

**THE TRANSFORMATION OF TECHNICAL COLLEGES INTO FURTHER
EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES: A DECISION-ORIENTED
EVALUATION OF THE NORTHERN CAPE URBAN FURTHER EDUCATION
AND TRAINING COLLEGE**

by

CLIFFORD FREDDIE BARNES

(N.T.D. (Mech), N. E. D., B.A., B.ED., M.ED.)

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**Promoter: Dr. L. J. van der Westhuizen
Co-promoter: Prof. A.C. Wilkinson**

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Declaration

I Clifford Freddie Barnes, declare that the Doctoral thesis "The transformation of technical colleges into further education and training colleges: A decision-oriented evaluation of the Northern Cape Urban Further Education and Training College" is my own work and that all the sources used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references and that this thesis was not previously submitted by me for any other degree at any other university.

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CLIFFORD FREDDIE BARNES

Dedication



This thesis is dedicated to my late daughter Genevieve

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I thank the lord my God, sustainer of life, for giving me the strength and the courage to undertake this study.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ADCOM	Advisory Committee for Technical College examinations
AFETISA	Association of Further Education and Training Institutions in South Africa
CCVE	Coordinating Committee for Vocational Education
CHED	Committee of Heads of Education Departments
COPAP	Committee for Pre-tertiary Academic Policy
CTCP	Committee of Technical College Principals
DEC	Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly)
DET	Department of Education and Training
DNE	Department of National Education
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assuror
FEDTEK	Federation of Technical College Councils
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
HEADCOM	Committee of provincial Heads
ITB	Industrial Training Board
NCFE	National Committee on Further Education
NCHE	National Committee on Higher Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NIC	National Intermediate Certificate
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NTB	National Training Board
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBET	Outcomes Based Education and Training
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAFCERT	South African Certification Council
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
TBVC	Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei

This research aims to assess the achievability of the socio-economic objectives set by the NCFE for further education and training colleges in South Africa, using the Northern Cape Urban Further Education and Training College as a case study. Subsidiary questions that further directed this study were: Whether steering the college curriculum in the direction of the labour and economic needs of the province is in the best interest of college? Whether the current approach to integrate education and training in the college sector is workable? Special attention was given the relevancy of the college programme offerings in the light of the perception that college programmes were irrelevant and as a result trained students for unemployment; and whether the Department of Education regards the college sector as important or would it remain the “Cinderella” of the educational system of South Africa?

The literature study shed light on education and training’s ability to effect socio-economic development. This was complemented by a qualitative, empirical study during which in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. The validity of the research was ensured through verbatim participant accounts, tape-recorded data and triangulation.

The major conclusions of the study revealed that the college curriculums were not irrelevant, transforming and changing of the college curriculum will not result in socio-economic development and that education does not cause changes in the economy, rather it responds to such changes. This study is an attempt to indicate that the optimistic expectations for education and training are futile and that there is no evidence in history

that indicates that education and training alleviates unemployment and poverty. It is hoped that the findings will assist especially developing countries to develop realistic objectives for their vocational education.

Important recommendations were that the Department of Education needs a major disposition change towards the college sector and need to provide greater support to the sector otherwise it will remain the “Cinderella” of the South African education system.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie ondersoek die haalbaarheid van die sosio-ekonomiese doelwitte wat die Nasionale Komitee van Verdere Onderwys en Opleiding daargestel het vir verdere onderwys en opleidingskolleges in Suid-Afrika. Die Noordkaap Stedelike Kollege vir Verdere Onderwys en Opleiding word gebruik as 'n gevallestudie in hierdie navorsing. Verdere vrae wat aandag geniet in hierdie studie is: of die sturing van die kollege-kurrikulum in die rigting van die provinsiese arbeids en ekonomiese behoeftes noodwendig in die beste belang van die kollege is? Of die metode wat deur die Departement van Onderwys voorgestel word vir die integrering van onderwys en opleiding in die kollege sektor werkbaar is? Spesiale aandag word gewy aan die "relevansie" van die kollege programaanbeidinge in die lig van die feit dat hierdie as die rede aangevoer is dat kollege studente nie maklik werk kry nie en of kolleges werklik as belangrik geag word deur die Departement van Onderwys en of hulle steeds die "Cinderella" van die onderwysstelsel sal bly?

Die literatuurstudie werp lig op die vermoë van onderwys en opleiding om sosio-ekonomiese veranderinge te weeg te bring. Die literatuurstudie word gekomplimenteer deur 'n kwalitatiewe empiriese studie wat gebruik maak van persoonlike onderhouds en fokusgroepbesprekings. Hierdie metodes kulmineer in triangulering wat die geldigheid van die navorsingsprosedures en bevindinge verhoog.

Hoofbevindinge van hierdie studie is dat die kollege kurrikulum nie "irrelevant" is nie en dat die transformasie van kollege kurrikulums nie sosio-ekonomiese verandering teweeg sal bring nie. Daar is ook bevind

dat onderwys reageer op ekonomiese verandering, maar dit nie kan teweeg bring nie.

Hierdie studie lewer 'n bydra deur aandag te vestig op die onrealistiese, optimistiese verwagtinge wat daar gekoester word vir die vermoë van onderwys om sosio-ekonomiese ontwikkeling teweeg te bring. Voorts is dit 'n poging om behulpsaam te wees om meer realistiese onderwysdoelwitte in veral ontwikkelende lande vir onderwys en opleiding daar te stel.

