be faced by learners on completion of their secondary school economic science education. Modern industry is changing rapidly and the traditional workplace of the past with many unskilled and semi-skilled workers is no longer appropriate for challenges of the present economic set-up. School leavers who will not be able to attend the tertiary institutions to further their studies must be kept aware that not all of them will be employed by the corporate world. It is important for the school to inculcate entrepreneurial attitudes and skills to economic science learners at an early age to make them more responsive to the needs and the realities of the labour market. This will also help them with business skills so that they can run their future business as profitable entrepreneurs. It is interesting to note that the topic of entrepreneurship in education is gaining momentum in our country. There is a strong belief that sooner or later entrepreneurship will be introduced as a subject or topic in secondary school economic science education. This will equip secondary school learners with skills that will help them as job seekers or business managers in post-secondary school economic science education.

QUESTION 14

How can this challenge be met?

Educators were expected to identify things that must be done to ensure that learners are ready to meet the challenge they will face in future. Respondents pointed out that the following things must be done to ensure that the level of economic science education has been boosted.

Educators, in-service training and workshops should be encouraged .In these seminars the educators may be able to discuss ways and means of ensuring

that economic science education is improved. Even the educator himself must be kept up to date with new developments in economic science curriculum. It is also important for the economic science educators to involve people who are from the corporate industry when seminars are conducted People from the corporate industry will also have an input in the secondary school economic science curriculum and they will know what is happening in schools .The schools will also be up-dated regarding new innovations in the industry. Economic science education is both an asset to a newly qualified educator and the experienced educator because it serves as a platform where these educators are able share fruitful education ideas.

Economic science educators must be aware that black communities lack the necessary skills to manage the country's modern economy. The shortage of skills would make it difficult for the learners who enter the labour market to get involved in the mainstream economy, putting a major strain on the country. Over the years white people had acquired skills and the country needs to integrate resources and skills and work together. This is according to the Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, Tito Mboweni (1999: 22). The researcher maintains that it is the duty of secondary school economic science educators to develop management skills in learners for further managerial positions in the corporate world.

QUESTION 15

Have you to expose your learners to real life situation in the corporate world?

Respondents were expected to point out whether they have been successful in keeping a link between a school and the corporate world. Their response was also expected to indicate whether learners have been able to pay a visit to these sources of employment.

Respondents emphasised that the majority of learners were not exposed to the real life situation in the corporate world. One can put forward that the

majority of these learners had been exposed to the corporate world through visits but not through part time jobs during weekends and school holidays. Their visits lasted a couple of hours if not minutes. Learners cannot claim that they actually know what is happening in the place of employment. The majority of industries do not allow outside people to enter their plants. Outside people are normally addressed on what is actually happening in the plant in separate rooms or they are just shown videos on what is done in that particular industry or business.

This is an indication that the relationship between the school and industry has not yet reached desired standards. Perhaps economic science learners must be allowed to enter the departments that employ people who have studied economic science subjects for them to have first hand information on what really happens there.

The researcher has realised that there is no proper link between the school and industry. This lack of good co-operation results in low productivity by recently employed economic science secondary school graduates. The corporate world has to spend a lot of money doing in-service training, which would have been cheaper if it was done while the new workers were still at school.

QUESTION 16

If yes, what have you done? If no, why not? Are you planning to do so in future, why?

The reason cited by other educators that they were unable to take learners to the corporate world was shortage of finance on the part of learners. The researcher does not accept this as a valid reason because it shows failure on the part of the school to ensure that there is a proper education. It means that the economic science educator(s) are failing to convince his/her learners about the importance of such visits. The people who represent the corporate world can also be invited to schools with the intention of addressing learners

about careers in their undertakings.

The failure of the school to expose learners to the real life situation in the corporate world indicates that there are still economic science educators who are not taking their profession seriously. This, according to the researcher, indicates that there are educators who are sending learners on the road to nowhere. If these visits are properly planned, well in advance, it is believed that learners will gain a lot through proper career guidance, bursaries and future employment opportunities.

QUESTION 17

Is there a benefit in introducing learners to corporate experiences?

Respondents were expected to mention whether it was good or bad to introduce learners to corporate experiences. Secondary school economic science educators who responded in research identified that the main shortcoming of economic science education was that it stresses theory rather than practice. This was also the point raised by many corporate world respondents. This is proof that if learners can be allowed to visit the industry they will be capable of relating theoretical learning at school to actual (practical) happens in the corporate world. They will also be able to notice the importance of some topics which they learn in their syllabus, linking theory with practice. The school must be encouraged to ask industries to "adopt" individual learners or groups of learners.

QUESTION 18

What opportunities do you see for school leavers in your field?

The researcher wanted to find out whether respondents were aware of the challenges that would be faced by economic science graduates as school leavers. Good or bad things must be expected by school leavers were supposed to be mentioned by people who responded in this research. The

school leavers should be aware of a high rate of unemployment. Large-scale layoffs take place every day as a result of downsizing and right sizing. Some companies have relocated to other countries in search of cheap labour. For this reason jobs are not created. Today's school leavers entering the labour market have to compete with experienced people who have lost their jobs.

From the discussions with both educators and learners who are engaged in secondary school economic science education it came to light that they were aware of the shortage of jobs in our country. The limited jobs which are available demands a person who is in possession of skills and people with qualifications which are marketable. Learners need to recognize themselves as people who will be able to compete for those limited jobs on offer. If it comes to a push, they may be able to start their own businesses.

Working for oneself will probably be the most viable option for many school leavers. The tough job market has also made it necessary for school leavers to look at self-employment as an option rather than working for large organisations.

5.3.1 GENERAL INTERPRETATION

The number of secondary schools offering economic sciences is increasing year by year. There is also an increase in the number of both educators and learners interested in these subjects. Even the National Department of Education has encouraged schools, especially colleges of education, to offer this option. This is an indication that the popularity of working well with the corporate world. It is also becoming clear that there was very limited interaction between the schools and the corporate world.

Lack of good co-operation between the school and the corporate world is still a big problem that retards progress in secondary school economic science education. Co-operation between these two sectors must be conducted with immediate effect to ensure that schools really

teach learners what is desired by the employer. The co-operation that is actually needed is one that will enable the corporate world to have a say in implementation of the syllabus in a nearby school, for example, some industries at Richards Bay approached the governing body of Tisand Technical High School to introduce certain subjects in the school for their future employers. They even subsidise the educators who will teach those subjects. The researcher realizes that unlike in the past some learners are now enrolling in the subjects that are relevant to their future careers.

5.4 INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CORPORATE WORLD

QUESTION 1

Name of establishment

These interviews were conducted with staff from industries around Empangeni/Richards Bay area. Empangeni/Richards Bay industries were chosen because the majority of secondary school economic science graduates especially in Northern KwaZulu-Natal are employed there. This industrial area also forms the backbone of the economy in the province.

Another reason for choosing this area was the fact that it is South Africa's highest coal exporting harbour and South Africa's highest producer of fertilizer. This area is also the second biggest source of employment in Kwazulu-Natal province after the Durban Pinetown area.

QUESTION 2

In your establishment what skills would you like your employees with grade economic science background to have?

The respondents were asked about the kinds of skills they expected Grade 12 learners to have. The aim of the question was to establish the skills needed by the corporate world from the secondary school economic science graduates.

The skills that are needed by the corporate world are mentioned in chapter 3, section 3.2.3.3. All skills needed by corporates except computer skills, are taught at almost all schools that offer economic sciences at secondary school level. Many schools do not offer computer illiteracy. The Department of Education and Culture will need to train the educators first before the learners are taught to use computers. Hopefully, in the very near future learners will be computer literate since many schools want or intend to include Computer Studies in their curriculum. The importance of computer literacy in a job situation can never be overemphasized as it makes a marked difference for candidates who have applied for a job. There are many schools both public and private which have introduced Computer Studies. In these schools a variety of people are registered, including economic science educators and learners. This suggests that the problem of the shortage of computer skills amongst secondary school economic science graduates may be solved with time, and if the educators use the skill to the benefit of the secondary school economic science learner's computer illiteracy may be eradicated.

Although it is not compulsory for educators to be computer literate future trends suggest that this may change as the needs of the learners change. Learners who undertake private studies in computers will be at an advantage when computer studies are introduced in their schools.