Van die hoof aanbevelings is dat daar 'n gesindheidsverandering moet plaasvind teenoor kolleges en dat meer ondersteuning van owerheidskant nodig is, anders sal kolleges steeds die "Cinderella" van die onderwysstelsel bly.

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

After the democratisation of South Africa in 1994, a plethora of initiatives were embarked upon by the new government to contribute to the socio-economic advancement of the majority of the people of the country, the people, whose advancement was hampered during the Apartheid era. One such initiative was the transformation of the education system to enable every person (child, youth or adult) to benefit from the educational opportunities designed to meet learners' basic learning needs, to increase social justice and equity, to reduce poverty, inequality, exclusion and as a corollary, bring about greater citizenship, democracy and a better life for all.

To achieve this, extensive changes in terms of educational policies, acts and regulations were made, far removed from the previously separate development philosophy. After the completion of the policy design phase alluded to above, the national and provincial departments of education were faced with the challenges of the implementation of the new policies, which would bring about the above-mentioned socio-economic objectives. Technical colleges, as part of the education system in South Africa, were to be transformed into Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges, which would be a very important vehicle for bringing to fruition these socio-economic objectives.

In this chapter, the context, rationale and the design of the research will be outlined.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Before the democratisation of South Africa, the technical college sector was largely responsible for vocational education and training. Before the process of transforming this particular sector began, the then Minister of Education commissioned an investigation into the sector in 1996. The National Committee on Further Education and Training (NCFE) was formed and appointed to do this investigation (DoE 1997: xv). Their report formed the basis upon which the transformation of technical colleges in South Africa was based. Therefore, it is important that the findings of the NCFE be presented, and that a picture be sketched of how they perceived the state of vocational education and training in South Africa, in particular technical college education.

1.2.1 NCFE findings on technical colleges in South Africa

The findings of the NCFE painted a very bleak picture of technical college education in South Africa. The Committee found that the college sector was not conceived as a well functioning system. Its provision was slanted towards the pre-employed, with very little provision for the employed and the unemployed. This sector lacked parity and esteem. Compared to the traditional academic education, it was fragmented, disorganised and failed to provide courses that straddle the needs of learners. Nor did it meet the changing requirements of the different target groups, because of a general lack of an overarching strategy. The system had great inequalities and inefficiencies in its provision and it made a poor impact on society. In addition, the teaching practices and training equipment were outdated and inadequate.

The most damnable finding was, however, that technical college education lacked relevance and therefore they were, in effect training people for unemployment (DoE 1997: 1-30).

In spite of the state in which the Committee found the college sector, they recommended that it be transformed into the FET sector.

1.2.2 Recommendation to transform colleges

The NCFE was of the opinion that this sector was important for the future development of South Africa, and could play a great role in the development of the country. Thus they set the following strategic, socio-economic objectives for the new transformed further education and training college sector:

- To provide a platform for lifelong learning.
- To address youth unemployment.
- To stimulating economic growth and international competition.
- To promote community development and national reconstruction.
- To distributing more equitable life chances.
- To contribute to personal development and life competency (DoE 1997:ix).

The Committee saw the transformation of the technical colleges into FET colleges as vital. They thus articulated the view that the FET colleges might play a key role in the fulfillment of the macro-economic, industrial, labour market and human resource development of South Africa (DoE 1998b: iii).

The transformation of the sector was to be achieved by:

- The implementation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998.
- The amalgamation of the 152 technical colleges into 50 FET colleges.
- The introduction of innovative and responsive curriculums responding to the economy and the labour market.
- The introduction of programme-based funding to steer college programmes in the direction of economic and labour market needs.
- The integration of education and training as defined in the White Paper (4) (DoE 1998b:41).

According to the educational planners, the transformation of the colleges would enable them to fulfill their assigned socio-economic role. This role was very strongly articulated within political and educational arenas throughout South Africa. An example of the strong need to fulfill the assigned role is illustrated by the fact that speakers at three national conferences, namely: the National Human Science Research Council (HSRC) conference on technical college responsiveness; the National FET Convention of October 2002; and the Association of Further Education and Training Institutions of South Africa's (AFETISA) national mid-term meeting in November 2002, all stressed, without fail, the socio-economic role to be played by FET colleges. This role assigned to FET colleges seemed to have been accepted unquestioningly and uncritically by all presenters and attendants of the conferences. This socio-economic role assigned to the colleges was also strongly articulated in official documents as well as non-governmental publications and manuals (such as DoE 1997; DoE 1998a; DoE 1998b; HSRC 2001; NICE 2001 and CCD 2001).

The pursuit of these socio-economic objectives is highly recommended, especially in the light of the situation in South Africa. The high unemployment figures of approximately 40% and the polarised economic situation of extreme poverty on the one hand, and extreme affluence on the other hand, as well as the high crime rate makes one realise the importance of bringing about social justice, equity, reduction of poverty and unemployment in South Africa so that all citizens could benefit from democracy. If this situation is not attended to, the dissatisfaction of the unemployed and the poor for not benefiting from the fruits of democracy could become problematic, and even threaten the very young democracy in South Africa. However, the role expected from the college sector becomes problematic when it is viewed against the core function of the colleges, which is education and training.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

FET colleges have been tasked with the role of assisting with the alleviation and eradication of poverty, creating employment for the unemployed and assisting in economic stimulation. Because this role has been very well advocated in the country, there is a general expectation from students, the Department of Education and from politicians that colleges fulfill this task. This raises the major question that the researcher wants to clarify in this thesis, namely whether the socio-economic objectives (the alleviation of unemployment, poverty and the economic stimulation envisioned for the transformed colleges) are achievable?