QUESTION 3

Why is it important to you that they have those skills?

Respondents were expected to mention the reason for the learners to have skills identified in (Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3.3. question 2).

Respondents emphasised that it is important for the secondary school economic science graduates to have these skills because they are needed by the corporate world and as a ticket for a job in the industry. Gray, McPherson and Raffe (1983:145) specify that, employers have used school qualifications as a criterion for selection of job applications. It goes without saying that people with skills have a better opportunity to be employed than those who do not possess skills. Unskilled labour is in abundance their demand and wages are low. On the other hand skilled labour is limited, its demand is high and the people receive high salaries.

Skills serve as the main criterion behind the employment of every person who is looking for a job. Employers employ people on the basis of their skills. If one does not possess skills required by the working environment chances of employment are slim. In every job on offer or being advertised, skills needed for a possible employee are mentioned. Training on the job is no longer acceptable to the employer seeing that a lot of money is spent to train people who, after completion, may look for greener pastures. Even the affirmative action cases are only considered if they have basic skills and show potential for development. However, to speed up the employability of workers the government has introduced the skills Development Act that encourages employers who comply with the act, will receive a levy of up to one percent. The importance of skills have also drawn the attention of South Africa curriculum (Curriculum 2005) which stresses the importance of a skills based type of education. There is a clear indication that the product of such education will hopefully possess the skills which are desired by the working environment.

QUESTION 4

How many employees do you have with Grade 12 economic science background?

Respondents were expected to give figures of their employees with secondary school economic science background. Almost all the industries in the sample did not have an exact figure of employees with Grade 12 economic science backgrounds. This indicates that there are some industries that simply employ workers without scrutinizing their skills and qualifications. There are jobs in which many people are employed but do not require specialized skills. Some people with matric are prepared to take any job which will give them income at the end of the week or month. However the use of computers in industries is beginning to change the statues quo emphasizing the importance of having such skill.

The majority of economic science secondary school graduates work in the financial department in various corporate establishments (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3.3. question 4). The most suitable section of the corporate industry where economic science graduate can be placed is a arguably the finance department. This is because of the relevance of their financial knowledge which they gain while they are being taught at school.

With a worldwide trend shifting toward practical occupations, the demand for people with skills needed by the corporate world, need to be addressed by curriculum designers as well as schools offering economic science in secondary schools particularly in a developing country like South Africa.

The product of secondary school economic science education are found everywhere in the world of work, be it in a small industry, big business, financial institutions, Telkom, Portnet, government sector,

private sector, etc. This gives proof that the corporate world is in need of people with an economic science background.

QUESTION 5

Do they demonstrate these skills?

Respondent were expected to indicate whether there was any skill demonstrated by the secondary school economic science graduate when they are employed for the first time in any industry. People from the corporate world differed in their responses. Fifty percent were not satisfied. Amongst the things they raised are the following:

- Because these new employees lack essential skills, there is a need for additional training to be undertaken before they can start to do the work but they showed that they have theoretical background.

Some educators have claimed that they have made the syllabus more practical but there are indications that there is still a majority of learners that do not demonstrate the desired industrial skills. It also shows that the practicals that have been used by educators are not relevant to the practical needs of the corporate world. To overcome this situation, a link between the corporate world and the school must be created.

QUESTION 6

How do you rate their performance against other Grade 12 school leavers who do not have an economic science background?

Respondents were expected to compare the performance of Grade 12 economic science graduates to those school leavers who are also employed for the first time but do not have an economic science

background. The respondents emphasized that if new employees are placed in department(s), relevant to what they learned at school, their performance is good. Certain members of the corporate world simply place their workers in departments that are not relevant to the skills they already possess. If they are properly placed, hopefully, the standard of their work will reach the desired standards. It is important, even in a school situation, to give educators subjects they are qualified to each in order to achieve effective teaching and learning. This gives a clear indication that the performance of any worker can be properly measured if he is placed in the department that is relevant to his already known skills.

The researcher believes that there are economic science secondary school graduates who are placed in jobs that are not relevant to their qualifications. Some of these new employees have no option but to accept what is said by the employer with the hope that they will get a chance in the future when they will be placed in sections(s) that suit their skills.

QUESTION 7

Do you think there is a correlation between what the learners do at school and what they do at work?

Respondents were expected to point out whether what is done at school is related to what learners will do in industry. The respondents differed in their responses with fifty percent agreeing and fifty percent disagreeing. One of the shortcomings of school education is that it concentrates on theoretical knowledge rather than practice, which is needed by the corporate world. The learning content is related to the corporate world but learners will need additional training before the working environment can gainfully absorb them.

Another problem cited by the respondent was that the school did not

prepare learners adequately for the world of business. Educators should be doing a thorough scrutinity of the industry so that they can pass relevant knowledge on to learners, thereby solving this problem. In addition learners must be encouraged to pay visits to industries on a regular basis with the intention of getting first hand information and experience.

QUESTION 8

Do you think this affects the economy of the country?

Respondents were expected to give their views on the role of the correlation between what learners do at school and what they do at work. All respondent pointed out that skills gained in the teaching and learning of these subjects contributes to the country's economic growth and development. Economic growth in the country depends, to a large extent, on the skills of the workers. Education and training plays a very important role in the economic progress of every country. Human resources skills are the most important development assets of a country. The work force of a country enables it to be productive. Better education and training will increase the number of skilled people in the work force and equip them to contribute to economic development. Better education and training is a very important component of economic progress.

Utterances by many education stakeholders in government, non-government organisations, and people directly involved in education point out that our schools should function like a business always striving for maximum profit year by year. The government has expressed concern that school learners are not employable due to lack of skills. The government cannot ignore the fact that these adults will play a part in the developing of the economy of the country. The majority will probably be unemployed. It is the intention of the government to reduce unemployment, and unskilled labour possess a

problem of un-employability. Most importantly, these people have very little to contribute towards economic growth and development.

QUESTION 9

What would you like to see happening in our schools?

Respondents were expected to raise their opinions with the intention of improving the quality of teaching and learning of economic sciences for the benefit of the learner, employer and the country as a whole. The respondents maintained that there must be co-operation between the corporate world, school and educational authorities. Education needs to be skills-based and more practical. One can argue that Outcomes-Based Education curriculum will endeavour to solve the problem of skills because it stresses the importance of skills based learning. Out comes based education, if properly implemented, will equip learners for life beyond school, and learners will see learning as a life-long process, which is essential to keep pace with the rapidly changing conditions of the world of work and of society.

The researcher has noticed that almost all employment avenues in South Africa have complained about the shortage of skilful employees in the country. The Outcome Based Education hopefully will be an answer to this problem since it stresses a skill-based type of education. It is believed that it will take a long period of time to achieve these education goals since economic science educators are no yet fully equipped to deal with this new approach.

As I have indicated earlier, the main solution to the shortage of skills is the provision of skills-based education in the school system. This will make secondary school graduates more employable.

QUESTION 10

Who is responsible for the growth of the economy of the country?

Respondents were expected to express their opinions about which people are responsible for economic growth in the country. Some respondents believe it is the responsibility of the government while others feel business and industry carry the responsibility. The majority respondents strongly believed that economic growth in the country was the responsibility of everyone, that is, citizens, government and the corporate world. Some respondents think that it is only the responsibility of the government to contribute towards economic growth. A hard working nation will be able to boost economic growth in the country. A lazy nation retards progress in economic growth and development. The researcher also strongly agrees that it is the nation which must uplift the economic standards in the country. The nation must create avenues of employment through job creation. The nation must not wait for the government to do everything for them. For the economy to grow, the population must have a good work ethic. The motivation of the population must be in the form of dedication, punctuality, perseverance, responsibility, attentiveness, ambition and initiative. Thus school economic science graduates must be effectively combined with the correct technology, entrepreneurship and capital.

It is interesting to note that many people in South Africa have accepted the importance of starting their own businesses instead of looking for jobs elsewhere. The development of the informal sector in South Africa proves the fact that some people are no longer waiting to be employed by the public or private sector. In almost all corners of our country there are informal sectors. Their number exceeds registered business. The informal sector is distinguished from the formal economy which is conducted within the institutional framework of the country. The informal sector includes businesses like hawkers, street

vendors, shebeens, self help housing, car washing, etc. The informal sector has created more job opportunities, combated poverty, made a greater contribution to the gross domestic product and produced many entrepreneurs. This gives a clear indication that everyone in the country is responsible for economic growth.

QUESTION 11

What can they do to create economic growth in the country?

Respondents were expected to raise opinions that may have an effect on economic growth in the country. All respondents agreed that education and training are key factors in economic growth. Countries with poor education, a high rate of illiteracy and low level of education do not enjoy economic growth. A good quality labour force through good education and training may be the determining factor in a country's economic growth. The quality of the labour force depends to a large extent on the skill of workers produced. Using a well-trained labour force to install, manage and maintain technology is also a necessity. Technology generates income and results in economic growth.

South Africa must be encouraged to export manufactured goods. The country that exports primary products like South Africa, will never achieve a position of being a well-developed country. When products are exported as unfinished products they tend to fetch low prices but when they are imported as finished products they are expensive. Defective economic structure, as mentioned above cannot contribute to economic growth. The solution to this problem is for South Africa to process the country's raw materials into finished goods before they are sold to other countries. This can be made possible by training it's citizens to be able to produce these value-added goods for themselves.

QUESTION 12

How many schools/educators in the economic science field interact with you?

People of the corporate world were asked to indicate the number of schools and educators of secondary school economic science education who keep contact with them. Respondents indicated that very few schools interacted with the corporate world. The percentage did not exceed twenty. This indicates that the partnership the government is encouraging has not yet materialised.

Many schools do not know what is actually happening in the business sector. Conversely the business sector is not aware of what is happening in the schools. This leads to a school producing learners that do not meet the corporate world's expectations. There are very few schools that undertake educational tours to different industries to the benefit of its learners. Trips to these industries may benefit economic science learners, and their educators, through the guidance they can give.

The industries do allow ad hoc school visits but only through appointments made in advance. By meeting with people from the industry learners may be in a better position to gain career guidance as will as getting first hand information of what is actually happening in those undertakings. This both educators and learners will benefit from the experiences.

QUESTION 13

How often do schools/educators in the economic science field interact with you?

The respondents were expected to mention the number of times they

come in contact with schools and educators. Even those schools which came into contact with the corporate world indicated that their contact was limited. It is believed that the schools are not up to date regarding the educational requirements and needs of industry. Educators do not have a chance to share in the ownership of industrial awareness. Both schools and industry must create an effective partnership in education in order to help both sectors. An industry will have an influence in the school curriculum by identifying subjects they think are relevant to their job situation. There may be as enormous opportunity for learners to be employed without any drawbacks in that industry since they will know what happens there. People from industry must be encouraged to frequently interact with schools, especially secondary school economic science learners (whom the researcher believes is the future destiny lies of the industry) must be regular visitors. Their visits may also help them if they decide to open up their own businesses as they will get ideas on how they can manage their undertakings as budding entrepreneurs.

QUESTION 14

In what capacity do schools in the economic science field interact with the corporate world?

The respondents were expected to point out the purpose of their contact with schools. It came to light that contact between the schools and the corporate world (amongst other things) occurred when educators and learners paid visits to the industry with the intention of getting first hand information on what was happening in the industry. Interaction also occurred when a school was seeking donations for school facilities like equipment, Saturday classes, winter schools, career guidance, etc. There are still too few schools which keep contact with the corporate world. All schools must pay visits to industry. This will help economic science learners avoid being caught by surprise when they are employed. The policy followed in the work

situation must be taught to learners. The culture of working must be transferred to learners at an early age. It is important for schools to make arrangements with any industry for economic science learners to have in-service training during weekends or school vacations.

QUESTION 15

What kinds of issues do you discuss with them?

The respondents were asked to specifically indicate topics discussed with secondary school economic science educators when they came into contact with them.

The main issue in their discussion was funding as well as donations for the school by the industry. This gives proof that the issue of types of skills needed by the industry is no so important in their discussion. The researcher believes that the issues discussed must go beyond funding. The issue must involve everything that involves education and training e.g. improvements in the teaching and learning situation, how to make the curriculum more relevant, etc. The issues must also include ways and methods of improving secondary school economic science education and curriculum. They must also talk about how a close relation between the schools and the corporate world can be created. That relationship must enable the schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning to meet the standard required by the working environment from a secondary school economic science graduate perspective.

QUESTION 16

What is you opinion from the interaction you have had with educators about the schooling system?

The respondents were required to raise what they have observed in

their interaction with educators about education as a whole. The corporate world believed that many improvements needed to be done to ensure that secondary school economic science graduates met corporate standards. Improvements needed to be done to improve the quality of educators available, facilities in schools, work relationships amongst all education stakeholders, contact between school and the corporate world on regular basis. Some radical changes were required in the curriculum.

The researcher believes that secondary school economic science educators meet the challenge of taking charge of teaching and learning. They use the opportunity to build citizens who will be able to contribute to reconstruction and development in their societies.

The interaction between economic science secondary school educators and the corporate world will help educators with relevant date information about the workings of the industry. It will also help the industry by getting ready-made recruits since they have had an influence in the school curriculum and because they have been part of the learner's schooling through regular contacts. Economic science learners from schools that have a relationship with industry stand a better chance of being employed faster as compared to others because the management of the industry will sense that they are part and parcel of their business through their previous contacts

5.5 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This section attempts to relate the objectives of the study with the results in order to ascertain the extent to which the results attempt to realise the objectives and what the researcher observed when this study was conducted.

5.5.1 OBJECTIVE 1

To identify skills the corporate world needs from learners of economic sciences.

The first objective is this study intended to seek information about the type of skills needed by the corporate world from secondary school economic science graduates. Hopefully, this information would then help the curriculum designers to ensure that the work programme is relevant to corporate needs.

The study identified the following skills:

- Computer skills
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Organising, planning and co-ordinating skills
- Report writing skills
- Skills to understand the business environment
- Financial skills
- People skills
- Ability to critically analyse accounts, pick up errors, wrong allocations, invoice errors and company performance skills
- How business operates (micro/macro)
- Business decision-making skills
- Good basic understanding of the subjects
- Ability to transfer theoretical skills into the workplace
- Good communication skills particularly in English, that is, the most important skill. Many young economic science secondary school graduates lack proper communication skills in this language.
- Determination to continue learning because they have not arrived where they have achieved basic qualification.

Schools visited mentioned that schools in the economic science

programme taught the above skills but the majority of people from the corporate industries had complained about the lack of practical skills from secondary school economic science graduates.

This indicates there in no common understanding between industry and the school about these skills. If schools believe they are teaching skills and business feels their employees lack these skills then obviously there is a big problem with the interpretation of the skills. The skill that is slowly being introduced in schools is computer literacy. There are a few schools that offer this skill. Economic science secondary school graduates have been taught mainly theory than practice, which is what the corporate world focuses on. When they enter the working environment they come equipped with theory only but lack practical skills.

Economic sciences learners must be encouraged to undergo experiential learning during school vacations to ensure that practice is make a reality. Experiential learning has proved to be helpful in preparing Technikon graduates for the world of work. The researcher believes that most employers prefer Technikon graduates because they have both theoretical and practical knowledge. While still learning in the Technikons there are periods of time during their studies when they are supposed to do on the job practicals in industries where they are likely to get employment in the future.

There are also schools that fail to offer the whole secondary school economic science subjects package that includes popular subjects like Accounting, Business Economic and Economics. The reasons mentioned by educators for not offering the whole package include the shortage of human resources and physical facilities. Learners from schools that do

not offer the whole economic science package are the ones that do not posses the skills identified by the corporate world. The researcher believes that many of these learners are part of the learners identified by the corporate world as having no skills at all. This gives a clear indication that schools and the department of education and culture must try some ways of providing schools with all the three above mentioned economic subjects package including computer skills and mercantile law to ensure that the skills identified by corporate world are fully provided by secondary school economic science graduates when they enter the labour market.

5.5.2 OBJECTIVE 2

To seek perceptions of the corporate people about the state of the economic science education in the country.

The second objective was formulated by the researcher with the intention of getting opinions from the corporate people about the current state of secondary school economic science education in the country.