Subsidiary questions to be answered by this study are:

- What would be the consequences of steering the curriculum of the Northern Cape Urban FET College into a predetermined direction

through programme funding based upon national and provincial economic and labour needs?

- Is it possible to integrate education and training in the manner proposed by the Department?
- Are FET colleges really as important as articulated by the Department of Education, or will the colleges remain the “Cinderella” of education in South Africa?

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this study is to assess the achievability of the objectives set for FET colleges in a systematic and scientific manner, using the Northern Cape Urban FET College as a case study. Secondary aims of this research are:

- To critically evaluate the consequences of steering the curriculum of the Northern Cape Urban FET College into a predetermined direction, through programme funding, based upon national and provincial economic and labour needs.
- To analyse the importance of the new FET colleges, in the new educational dispensation, in South Africa by looking at the transformational process of the colleges in Kimberley as a case study.
- To investigate the viability of the integration of education and training, in the manner proposed by the Department of Education.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, a decision-oriented evaluation approach will be used in which the emphasis will be on the description and assessment of educational change processes, as well as the outcomes of these processes, so that they can be made available to decision-makers for the future. In this study the evaluation will be a process of determining the kinds of decisions that have been made: selecting, collecting and analysing the information needed to make these decisions; and eventually reporting to the appropriate decision-makers. This decision-oriented evaluation will be supported by a literature study, an analysis of information collected during study tours, as well as information gained through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions in a qualitative investigation design. This multi-method strategy will add to the reliability of the findings of the research project by allowing different methods to complement each other.

In this study, the FET policy decisions made by the policy makers with regards to the transformation of technical colleges into FET colleges, and the possible consequences of these decisions on the sector will be analysed. The qualitative research methodology is, as pointed out by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:395), a flexible approach that may be used for a formative purpose to guide decision-making throughout an educational change process. It also describes and analyses people's individual social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions, necessary to form a broad understanding of the research topic, and to shed light on possible solutions. In this study the researcher will interpret the perceptions of the participants in terms of their understanding of the research topic. This approach is important for theory generation, policy development, educational practice improvement and illumination of social issues. According to Berg (2004:7), qualitative research properly seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings. As a result, qualitative researchers share in the understanding and perceptions of others to explore how

people structure and give meaning to their daily lives. In this study the researcher will use the understanding and perceptions of experts in this field to seek answers to the research questions. This research approach is ideal for this study in spite of the fact that the objectives of the NCFE for FET colleges will be evaluated. It is the view of the researcher that the decision-oriented evaluation within a qualitative methodology would better serve this study than an objective-oriented evaluation.

1.5.1 Data collection

The data collection was conducted as follows:

- A literature study focusing on the relationship between education and socio-economic change, poverty alleviation, unemployment and the causes of poverty.
- Study tours to the Netherlands and the United States offered the opportunity to look at FET and to conduct interviews with role players in such systems.
- Sampling of the interviewees took place purposefully, keeping the aims of the study in mind. In-depth interviews were conducted with experts in the sector in South Africa. Four principals of the old technical colleges, four newly appointed chief executive officers of the FET colleges and four ex-students (two employed and two unemployed) were interviewed to evaluate their experience with regards to the relevance of the programmes of the college. Focus group discussions were also conducted with lecturers at Northern Cape Urban FET College. In the Netherlands interviews were conducted with three presidents of the Regionale Opleidings Centrum (ROCs), the equivalent of the FET colleges in South Africa, two directors of finance, two directors of human resource

management. Focus group discussions with thirty students and five lectures of a ROC also formed part of the data collection. In the United States of America interviews were conducted with the president of an American technical college, focusing on the integration of education and training.

1.5.2 Data analysis

Data was analysed on an ongoing, cyclical, integrated manner in all phases of the research. Data was analysed in a systematic manner by selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting to provide explanations of the phenomenon of interest (McMillan and Schumacher 2001:462). The researcher applied a subjective interpretive style. The analysis began as soon as the first set of data was collected and it ran parallel to the data collection, in other words data collection and interim analysis formed the basis for subsequent research activities.

1.6 DEMARCATION OF RESEARCH

In this research the Northern Cape Urban FET College in Kimberley is taken as a case study. Specific attention will be paid to describing and assessing the transformation process within the college, the relevancy of the college's instructional programmes offered, the possible effects of programme funding based upon economic and labour market needs of the Northern Cape Province. The college's role in poverty and unemployment alleviation and economic stimulation of the region within which the college is situated, will be looked at. This will be done in order to investigate the attainability of the objectives set by the NCFE for colleges.

Although the Northern Cape Urban FET College will be used for this study, it is hoped, that, by extension, light will be shed upon the relationship between education and socio-economic development in developing

countries. The international perspectives gained through a literature study on the relationship between education and socio-economic development as well as visits abroad, will contribute to this outcome.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

It is essential that the following terms be clarified because they do not form part of ordinary language usage other than within technical education.

- **Technical colleges**

Technical colleges are post-school institutions where education and training is provided to learners with the view to a future vocation or the development of a social or recreational skill. This type of education is aimed at persons exempt from compulsory school attendance (Williamson 1992: 17).

- **Further Education and Training (FET) colleges**

After the existing technical colleges have been transformed in terms of Act No 98 of 1998 they are known as FET colleges.

- **Post school education**

Post-school education is vocationally-orientated education and training provided on a full time or part-time basis, to people whom are exempted from the Compulsory School Attendance Act. According to Steyn (1982:24), post-school education is education pursued after leaving school, with the view to preparing for a future vocation. Post-school education in the RSA takes place primarily at one of the following types of institutions: universities; technikons; colleges of education; further

education and training colleges, trade training centres; etc. In this study the emphasis will be on post-school education offered at technical colleges.