The corporate world mentioned that the secondary school economic science graduate had basic but needed additional training to be suitable for the jobs. Some employers indicated that they say no difference between a school leaver who was doing economic science subjects at secondary school level and those who did not participate in these subjects at any level when they were employed for the first time in the industry.

This is a very serious problem and a challenge for economic science educators. Clearly, learners who have knowledge of business operations should be able to demonstrate that skill. If they cannot do so then the education they receive questionable.

Some industries did mention that though secondary school economic science learners do show some skills there is a need for additional training before they are fully observed by the industry. They also fit easier in the industry, and training they receive tends to be additional knowledge. Some industries felt that they spend less money for training new recruits with economic science background. They also have a higher rate of productivity.

Most school leavers without an economic science background would be costly to the industry. A lot of money would be needed for training before they fit in the working environment. Some corporate industries believe that these school leavers with secondary school economic science background are an asset to the country as the country is faced with pressure of competing with highly industrialised nations.

5.5.3 OBJECTIVE 3

To establish the role of the corporate world in the economic science education.

This objective was identified by the researcher to establish the contribution that is made by the corporate world in the upliftment of teaching and learning economic science subjects at secondary school level.

As indicated in Chapter 3 section 3.2.3.3 question 12, there is no strong role played by the corporate world in the economic science education. Their school involvement is limited to few schools or no schools at all. The researcher also observed this when he was conducting interviews. Certain corporate world notably ABSA Bank, Standard Bank, First National Bank and

Ithala Bank did not allow the researcher to conduct any interviews with them. They claimed they had a policy that did not allow interviews to be conducted on this issue. This suggests that the banking industry has so far shown very little involvement in secondary education in the country. Some schools especially in rural areas, which are for away from industries, are hard hit due to the fact that some of their economic science learners come into contact for the first time with the labour market where they are looking for employment. The major blame may be put on the school; especially educators who fail to organize some educational tours to industries.

Another blame may also be put on the corporate industries that are reluctant to help all schools equally pertaining to funding, donations and career guidance. The researcher has observed that schools near industries benefit a lot. They normally receive what has been mentioned above. Assistance tends to be duplicated to the same people and schools that do not exceed even any percent. It really shows that the majority of schools do not get any assistance from the industries. Even if assistance is there the industries would like to know what will benefit out of it e.g. publicity

On the positive note, there are corporate industries the researcher would say are the assets in economic science education. These industries include corporate industries like Richards Bay minerals, Alusaf, Zululand Chamber of Business Foundation and Mondi Kraft. In career guidance, give permission for school visits with the intention of educational tours, fund winter schools, fund Saturday classes, financial assistance to schools for constructing buildings, bursaries to learners, etc.

5.5.4 OBJECTIVE 4

To establish whether schools work collaboratively with the corporate world

This objective is used to find out whether schools worked hand in hand with the corporate world in economic science education.

There is a limited working relationship between the school and the corporate world. In practice the school does not know what is happening in the industry and vice versa. The blame can be put on both sectors because one believes that they lack commitment of having a close working relationship.

The researcher believes that the working relationship between the school and the corporate world have not yet reached a satisfactory level. A clear plan of how the corporate world and secondary schools offering economic science subjects will co-operate to bridge the gap between the school and the working environment would be a logical step in preparing learners for the world of work. The school should be acquainted with what is happening in the working environment and be able to help learners make the necessary connections.

Some large businesses conduct seminars for grade 12 learners that deal with career guidance as will as job opportunities available to school leavers. Invitations to attend these seminars do not reach all schools that are near the industries and in the townships. This is understandable because if the communication in the country is generally not well developed how much more between the school and the corporate world. Rural schools are again hard hit because information does not reach them. Another blame may be put on educators themselves. Some of them do not respond to invitations by

industry for career guidance. These educators are not willing to accompany learners to workshops and seminars arranged by industries especially during the afternoon, week-ends or school holidays. This clearly indicates that some of them are just teachers with intention of getting the pay without the actual love for the profession.

Another point that need to be raised is the kilometre radius that is used by most industries. The ruling for the kilometre radius by certain industries states that certain undertakings will only collaborate with schools say within 20 kilometre radius from their institutions. Only few schools benefit. A bulb of schools especially those with a high number of black learners are left behind. This retards progress in the majority of schools.

5.5.5 OBJECTIVE 5

To assess the relevance of secondary school economic science curriculum to the economic needs of South Africa

This objective was included in this study with the aim of identifying some loopholes in our economic curriculum in order to come with a material that will help curriculum designers to strengthen it so that the products becomes competitive and productive when joining the working environment. There are areas, which the researcher and some education stakeholders felt that they need to be strengthened to ensure that the curriculum is more relevant to the economic needs of the country. We have to develop economic science graduates who have the skills to be competitive within global markets and the attitudes that will allow them to live meaningful life. They need both theory and practice These are:

- A range of entrepreneurship programmes to be

developed for economic science secondary school learners. The programme must be able to teach learners about business through learning by doing. The programme must be able to uncover potential entrepreneurs in the classroom and give the confidence to think of establishing a business as a viable career. Everyone needs to think entrepreneurial, not just as school leavers looking for jobs but as job creators. Learners must be taught skills of running a business. They must be taught techniques of how to establish their own business without post secondary school qualifications.

- Computer studies must be taught to all secondary school economic science learners. They must be able to work with computers as is happening in the corporate industry. Computer skills, they will need outside the school as the job creators or job seekers, must be brought into the classroom.

- Learners must be taught the skills that are needed in a business or working environment. Such skills include calculating skills, typing skills, budgeting skills, computer skills, interpersonal communication skills, organisational skills, etc.

- Schools which offer economic science subjects in particular must have a computer laboratory to keep up with the latest development in technology.

Business English must be introduced as an additional subject to economic science learners, and this will enhance communication skills (both written and verbal). This will also help the learner to participate in international business trade

where English is dominant and serves as an international means of communication.

- The curriculum for economic services must include the following core curricular subjects like Accounting, Business Economics, Economics and mercantile law. Fundamental subjects like numeracy and commercial mathematics as well as elective subjects like Business English, Typing or Computer studies should be included in the Economic science curriculum.

  The present learning areas as advocated for in the Curriculum 2005 for South African schools seems to address the concerns raised by the researcher, adequately. Therefore, it is not necessary to design a new curriculum. The following features are covered in the draft revised Curriculum 2005 on economic sciences and those are in line with the recommendations proposed in this study (Department of Education, February 2001).

- The draft revised Curriculum 2005 outcomes are aimed at ensuring that learners gain the skills, knowledge and values that will allow them to contribute to their own success as well as the success of the nation as a whole.

- The draft revised Curriculum 2005 will spell out the type of knowledge and skills that is expected at the lower grades (grade 7 – 9) of the secondary school economic science.

- It is people centred. Curriculum designers who are expects in economic science curriculum will consult all stakeholders in the whole country for ideas as they revise the curriculum.

- The curriculum proposes to develop learners who have the skills to be competitive within global markets. They would have both theory and practice, which is lacking in the past curriculum.

- This education system will be extremely flexible, will reward excellence, encourage progress, even beyond the learner's grade of learning.

- The draft revised curriculum will ensure that every learner is exposed to economic science subjects from Grade R to at least Grade 9 or above.

- The researcher believes that the inclusion of economic sciences in the foundation, intermediate and senior phase through Economic Management and Sciences in schools is more specifically extremely important for the following reasons:

    - all citizens require the basic knowledge and skills of economic science regardless of their chosen careers. As business owners they will require the economic science skills.

    - it is essential for learners who will gain employment in the formal sector because it will have a positive impact in productivity, work ethics, etc.

- The draft revised curriculum 2005 spells out the type of economic science educator that will be needed and it will also provide them with the type of content and knowledge to be taught and learnt.

- The National Department of Education has indicated that publishers will get a clear picture on the type of learning support material e.g. textbooks they must produce.

- Economic science educators will be trained in the evaluation, selection and use of the textbooks in the context.