- **Vocational education**

Vocational education is provided at senior secondary level with the emphasis of the curricula falling on the mastering of structured knowledge, the inculcation of values, attitudes and skills in one or another vocation (CTCP 1993:4).

- **Formal education**

Formal education is education offered at a school, college, technikon, university or another educational institution that leads to the acquiring of a degree, diploma or a certificate that has been instituted in terms of the Act on National Policy for General Education (Act no 76 of 1984:20).

- **Non-formal education**

Non-formal education is education that is highly adaptable and takes place in institutions, organisations and institutions falling outside the formal and informal education provision, for example in-service training in a work situation (Landman 1991:8).

- **Indentured students**

Indentured students are students who are contracted apprentices at firms and who are sent to technical colleges for theoretical training by their employers. The employers are then responsible for the payment of the students` fees and the students receive full salaries for the duration of their studies at the technical colleges.

- **Private students**

Private students are students who are not sent to technical colleges by employers, but they enroll at technical colleges of their own free will. They are responsible for their own accounts.

- **Block-release**

Block-release is a form of co-operative education. In South Africa it has become associated with apprenticeship education and with the trimester system. Generally the period of block-release consists of eleven weeks of study at a technical college and two weeks of examination time alternated with eight months of practical training at the places of employment. The block-release must entail a structured relationship between the technical college, employer and student.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher intends to provide a better understanding of the relationship between education and training, and socio-economic development. Especially because it seems as if developing countries embrace the idea that education can be used for socio-economic upliftment. The researcher hopes that this study will shed light on whether this approach is realistic or not and that it will ultimately provide information that will guide decision makers in this area.

1.9 RESEARCH OUTLINE

Chapter 1 will provide an orientation regarding the identification of the problem, aims, scope, research methodology and an outline of the chapters.

Chapter 2 will survey the origin and development of technical college education in South Africa.

Chapter 3 will explore the transformation of the Northern Cape Technical College into the Northern Cape Urban FET College. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the integration of education and training.

Chapter 4 will discuss instructional programmes offered by the Northern Cape Urban FET College in order to establish their relevance. This will be done against the background of the perception that the old technical college programmes were irrelevant and contributed to unemployment of college “graduates”. The college programmes will be compared to the socio-economic needs of the province, in order to establish whether there is correlation between the needs of the province and the instructional programmes offered by the college.

This is followed by a discussion of the proposed programme funding mechanism that should steer college programmes in the direction of the province’s economic and labour needs. A discussion of manpower planning and the incongruity between the world of work and the world of education will then be presented. This will be done in order to investigate the achievability of the objectives set by the NCFE for colleges.

Chapter 5 will provide definitions and causes of poverty, in order to create a better understanding of the phenomenon. A thorough understanding of the phenomenon can assist in finding solutions to poverty. This will also be helpful in establishing whether education and training could in fact alleviate the problem. This will be followed by a discussion of the American Government’s experiment of the 1960s and the 1970s, where they tried to use education and training to alleviate poverty and unemployment.

Chapter 6 will present a national education model and will point out the limitations of educational transformation. According to this model only structural changes could be made to educational systems, which would result in changing only the operations of an educational system, without necessarily resulting in the education system, achieving socio-economic changes in society. This chapter concludes with a presentation of educational planning and the consequences of poor systemic planning.

Chapter 7 will present the guidelines to a decision-oriented approach within the qualitative research methodology, and the reasons why, this methodology has been chosen. This methodology forms the basis for chapters 8 and 9's empirical study. The key characteristics of this approach will be discussed, followed by an indication of the application of the methodology in this study. Details of the participants who took part in the in-depth and focus group interviews will also be provided. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the rationale behind the questions included in the interview schedule.

Chapter 8 will provide the outcomes of the empirical investigation, which centers around the perceptions of the participants regarding the ability of the colleges to assist with unemployment and poverty alleviation. Their ability to stimulate the economy of the geographic area where they are situated will also be investigated.

Chapter 9 will present the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an overview was given of the background to the problem statement, which this study wishes to address. The research design and methodology was indicated and was followed by the clarification of terms, demarcation, significance and outline of the study.

As has been indicated the following chapter will provide a literature study of the genesis and development of technical college education in South Africa.

CHAPTER 2

GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the origin and development of vocational education and training in South Africa will be presented to indicate firstly, the background and secondly, the reasons for the transformation of technical colleges into FET colleges in the new political dispensation in South Africa.

2.2. EARLY BEGINNINGS

Sir George Grey introduced vocational education in the Cape Colony in the early 1850s. The schools were for non-whites and offered subjects such as shoe making, tailoring, carpentry, and masonry. For many years bricklaying, plastering, painting, decorating, engine cleaning were regarded as work for coloureds and workers from overseas. The colonial-born preferred professional careers or adventurous work such as transport-riding (Behr 1988:138; Malherbe 1977:163). Right from the beginning of vocational education in South Africa it was perceived as inferior education only good for non-whites. Institutions providing vocational education and training for whites were only established fifty years later (Malherbe 1977:163). There is an irony in the fact that the very same skilled trades mentioned above would become the very ones in which job reservation would be applied in later years in South Africa, discriminating against non-whites, particularly in the building industry in the cities where the need for these skills was greatest.

2.2.1 Stigmatised tradition

In the 1890s the Dutch Reformed Church sponsored the establishment of industrial schools and extended them after the Anglo-Boer War, as a means of training poor white boys from the rural areas in industrial occupations such as shoe-making, carpentry, smithy work, etc., and girls were trained for domestic work.