- The current working group that was appointed in February 2001 represents all education stakeholders like corporate industry, unions, educators, government, etc. This makes the curriculum more relevant to the expectation of the nation.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the analysis and the interpretation of data that was collected by the researcher. Analysis and interpretation of data involved information gained from economic science learners and educators as well corporate people. The data was analysed and related to objectives of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the competitive world of today, it is a fact that employers are becoming more selective when they choose employees because the emphasis is on quality production and high productivity. Inadequately skilled employees therefore become a liability in that environment hence they are retrenched or retrained. The Skills Development Act encourages employers to train unskilled employees by offering them (labourers) a skills levy of up to one percent of their (labourers) taxed income. This study focuses on the importance of the economic sciences in empowering learners for the world of work. What appears to be critical at this stage is that the present school offerings do not prepare the learners adequately for the world of work and that partnerships with the corporate world are non-existence and that educators, although mostly qualified, do not however, expose learners to appropriate learning experiences that would broaden their understanding of economic issues and make them employable.

Based on the literature review and the findings of the empirical investigation the researcher would offer the following recommendations which can act as a basis for further study, debate and improvement in the teaching and learning of economic sciences in preparation for a job in industry.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE LEARNERS

The researcher saw it fitting to make recommendations which he felt would improve the quality of teaching and learning in secondary school

economic science subjects. These recommendations are made with the aim of helping learners to be fully employable in the labour market, which has limited spaces for employment. The research makes the following recommendations based on the findings of this study:

6.2.1 CAREER GUIDANCE

In the past educators and principals attached little importance to career guidance as a subject at school. The subject was usually given to those educators who had lighter workloads than others. This created an impression amongst both educators and learners that this subject was not important. Correct career guidance is a necessity to ensure that learners enroll in options that are relevant to their future careers. This will ensure that learners choose vocations for which they have potential and interest.

Career guidance will enable learners to know the merits and demerits of different careers and help them to chose career options that are linked to the curriculum they follow. In other words, the curriculum should be focused and relevant to what the learners want to do so that they can make connections and informed choices when they decide on careers. For instance, when teaching economics, an educator should always make reference to the scope of work of an economist.

Another factor, which contributed to the neglect of career guidance, was the fact that there was no assessment done on the subject. As a result, educators used the periods allocated to the career guidance as extra time to teach other subjects. The school syllabus was not linked to vocations and therefore, even when career guidance was taught, very little reference was made to skills acquisition and where reference was made, it was done in a broad and general way. Learners were told that they

could work in industry, for instance. Ongoing career education should be provided to all learners at all secondary school levels.

It is highly recommended that all secondary school educators, and not only those in economic subjects, should utilise the career guidance period effectively if it is assigned to them by devoting the time solely to career guidance. This will help learners to choose their careers before they reach grade twelve. Career guidance will also help them not to enroll in options that are not relevant to their future careers. Another possibility would be for career guidance educators to team-teach with subject specific educators who may be better informed about career paths in their field of study.

6.2.2 TRANSITION TO THE WORK PLACE

The education system in South Africa has often been criticised for its weakness in preparing learners for life in the world of work. Secondary school economic science learners should be provided with work related skills. What is taught at school should make sense of life and the world of work. After all learners, are being prepared to be active citizens of the world. The curriculum must be able to equip economic science learners with the knowledge, competencies and orientations needed to be successful after completing their studies. Members of the business community and the community at large should be involved in the process of designing the school curriculum to ensure that relevance to the world of work is ensured.

Providing work placements for secondary school economic science learners while they are still in school is one of the important methods that can be used by the business sector and education authorities. Mechanisms and programmes that facilitate the transition of learners from the centre of learning to

work need to be provided in centres of learning. As the South African economy is still low and as very few parents are able to send their children to higher education institutions, it is essential that the skills learners acquire at school make them employable and enterprising. The President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, has on many occasions called on people to use their skills to create their own job initiatives and he has promised that the government would support such ventures. Although partnerships should be formed and supported between education departments, the Department of Labour, unions, businesses and communities to ensure that the transition from school to work takes place, the onus remains with the schools to take the initiative and explore all possibilities for experiential learning. Such partnership will also help schools to teach career directed subjects and life skills.

Transition to work also involves the process of preparing economic science learners for life and the world of work. In order for the curriculum to facilitate an effective transition for all learners, it is important that it equips learners with the knowledge and competency to move successfully into the open labour market and be productive. The transition to work is enhanced through the relevance of what is taught as well as through effective interaction between schools and the wider community.

6.2.3 SUFFICIENT LEARNING MATERIALS

Learning materials and equipment including computers, televisions, radios, textbooks, writing materials and exercise books should be made available to secondary school economic science learners in order to stimulate learning. Economic science educators are still dependent on textbooks to provide

basic information. Parents should also be prepared to contribute to the education of their children by participating actively and by providing materials that will add value to their children's learning experiences. Economic science learners and parents must not wait for the government to do everything for them. Materials are invaluable in provoking creativity and the expansion of knowledge. The concept is that one idea is a seed for further innovation. However, for materials to have an impact on education, they must be relevant to the topic being studied.

Learning materials should enhance the avenues for expression and opportunities to capture evidence of learner knowledge. They should therefore be evaluated and developed to ensure that they are appropriate to the needs of economic science learners. Learning materials developed and used must be customised to address and reflect the diverse needs of the learners' population across all bands of education seeing that individuals respond differently to stimuli. The economics science educators need to ensure that materials used are bias-free. When materials show a bias the economic science educator should open such matters up for debate so as to help economic science learners to interrogate issues and not accept every written word as law.

6.2.4 SKILLS BASED EDUCATION

The secondary school economic science education curriculum should be designed in such a way that it provides the learner with worthwhile skills for lifelong learning. The education system must undergo a major change from content and the memorisation of facts, to a system that places its primary emphasis on the development of an inquiring spirit, leading to the acquisition of knowledge, together with the skills, values and attitudes to apply this knowledge in a constructive way. The

skills that are essential in economic education include information technology and the analysis and synthesis of knowledge. The current South African curriculum (interim syllabi still in operation at Grades 10, 11 and 12) has been criticized for the lack of articulation and integration between pathways of learning and the waste this has brought about in the non-recognition of skills or learning picked up on the job.

What is taught or the subjects which learners are able to choose may limit the learners knowledge base or fail to develop the intellectual and emotional capacity of the learner. Such barriers arise when the school fails to provide sufficient attention to skills that will prepare the learners for work (vocational skills) and skills which prepare the learner for coping with life (life skills). What is taught through the curriculum may often be inappropriate to the learner's life situation making learning extremely difficult and ultimately contributing to learning breakdown. For example, economic science secondary school learners may be taught with the aid of examples that are unrelated to their particular life experience. Materials used by secondary school economic science educators for teaching may reflect only one culture or life experience Curriculum 2005 if properly designed and properly put into practice, will be an answer to skills shortages in our country.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATORS

The nature of the curriculum at all stages of education involves a number of components, which are all critical in facilitating or undermining effective learning. Key components of the curriculum include the style and tempo of teaching and learning, what is taught, the way the classroom is managed and organised, as well as materials and equipment which are used in the teaching and learning process.

To a large extent, the successful implementation of these components depends on the calibre of the educator responsible for the curriculum.

Sometimes secondary school economic science educators, often through inadequate training, use teaching styles which may not meet the needs of the economic science learners and society. Many educators in African schools were trained by retired specialists, who were experienced in teacher-centred teaching methods. They are, therefore, not used to applying the principles of individualization, which emphasise that each learners has a right to be taught at his/her own place.

The role of the educator is very critical in bringing about the desired changes in a curriculum. However, care should be taken that the educators are adequately prepared for the adjustments they will need to make in their practice.

The success or failure of secondary school economic science education depends to a large extent on the educators in this field. To contribute to the upliftment of the teaching and learning of secondary school economic science education by educators, the following recommendations are suggested. Cultural diversity is one of the areas educators need to be sensitive to and they must ensure that learners are made aware of the diversity of the South African people. The materials chosen could be carefully selected to illustrate this diversity.

6.3.1 **STAFF DEVELOPMENT COURSE**

It is recommended that economic science secondary school educators attend enrichment courses on a regular basis. This will help educators to update their knowledge on changes in the work programme. They will also be in a position to gain information on new teaching methods. Such courses aim to

help them in handling topics that are a problem. An enrichment course may increase the educator's knowledge of the subject. Such enrichment courses should include seminars and workshops and only experts in the area of the subject and methodology should facilitate these workshops.

Educators themselves must be able to form subject committees with their own constitutions. For example, there is Mehlwesizwe Commercial Teachers Association which was formed in 1991 at Mthunzini District the in Empangeni region. The committee has been actively organizing seminars and workshops for secondary school economic science educators and at times workshops are held for learners. Experienced economic science educators lead discussions and practicals during the special classes for learners.

Amongst things they normally discuss are the problematic areas in the work programme, setting of common papers in schools within the same district and innovation in the syllabus on offer. This committee has also been successful in getting sponsorship from local industries such as Mondi Kraft, Alusaf and Richards Bay Minerals. With the sponsorship they received they were able to organize Winter Schools, an economic science olympiad and seminars where examiners were able to address both learners and educators on the mistake of candidates during Grade 12 final examinations. The researcher strongly believes that if such enrichment courses could be implemented by all schools and educators in the country, there will be a major improvement in achievements in the school curriculum.

As the districts continue to facilitate workshops and seminars for educators, they should identify individuals who demonstrate willingness to initiate new styles of teaching. Many talented individuals are at times reluctant to share good ideas with other

colleagues for fear of being ridiculed. There should be a way of encouraging innovation and creativity in order to unleash the potential some educators may have. The Minister of Education gives awards to educators who have been identified as dedicated practitioners who promote best practice.

Educators from each school could set the targets or goals they aim to achieve by the end of the year. If they stay focused on these goals and assess them regularly, they may find it easy to meet the criteria for the minister's awards. The benefits of such an exercise would be shared among educators (staff development), learners (higher grades), the school (high standards, integrity) and the country (economic growth).

6.3.2 CAREER EXHIBITION AT THE SCHOOL

Efforts must be made to invite industry to play a meaningful role in education especially in career exhibitions in secondary schools which offer an economic science curriculum. This will be a reality if economic science educators and school principals take the initiative by sending out such invitations. The local educator subject committee could also co-ordinate these activities. It is the duty of the school to create a good working relationship with the corporate world. Partnership with industry will help learners to be informed and have insight into the expectations of the employer. Educators could also benefit by getting more information about the operation of the industry. Partnerships could include career exhibitions, seminars and workshops by people from the industry through an initiative by educators. The researcher has observed that a strong relationship with industry normally happens if educators themselves are the ones that approach business with clear objectives and suggestions. People from industry must be given a chance to interact with economic science learners about

careers available in the employment sectors, and learners could therefore be in a position to make connections between theory and practice.

6.3.3 ALLOWING LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS FREEDOM OF CHOICE WITH REFERENCE TO OPTIONS

It is important for the secondary school economic science educators to orientate learners about economic science education before they make subject choices. Orientation by educators will help learners to make correct choices of options in earlier grades, for example, Grade 8. This will give direction to the education of the young generation. Learners must be told about the careers they will be able to do after being enrolled in different options. This must be done before they make their subject choices. This is in line with the career guidance education the school should offer. The difference is that a learner may choose a particular career but if the combination of subjects is wrong it will be difficult to realise his or her dreams.

Although some schools have limited options on offer, as well as a few economic science educators, in most cases learners are forced to enroll in options that are not their first preference. This trend occurs with the intention of balancing classes without considering the choices of learners. In the economic sciences there are learners doing these subjects without their own will but through factors like the one mentioned above. The performance of learners who are enrolled in subjects not of their own choice will normally be bad because there is no motivation to enroll in these subjects. Educators themselves cannot be left out. There are many educators who teach economic science subjects in their schools because there is no one else qualified enough to teach them. They teach them because the majority of learners want these subjects to be included in their curriculum.

6.3.4 PROFESSIONALISM AMONG ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATORS

It is important for secondary school economic science educators to be committed to their schoolwork. It is common knowledge that some educators discourage prospective learners by informing learners that this option is difficult and it needs to be done by a chosen few, viz, gifted learners only. This results in many learners being negative about this option. Dedication by economic science educators will ensure that the status of these subject is maintained and that learners are purposeful in their pursuit of meaningful education. Economic science educators must be responsible enough to realize they have a duty to be in class everyday. Economic science heads of department should accept that their responsibility is to supervise educators' work on a regular basis with the intention of giving advice and improving teaching and learning, if required. Professionalism means that a practioner realizes that his/her duty goes beyond the minimum call of duty and that their actions should be exemplary. Therefore, a dedicated educator will be prepared without being prompted by any superior to perform his or her duties.

In South Africa, the culture of teaching and learning was eroded during the apartheid era as both learners and educators demanded a new dispensation. Now that there is a new system of government, efforts should be made to cultivate a new culture of teaching and learning.

6.3.5 INNOVATIONS IN THE WORK PROGRAMME AND TEXTBOOKS

Educators must realise that it takes a couple of years before authors of different textbooks update their information. It is the

duty of educators to make such changes on outdated information. They also need to be aware that education authorities from time to time add innovations to the work programme. Economic science educators must be prepared to update their knowledge since these subjects are subject to change on a regular basis. When educators are motivated to make a difference in their teaching they will not wait for authorities to tell them to change. The onus is on each and every educator to enrich their knowledge and, in turn, that of their learners.

6.3.6 ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATION

It has been observed that the role of the media is very important in economic science education. The media present up to date information because if educators are teaching outdated information it will mean that they are teaching irrelevant material. Relevant media include newspapers, radio, computers, televisions, circulars, journals, etc. Everyday news about stockmarkets, world currencies and investments is aired and printed in the media to inform investors on what to do with their money. Secondary school economic science educators and learners should be encouraged to make use of this opportunity to study how the money or wealth grows or diminishes. Radio education programmes play a major role for Grade 12 learners, for example, Ukhozi radio and television channel 3, by airing education programmes on economic education. It is important for both economic science learners and educators to listen to such programmes and thereafter discuss and analyse them in class.

6.3.7 VISITS TO WORKPLACES

The results of the study show that some schools pay visits to industries to give learners first hand information on the jobs and careers they will pursue later. However, there are still schools that fails to link their secondary school economic science learners with corporate industry. The issue of familiarity with the workplace cannot be over emphasised. The researcher recommends that visits to workplaces are preplanned on time to ensure that all learners get an opportunity to make a connection between school and the real world. Many secondary school economic science graduates will pursue their careers in those industries, therefore, they need to be familiar with what is happening in the industry. The interaction with the real world could help economic science learners make meaning of the theory they study in class.

The nature, quality and experience of the work environment is vital for every employee's development. It is also important for the secondary school economic science learner to be acquainted with what is really happening in the work situation. Some of the experience learners will be exposed to in the workplace could help the educators to explain abstract concepts they had been struggling to get through to the learners.

By developing a cordial relationship with employers educators could place some of their learners where they would interact with experienced employees who might help them with information they might need. This will offer students an opportunity to know what really happens in the workplace. They will be able to associate what they learn at school with what really happens inside an industry. Learners will be able to develop the practical skills they appear to lack when they are employed for the first time in industry.

6.3.8 MARKET RELATED CURRICULUM

It is important to ensure that workers with different skills are evenly distributed. It is important for the workers to have appropriate skills but this does not mean that they must possess the same skills, for example, there needs to be a balance between economics graduates and accounting graduates. An oversupply of graduates could lead to some of them being redundant and therefore not able to get jobs. Employment needs can be established when economic science educators maintain contact with corporate industry to seek information related to the type of expertise they need in their sources of employment. A market related curriculum is a dynamic type of curriculum which changes now and again as a result of market forces. What is taught at school should vary according to the needs of the market.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE CORPORATE WORLD

The future of secondary school economic science graduates lies with co-operation between the department of education and the corporate world. Corporate industry is the leading sector that employs secondary school economic science graduates. Good interview performance will give a learner better opportunities to be employed. The research proposes the following recommendations which could be used by corporate industry in ensuring that products from economic science secondary school education have relevant skills to the jobs on offer and that, with their co-operation, no undue time is wasted in preparing prospective employees.

6.4.1 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Corporate industries should be encouraged to provide bursaries and loans to needy learners who have a knack for business. Financial resources are the life blood of all learners who need financial backup as a means to education. In turn the recipients of bursaries or loans may be compelled to work for the donor industry for a certain time as a way of returning the favour.