In 1911 the Prisons Department established two industrial schools for destitute and delinquent children. In 1917 the Union Education Department took over all these industrial schools. The fact that vocational education had been associated with non-whites, the destitute, the defective and delinquent severely handicapped its development. This association, and the idea that manual labour was perceived as degrading, placed training in occupations requiring manual skills beyond the pale of the boy or girl from the "well to do" and average homes (Behr 1988:138; Malherbe 1977:164; Mc Kerron 1934:104). Historically, vocational training was conceived as a means of rendering charity and even redemption. It was born out of poverty, depression, wars and epidemics and it was managed and offered by poorly qualified people. The stigma that attached itself to this type of education also had a negative influence on education in general and on the industry because:

- It could not meet the educational needs of the ordinary adolescent.
- Trade and industry could not develop effectively and efficiently while mainly the weak, maimed and delinquent were recruited for vocational and industrial education (Mc Kerron 1934:107).

This stigma of inferiority associated with vocational and industrial education persists in the minds of parents and students even to this day.

Thus, vocational education and training in South Africa became the “Cinderella” of the education system. It became a form of education to be embarked upon by the intellectually less gifted and those students who dropped out of main-stream of education. Moreover, it is possible that this perception of vocational education and training could also be present with decision-makers in education.

2.3 DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION UNTIL 1955

Prior to 1887 with the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley and the development of gold mines in the Transvaal in 1886, little industrial development took place in South Africa and consequently no need for technical education was experienced. With the development of mining, came the establishment of railway systems and this appears to have created the first demand for some form of technical education (Pittendrigh 1988:108; Mc Kerron 1934:104). For the researcher this fact is of cardinal importance and will be referred to later in this study.

The railways and mining took the lead in initiating technical education at various places in the country. As the railway system developed, they required artisan labour which was unavailable and, in order to train artisans, the railway management instituted the apprentice system. The Natal Government started the first apprentice classes in the railways workshops in Durban in 1884. Cape Government Railways established classes at the Salt River Works in 1890, Uitenhage in 1895 and East London in 1902. The Central South African Railways started apprentice classes in Pretoria in 1902 and in Bloemfontein in 1904. Typical subjects taught at that stage were Machine Construction, Practical Mathematics and Sketching (Behr 1988:139).

The burgeoning mining industry and expanding network of railways in the latter part of the 19th century relied for their functioning entirely on

engineers and technicians brought from overseas. It was for this reason that a start was made in 1894 with the training of mining engineers at the South African College (the now University of Cape Town). The course comprised of two years theoretical training, to be followed by two years practical training at the South African School of Mines, that was established at Kimberley. In 1903 this school was transferred to Johannesburg and renamed the Transvaal Technical Institute (TTI).

The fledgling TTI extended its activities and became an independent institution, the Witwatersrand Technical College with branches spread over the Witwatersrand from Springs to Krugersdorp and from Vereeniging to Witbank. In 1910 the TTI became part of the School of Mines and Technology, which was incorporated into the University of the Witwatersrand in 1922 (Behr 1988:139). These beginnings of technical and commercial education and training laid the foundation for technical education in South Africa.

It is interesting to note that industrial development and the development of mines first created a need for skilled labour in South Africa, and that education and training responded to provide in this need. During the industrial revolution in Britain the same observation was made: education and training responded to an existing need and according to Trow (1961:147), evidence seems to suggest that a similar relationship prevailed in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries: "The changes in the occupational structure have raised the educational aspirations of large parts of the American population, and the educational system has been responsive to these higher aspirations". These examples seem to suggest that education reacts to changes that take place in society and not the other way around.

2.3.1 Provincial control

In 1911 there were only 500 learners receiving technical or vocational education in South Africa. By 1920 this figure had risen to about 15 000, the greater majority being part-time students. The growth in full-time student numbers was not as rapid as that of part-time student numbers. In 1911 Dr. D.F. Malan, the Minister of Education in Pretoria, called a national convention on vocational education. At this convention a number of important recommendations were made:

- More attention should be given to practical education and training in the interest and welfare of the people.
- Vocational education should be directly under the control of the central government.
- There should be reasonable uniformity in all technical courses syllabi (Behr & Mac Millan 1971:205).

It is interesting to note that the Minister of Education, Dr. D.F. Malan, saw technical education in 1911 as a means of addressing the welfare of the people and not as a means of economic stimulation nor as a means to alleviate poverty and unemployment. As a result of this convention the National Council for Technical Education was established the next year. This council only operated for two terms and was unfortunately, not re-appointed after its second term, which ended in 1918. From this point onwards, the development of technical education was of a rather sporadic nature.

The provinces continued to control technical and vocational education in spite of the resolution passed at the 1911 convention. This was because of the provisions of Section 85 of the South African Education Act of 1909, which limited the transfer of control of those forms of education not clearly definable as "higher education" from the provincial departments to that of

the Union. Unfortunately the founders of the Union had not clearly defined what was meant by “higher education” and there was consequently no unanimity on the meaning of the term.

2.3.2 The Higher Education Act of 1923

With the promulgation of the Higher Education Act, Act No. 30 of 1923, came the legalisation, recognition and subsidisation of technical colleges and continuing classes (Behr and Mac Millan 1971:206). This act gave the councils of the technical colleges the status of juristic persons (Steyn 1982:4). Pittendrigh (1988:146) points to the fact that the councils of technical colleges received a great deal of autonomy through this act. The autonomy provided for by this act caused leaders of industry and commerce of all professions: lawyers, doctors, educationalists and ministers of religion to be interested in serving on the college councils. These persons had a good idea of the needs of their environment. Thus courses could be introduced in response to local, industrial and commercial needs of their particular area, and not as a result of deliberate planning or prescription by the central government (Malherbe 1977:120). At a meeting in 1924 between the union government representatives and the provincial administrators it was decided to transfer all vocational education from the provinces to the Central Government. The reasons given for this move were as follows:

- The provincial administration, under which these institutions were established, did not have the financial resources to provide adequately for their growth.
- Technical, industrial and vocational training is connected with, and is an integral part of the general industrial policy of the country which is, in turn, the responsibility of the Central Government.

- Co-ordination between, a unified system of administration, inspection and examination would result in an economy of scale and greater efficiency (Behr and Mac Millan 1971:206).

As from the 1st of April 1925, all vocational education and training was transferred from the control of the provinces to the Union Education Department.

Another act that profoundly influenced technical education in South Africa was the Apprenticeship Act of 1922, which was adopted in 1922 (HSRC/NTB, 1985:15). This act was amended by Act No.22 of 1930. From 1931 apprentices were compelled to attend classes at technical colleges. This arrangement was very good for technical college development in the sense that it ensured that colleges would have students. Furthermore, it ensured that all apprentices received a good and a uniform theoretical training in their respective trades.

Fairly good progress was made during the next three decades with regards to the growth of technical colleges. The enrolment at technical colleges grew rapidly as indicated in Table 2.1 below. In fact, at that time, technical colleges represented one of the most important growing points in South African education, and a breakaway from the traditional white-collar setup of higher education (Malherbe 1977:172).

Table 2.1: Growth of the technical colleges between 1924 – 1933

	1924	1933
Number of colleges	2	8
Students		
Number of full- time students	741	4177
Number of part – time students	3332	13203

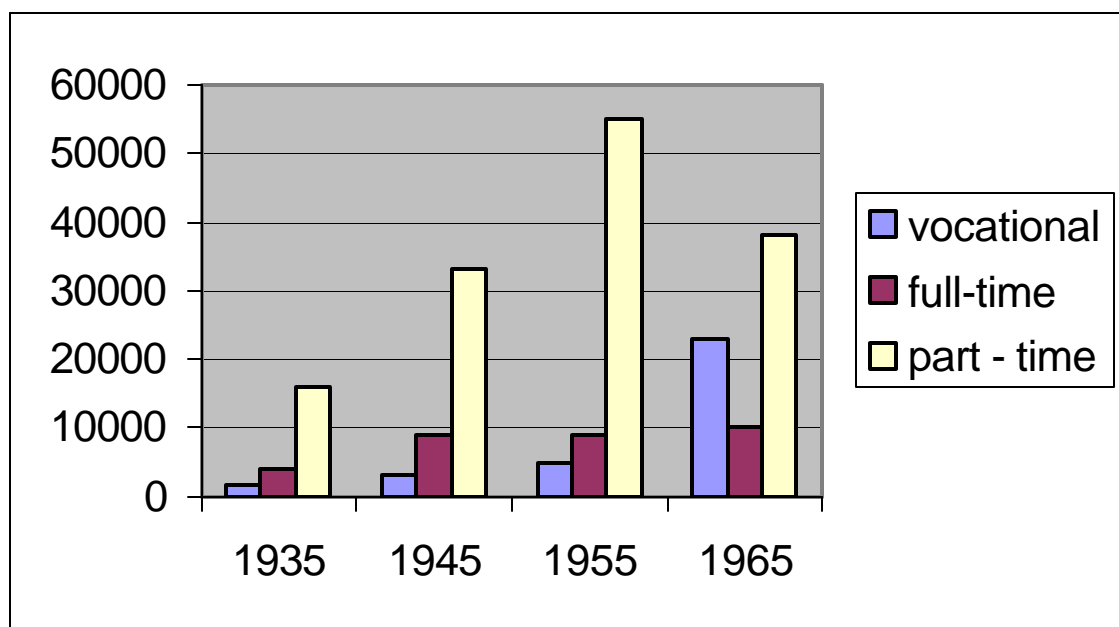
Number of correspondence students		4608
Total number of students	4073	21 988
Staff		
Number of principals	2	8
Number of full – time teachers/ lecturers	132	330
Number of part-time teachers/ Lecturers	*58	623
Total number of staff	192	961
Government grants	37 340	206 530
Fee income	13 687	107 790
Value of fixed property	142 249	896 577
Wages and salaries	43 710	212 673

*Natal figures not included (Pittendrigh 1988:121). The funds in the table are in pounds.

The provision of part-time facilities for continued education is probably the most important contribution that technical colleges made since their inception. Technical colleges offered further education to those who had to leave school early to get employment and who needed part-time education to supplement curtailed full-time education. It offered further education to adults who needed better qualifications in order to be promoted. A range of programmes for post-matrices were offered such as pharmacists, medical technologists, commercial artists, health inspectors, supervisors, foremen, sugar technologists, etc. The courses were formal and informal, general and special subjects were offered, vocational training and leisure activities also appeared on the programmes. At that time technical colleges were regarded as the “people’s universities”. Their organisation was flexible and adaptable, so they could readily meet the educational needs of all ages, at all levels and in almost every conceivable subject. The

following are some of the fields commonly covered by the technical colleges: engineering, building and commerce, subjects not offered at schools or universities such as art, home economics, science, optics, leather-making, printing, teacher training, music, speech training, dramatic art, hair dressing, photography, etc. (Malherbe 1977:174). During that time 1935-1965 technical college education blossomed as indicated in figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Growth of technical education between 1935 – 1965 (Malherbe 1977:175).