6.4.2 ADOPTION OF A SCHOOL

Adoption happens when large industries help schools to finance projects like information technology and science education and teaching and learning improve markedly as a result.

The Toyota Company in Durban has adopted schools such as KwaMakhutha High School and Ogwini Comprehensive High School (Wela, 1999:44). There are also companies like Richards Bay Minerals which have adopted schools in Empangeni and Richards Bay (for example, Manqamu High School, Tisand Technical High School, Ntongande High School and Emkhayindeni High School). Richards Bay Coal Terminal adopted schools such as Ndesheni High School in the outskirts of Esikhawini Township. These schools received financial assistance, building assistance, teaching aids as well as pay for educators who are needed to offer selected subjects that are targeted by these industries. My proposal is that industry should specify what the financial assistance given to schools should be used for. If the aim is to develop learners with certain economic science skills which are needed by industry, they should help educators to write a business plan that will clearly indicate when and how those skills will be incorporated into the economic science programmes.

In other words, education and stakeholders must work hand in

hand to promote relevant education. Relevance refers to education that will increase the employability of learners. By collaborating, schools and stakeholders may develop the good working relationship that is essential for a country to develop and meet its economic targets.

6.4.3 CORPORATE WORLD STANDARDS

When the corporate world works collaboratively with schools it will be easy for industry's standards to be passed on to the school environment. As a result congruence between what is taught and the needs of industry might be achieved. The level of competence of the employee who has been taught work related skills would be high and his or her performance could be expected to be equally high. Business empires depend on the quality of the products they produce and services they render to stay at the competitive edge. If South African businesses want to compete at the global level their standards and quality will be enhanced when their employees are adequately trained.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

In the new millennium South Africa has to find answers to some of the hardest questions facing the nation in order to find its place in the global economy. There are not enough professionally trained black economists in South Africa to meet the need, while the narrowly - focussed, black entrepreneur class is smarting from banishment to the informal sectors of South Africa due to a shortage of capital for opening bigger business. To remedy the disparity, massive concentration on education is required, while the usage of the current pool of experienced, better educated minorities is commendable. The country needs more technical and vocational education so that there will be more skilled workers, especially in the commercial streams.

6.5.1 CULTURE OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND SERVICES (COLTS)

The legacy of the past has created a climate in schools and other centres of learning which is not conducive to effective learning and teaching. The researcher would like to add his voice in full support of COLTS activities as unveiled by the former Minister of National Education, Prof S.M.Bhengu, some years ago. This trend has not yet been fully absorbed by many educational stakeholders in our country. There is hope that if it is fully utilised by all stakeholders in our country, successful teaching and learning will result in a bright future for all of us.

The COLTS activities must go beyond the schooling system. The active involvement of parents and the broader community in the teaching and learning process is central to effective learning and development. Such involvement includes recognition of parents as partners in education.

Parents as the primary care givers of their children are a central resource in the education system. Where parents are not given recognition or where their participation is not facilitated and encouraged, effective learning is threatened and hindered. The COLTS activities include workshops to motivate educators, learners and parents to take pride in the future of the nation and its education. This can be done on prize giving days, by offering bursaries to outstanding learners and inviting well known members of society who can serve as role models for the learners.

6.5.2 PROVISION OF FACILITIES

Inequalities in the provision of facilities still exist in our schools. Some schools are forced not to do certain subjects due to the

fact that there is a lack of resources. It is important for education authorities to address this problem with immediate effect to ensure that the level of education and training reaches the desired standard. In South Africa there are many school where support facilities are limited and, in some, cases inappropriate and ineffective.

Inadequacies and inequalities in the education system and the resultant problems which lead to a breaking down of learning are most evident in those areas of the country which have the lowest levels of basic service provision, the highest levels of unemployment and sustained poverty. Particularly in the rural areas which were part of the previous homeland system, most schools are poorly resourced despite the large number of learners using them. There are even secondary school economic science schools that form a bulk of schools that lack facilities. This problem needs to be addressed by the education department.

6.5.3 SKILLS BASED EDUCATION CURRICULUM

It is indeed important that secondary school economic science learners should acquire the required skills for the workplace. Education should lead to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes and these should lead to innovation and creativity. Education should help to prepare learners for the challenge of life, to fully understand their environment and develop a sense of responsibility to their people. There is hope that the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) recently unveiled as the new curriculum in South Africa will successfully to encourage skills based education. Skills based education is necessary for all workers, who might take the shortest time required to perform the job profitably. Apart from the skills necessary for the work situation, it is important that the products

of secondary school economic science education should be able to deal effectively with the challenges and demands of everyday life. These challenges are decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness, the ability to empathise, coping with emotions, coping with stresses, the skills of developing the self, adapting to unchangeable circumstances, respecting and relating to others as well as to the environment and the skills of learning and knowledge acquisition.

6.5.4 ADEQUATE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS

Seminars and workshops are a necessity especially for secondary school economic science educators. There have been some changes in the work programme or syllabus. New themes like cash budgets with which the educators are unfamiliar have been included. In 1996 many new subjects advisors were appointed in all regions, especially in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, yet they fail to reach many schools especially in rural areas where most educators are unqualified. The main problem they face is a shortage of transport to enable them to reach many schools. They claim they do not have vehicles dedicated for their services. There is always a superior person who needs to use the vehicle. Secondly there are also not enough subject advisors to help many schools. It is important for the education authorities to ensure that the subject advisors are helped to do the job for which they are employed by creating the necessary infrastructure to support them. Subject advisors would be able to reach many schools if they could arrange seminars at the points where all schools were able to attend. Circulars must also reach schools in good time instead of schools receiving information at short notice or not at all.

6.5.5 APTITUDE TESTS

It is recommended that schools, through the education department, conduct aptitude tests that will be enable learners to choose suitable future jobs. The following types of tests are recommended to be done. Personality and interest tests may be undertaken. These tests may be taken to measure learners' characters, preferences and motivation. Ability test may also be undertaken. This test is conducted to find out what the learner already knows and what he or she may be able to do in the future if additional training is conducted. These tests need to be conducted and administered by trained people. It is also recommended that these tests should be conducted in Grade 8 and 9 before the learner chooses his/her stream in Grade 10. Many employers use aptitude tests before a person is fully accepted as an employee in the industry. However care should be taken to ensure that the tests are free of bias which could, if not checked, skew the results or give some learners a unfair advantage over others.

6.6 THE NEW CURRICULUM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE CURRICULUM AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE STUDY

The past education system in South Africa has been widely criticized for its apartheid ideals. In addition it has also been criticized for its failure to provide equal education facilities for all racial groups in South Africa. One of its major failures was in preparing learners for life and the world of work.

The new curriculum that is currently being used and reviewed, Curriculum 2005, has an important role to play in South Africa's education system. This curriculum came into operation after a new democratic government was elected in South Africa. Interim syllabi are still used by many grades in secondary school education but outcome

based education is already used in Grade 1,3,4 and 7. In some secondary schools, educators have been proactive in trying the new methods, even though the year of implementation has not reached higher grades. For instance, continuous assessment in the form of year mark was introduced for the first time in Grade 12 in the year 2000. Some schools have been voluntarily using continuous assessment in other grades prior to this.

The area of secondary school economic science education was one of the areas that was neglected. There was one College of Education in the now defunct KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture viz., Amanzimtoti, offering programmes in economic sciences. As a result a few schools were able to offer this option. Schools in rural areas were hard hit with the shortage of economic science educators since educators preferred to work in cities and townships. To crown it all the whole KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture had no subject advisor in economic science as a secondary school subjects and therefore there was no support for the few educators in schools where this subject was offered.

The coming to power of a new government has led to the introduction of a new system of education which it is hoped will address the inequalities and inadequacies in education. Our schools, especially those in rural areas have inadequate facilities and shortages of qualified educators. Apart from the limitations in the academic programmes the education system also fell short in empowering people with life skills, employability, and citizenship. The impact of this has been an educated corps that is not readily employable.