By 1955 there were 55 972 part-time and 7 593 full-time students registered for technical courses, 8 069 students were registered for commercial courses. During the following decade technical education lost its impetus as indicated on figure 1 above (Malherbe 1977: 175).

2.3.3 Limited financial support

By 1937 government aid for colleges was proportional to the amount of money each college could raise by way of fees or local endowment. This arrangement often put a number of technical colleges in serious financial difficulty, because proper planning could not be based on such a funding formula. According to Malherbe (1977:1) there can be no doubt that this system stunted the development of technical education at a time when its development was most needed by the country's rapid economic expansion.

Dr F. H. Spencer, commented as follows on this aspect in his report of 1937: "Any financial formula which is a function of local mendicancy is bound to be unfair in its incidence and evil in its practice. The burden of this mendicancy" he said "falls principally and inevitably upon the principal of the college. No one knew how much would be collected, thus no one knew more than a month before the beginning of a financial year what the amount for the government grant would be, which was the principal source of income. And this uncertainty, the existence of which cannot truthfully be denied, was paralyzing the activity and the enterprise of every college" (Spencer 1937:120).

After the Spencer Report the Minister of Education appointed a committee of inquiry into the finances of technical colleges under Sir Carruthers Beattie, Commissioner for Inland Revenue. On 20 September 1937 the report of this committee was published and some of the recommendations it made were:

- That the technical colleges were a necessary and essential part of the Union's educational facilities.
- That, if the institutions were essential, their financial positions should be such as to enable them to play their part with maximum efficiency.

- That the institutions should be state-aided.
- That Technical Colleges would always require a greater measure of State aid than universities (Natal Technical College Minutes 1937: 4629- 4633).
- After this report, a new formula, the 1937 subsidy formula, was approved (see table 2.2).

Table 2.2: The 1937 subsidy formula (Malherbe 1977:180)

On fee income	3:1 on the first £1000 2:1 on the next £6000. 1:1 on the balance subject to a maximum grant of £70 000.
On recurrent revenue	3:1 on the first £2000. 1:1 on the balance subject to a maximum of £20 000.
On donations building funds	1:1 for all funds raised.

It has to be stressed, that, ever since the inception of technical colleges funding was always problematic and that this situation stifled the development of colleges. Consequently, the contribution that colleges could make to society was not optimum.

2.4 TECHNICAL COLLEGES 1955–1982

Up to the end of 1955, the autonomous councils of the colleges were not always aware of the manpower needs of the country. Because of the subsidy and management problems mentioned above, the Government decided in 1954 to declare technical colleges state institutions. The result

of this decision culminated in the Act for Vocational Education of 1955, (Act no. 70 of 1955). This act made provision for the following:

- A clear definition of vocational education.
- The take-over of all autonomous technical colleges and state institutions by the Department of Education, Arts and Science.
- Free vocational education at technical colleges up to standard ten level.
- Continuing education through part-time classes at departmentally subsidised institutions (Williamson 1992:90-91).

Under the 1923 Education Act, technical colleges became autonomous bodies with their own local councils. This resulted in colleges going their own ways; perhaps this was healthy for the colleges in the sense that they became sensitive to their local needs. They did not always look at educational matters from a national point of view, nor always co-operated with other institutions and in particular with the Government.

Therefore, Government considered some change in the form of control necessary. The increase in Central Government control over the technical colleges was further motivated by the fact most technical colleges did not take the Afrikaner national character and philosophy of life into due account. Afrikaans-speaking parents urged the government to establish separate Afrikaans-medium technical colleges. Because technical education was the most expensive form of education, the most acceptable solution was to transform the technical colleges as government institutions (Behr and Mac Millan 1971:209 – 210). Act no. 70 of 1955, which made this provision, proved detrimental to technical colleges.

Problems encountered with the control and management of technical colleges by a central authority led to the establishment of a departmental committee, which investigated the national post-school system for whites (DoE 1994:7). The committee recommended that technical colleges be state-aided institutions. As a result of the above recommendation, the Act for Technical Colleges of 1981, (Act no. 104 of 1981) was promulgated.

2.5 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE THREE TECHNICAL COLLEGES IN KIMBERLEY

The three technical colleges in Kimberley: the Northern Cape Technical College, R.C.Elliott Technical College and Moremogolo Technical College were established for white, coloured and black students respectively, as determined by the Apartheid Laws that separated and compartmentalised people along racial lines in all areas of life, including education.

2.5.1 The origin of the Northern Cape Technical College

The Northern Cape Technical College is the oldest of the technical colleges in Kimberley. It originated in 1896 with the discovery of gold in the Transvaal and diamonds in Kimberley in order to train engineers and other professional persons. (Du Toit 1993:13, Pittendrigh 1988:108).

To fulfill in this need, the government of the Cape of Good Hope agreed to a scheme that provided for the training of mining engineers in South Africa. Training consisted of two years at the South Africa College in Cape Town, and two years at the School of Mines in Kimberley. In 1896 the first students attended the School of Mines, in Kimberley. In 1903 a commission, appointed to investigate, technical and mining education recommended that a technical institute be established in Johannesburg. Because of this recommendation the School of Mines was moved to Johannesburg. Between 1908 and 1923 De Beers mining company offered

technical classes to its apprentices in Kimberley, thus ensuring that technical education continued to be provided in Kimberley (Du Toit 1993:20).