Since the inception of the interim syllabi there is a ray of light at the end of the tunnel. A few good things in education are beginning to emerge. Since the formation of one education department for all racial groups in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal the number of colleges of education offering economic sciences has increased, especially during the mid 1990's. Colleges of education have been transformed and economic science education has been highlighted as a niche area. Students doing economic sciences in these colleges have been offered bursaries by the national Department of Education in order to attract more students to the programme. However the restructuring of Education Colleges is disconcerting. Since there is uncertainty about the future of teacher education in general and the economic science teacher in particular. These colleges have been incorporated into Universities and Technikons. Some educators, especially economic science educators, have been absorbed by these institutions. The greater concern is around those educators who are supernumery and therefore given other positions within the department. Their expertise is lost to the schooling system.

The KwaZulu-Natal Education Department also appointed economic science subject advisors in July 1996 in all regions in the province. Although these appointments were welcome, questions regarding their role as subject advisors exist. There is hope that there will be improvements in the very near future. They will be able to conduct teacher development courses to update educators with new and difficult topics.

Recently, (7 March 2000) on a vacancy list advertising level 1 educator post for curriculum transformation: Volume 1/2000, Province of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture, almost five hundred posts were advertised. Out of these five hundred posts almost half of them were allocated to the economic science stream. This is an indication that the education department realizes the need to invest in economic sciences it if is to address the national imperatives. One also noticed that the school that had been targeted for these posts were schools from previously disadvantaged black areas who were from ex-KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture. Most of these schools are in the rural areas, which previously found it difficult to offer these subjects owing to the shortage of educators and other related reasons.

The interim curriculum seems to be offering radical changes in many structures of education. The number of learners in the economic stream are steadily increasing. In the past, learners in the general social science stream out-numbered those in the science and economic science stream. Educators with lower qualifications have enrolled with various education centres offering economic sciences programmes on a part-time basis. In some schools around Empangeni Region, educators attend economic science classes during school time when they have free periods, with the intention of being economically literate. Although this state of affairs cannot be condoned, it clearly shows there is need for adequately prepared staff. One positive aspect is that the educators realize the gaps in their education and are making attempts to correct the situation. The interim curriculum emphasizes skills based education, which will address the concern that secondary school economic science graduates lacked. There is also hope that the corporate world will be able to identify skills they actually need from the secondary school economic science graduates. This will be possible since the government of the day encourages collaboration and partnership between stakeholders.

The curriculum that will best meet the demands of the corporate world, of the educators as well as those of the learners, is the one where all these education stakeholders, including the government through the Department of Education and Culture, are involved in its formulation. Hopefully the interim curriculum is the paving way for the smooth introduction of outcomes based education at secondary school level. The fact that the interim curriculum emphasizes the development of skills, attitudes, values and employability is indicative of the trend to promote outcomes based education.

6.7 A FINAL REMARK

It is hoped that this study will be of value to the secondary economic science learners, educators, parents, Department of Education and Culture and the corporate world. There is also hope that this study will initiate dialogue amongst all education stakeholders to ensure the smooth running of the education system to be able to produce a skilful nation. It is also encouraging to note that the education White Paper (August 1998) stresses that, in the market for education and skills, the Minister of Labour operates mainly on the demand side while the Minister of Education operates mainly on the supply side. There is hope for the future generation if these promises are carried out.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW : QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GRADE 12 (STD 10) ECONOMIC SCIENCE LEARNERS

FOCUS GROUP

6-10 Learners in a group to discuss the following questions.

1. Why did learners choose to do commercial subjects?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. If learners did not do these subjects what other option would they have chosen?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What do learners like most about their stream? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What would learners like to see change in their subjects? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Where would learners like to work?

6. Will learners education help them to work there? How do they know?

7. If learners were to get an offer for a job how would they sell themselves? What skills would they say they have acquired from the course?

8. Do learners think they could have acquired the skills without the course?

9. How many years did it take learners to acquire the skills?

10. Is there time/year that learners feel was wasted? Why and how?

11. What do learners want most from education?

ANNEXURE B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE EDUCATORS

1. General Information

Indicate your answer by merely making a cross (X) in the base/frame/square. Be precise in your answers.

1.1 SEX

Gender

Male	Female

1.2 AGE

25 years and below	
26 - 30 years	
31 - 35 years	
36 - 40 years	
41 - 45 years	
46 years and above	

1.3 How long have you been teaching?

Period of Teaching	
5 years and below	
6 - 10 years	
11 - 15 years	
16 - 20 years	
21 years and above	

1.4 Professional qualification=s

Educator=s with diploma or teaching certificate	
Educators without teaching certificates or diploma=s	

1.5 Academic qualification=s

Degree (s)	
Matric	

2. What careers do you think your students should pursue?

3. Does the programme you offer them, allow them to pursue these careers? Expand.

4. What are the outcomes or goals that you set for the programme?

5. Are these goals achievable? Justify your response.

6. What problems do you experience as you strive to help learners realise their goals?

7. How can these problems be solved?

8. Do you have a set syllabus for the course=s you teach?

9. How relevant is the syllabus to the needs of society? Expand.

10. How do you know that these are the needs of the society?

11. What are the limitations, if any, of the syllabus?

12. What have you done to try to overcome these for the benefit of your students?

13. What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge faced by your students?

14. How can this challenge be met? Give ideas and justify them.

15. Have you tried to expose your learners to real life situations in the corporate world?

16. If yes, what have you done? If no, why not, are you planning to do so in future, why?

17. Is there a benefit in introducing learners to the corporate experiences? Justify?

18. What opportunities do you see for school leavers in your field?

ANNEXURE C

INTERVIEW ITEM FOR PEOPLE IN THE CORPORATE WORLD

1. Name of establishment:-

2. In your establishment what skills would you like your employees with Std 10 commercial background to have?

3. Why is important to you that they have those skills?

4. How many employees do you have with Std 10 commercial background?

5. Do they have/demonstrate these skills?

6. How do you rate their performance against other Std 10 school leavers who do not have a commercial background?

7. Do you think there is a correlation between what the learners do at school and what they do at work?

8. Do you think this affects the economy of the country? Explain.

9. What would you like to see happening in out schools?

10. Who is responsible for the growth of the economy of the country?

11. What can they do?

12. How may schools/teachers in the commercial field interact with you?

13. How often do you interact with schools/teachers teaching secondary school economic science subject?

14. In what capacity do you interact?

15. What kinds of issues do you discuss with them?

16. What is your opinion from the interaction you have had with teachers about the schooling system?

17. Any other comment?

ANNEXURE D

APPLICATION LETTER TO THE CHIEF DIRECTOR: EMPANGENI REGION

P O Box 1906
ESIKHAWINI
3887

2 December 1996

Chief Director
C/o Mr A Nkabinde
Empangeni Region
P/Bag X20070
EMPANGENI
3880

Sir

RESEARCH: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMIC SCIENCE CURRICULUM

I am a registered Doctor of Education student of the University of Zululand. The copy of the latter that serves as proof of registration is enclosed.

I am writing this letter to request for permission to conduct research under the above mentioned topic at any Secondary School that offer economic sciences under KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture in schools and teachers that fall under Empangeni Region.

I will use questionnaires and conduct interviews. The aim of the research is to identify a skilled based curriculum in the forthcoming final curriculum that is expected before the end of this century.

I will supply the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture with a copy of this research or survey when requested.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully

ZACHEUS NGCEBO DUMISANI ZUNGU
PHONE NUMBER : 035-7965219

ANNEXURE E

A LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE FROM THE CHIEF DIRECTOR: EMPANGENI REGION

AND.CULTURE | NAMASIKO | DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR

EMPANGENI REGIONAL OFFICE

ADDRESS: | PRIVATE BAG: 20070 | TELEPHONE:
ADRES: | ISIKHAMA SEPOSI: Empangeni | UCINGO:
ADRES: | PRIVAATSAK: 3880 | TELEFOON:
FAX NO.

Enquiries: A. NKABINDE | Inkomba: | Reference: | Verwyning: | Date: 06 - 03 - 1997

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TO ALL CHIEF SUPERINTENDENTS AND PRINCIPALS OF POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS OFFERING COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS

Mr Z.N.D. Zungu, the Principal of Zimeme Sec. School is granted permission to conduct an educational research for Doctoral Studies, would you please assist him with his research work.

A. Nkabinde

REGIONAL CHIEF DIRECTOR : EMPANGENI REGION
AN/ptm