This college went through many different stages of development and in 1945 it became known as the Northern Cape Technical College (Du Toit 1993:35). In 1981 this college was under the jurisdiction of the Technical College Act No. 104 of 1981. This act was for white people and the colleges under this act were accountable to the Department of Education: House of Assembly. Colleges within the jurisdiction of this act enjoyed a great deal of autonomy since their councils had decision-making powers and they received bigger subsidies than the other two colleges in Kimberley who were not under this act. This type of institutions were also allowed to keep their student fees for the development of the college.

2.5.2 The origin of the R.C. Elliott Technical College

In the period before the 1st of July 1966, technical and business studies classes for coloured people were offered on a part-time basis at the Kimberley Institute. These classes were subsidised by the Department of Coloured Affairs who was responsible for the coloured people's education. Classes were offered in a building consisting of four classrooms, an office and a store room (Viljoen 1987:8-10).

Prior to 1966 Mr. Russel C. Elliott, a lawyer and councillor for the Kimberley Municipality had for a long time already been advocating actively for the establishment of a vocational school for coloured people in Kimberley. Under the apartheid laws, access for non-whites to technical college education was very difficult, because non-whites were not allowed to enter trades. Because of his efforts a vocational school in Kimberley opened its doors in Florianville for the first time on the 1st of July 1966. The vocational school was later declared a technical college. The buildings

consisted of a pre-fabricated double storey building which included a hostel. The council of the college had only advisory powers (Viljoen 1987:15). The college was established under Act No. 47 of 1963 which made provision for coloured peoples' education, and it fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Culture: House of Representatives.

All these facts meant that arrangements for this college were inferior to those made for white colleges. These arrangements did not lend themselves to the development of the college. The afore-mentioned, was exacerbated by the state's controlling of the college. The establishment of the R.C. Elliott Technical College in 1966 meant that there were now two colleges in Kimberley offering the same programmes.

2.5.3 The origin of Moremogolo Technical College

This college originated in 1980 under Act No. 90 of 1979 which provided for education and training for black people and the college fell under the Department of Education and Training. This college council, too served only in an advisory capacity with government taking all the final decisions. This college was established under very difficult circumstances; for example, broken windows, no telephones and broken toilets. This seems to have been an indication of the urgency for technical education for black people. With the establishment of the Moremogolo Technical College there were thus three colleges in Kimberley, each catering for the different race groups and triplicating programmes. It seems as if the authorities did not regard technical college education as a priority for non-white people, given the late stage at which the colleges were established. This impression is strengthened by the fact that their councils acted only in an advisory capacity and the condition of the available facilities.

The system described above was too costly and the new government that came into power in 1994 had to transform it into a more effective, efficient, equal and just system ensuring open and equal access for all the citizens of the country.

2.6 LEGISLATION THAT HAD A DIRECT BEARING ON TECHNICAL COLLEGES

2.6.1 The Manpower Training Act, No. 56 of 1981

The Manpower Act of 1981 made provision for the founding and operation of training boards. This act further determined that training boards could make recommendations to the Minister of Manpower with regard to the theoretical training of apprentices under the jurisdiction of the Manpower Department. Since technical colleges offered theoretical training to apprentices there existed close co-operation between technical colleges and training boards with regard to the compilation of curricula for the training of apprentices.

2.6.2 The Machine and Vocational Safety Act

Although technical colleges were not mentioned specifically in the Machine and Vocational Safety Act No. 6 of 1983, technical colleges had to comply with the terms contained in this act. Where practical training was offered at technical colleges, the workshops were set up according to the prescriptions of this act. Safety committees were required, fire extinguishing equipment and lifts in the colleges all had to operate in terms of this act.

2.6.3 The Treasury and audit Act

Financial aspects such as accurate record keeping of financial statements and audited documents were subject to the Treasury and Audit Act, 1975 (Act 66 of 1975). Colleges had to comply with the afore-mentioned act if they were to receive funding from the Department of Education.

2.6.4 Own Affairs Departments

Act no. 110 of 1983 provided the legislative framework within which the different departments of education for the different race groups in South Africa were given effect as "Own Affairs Departments". Each department was charged with the responsibility of providing education and training for its own race group. The Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly) was in charge of white education and training, thus the Northern Cape Technical College fell under this department. The following acts were applicable with regards to Own Affairs Departments:

- The Amendment Act on the National Education Policy (House of Assembly), 1986 (Act No. 103 of 1986).
- The Act on Educational Affairs (House of Assembly), 1988 (Act No. 70 of 1988).
- The Act on Technical Colleges (House of Assembly), 1981 (Act No. 104 of 1981).
- The Amendment Act on Technical Colleges (House of Assembly) 1989 (Act No. 44 of 1989).

- The Act for Coloured Education and Training (House of Representatives), 1963 (Act No. 47 of 1963) was the governing Act.
- The Act for Indian education and training (House of Delegates), 1965 (Act No 61 of 1965).
- The Act for the Black education and training (Department of Education and Training), 1979 (Act No. 90 of 1979).

The above acts resulted in the 129 technical colleges in South Africa in 1988:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| • House of Assembly | 67 technical colleges |
| • House of Delegates | 3 technical colleges |
| • House of Representatives | 9 technical colleges |
| • Department of Education and Training | 24 technical colleges |
| • Self Governing States and Homelands | 26 technical colleges |

TOTAL

129 technical colleges

(DoE 1993:6).

Being administered by four executive education departments, each of the executive education departments had a head office personnel component, which was responsible for, *inter alia*, subject guidance, financing, staff establishment, staff development, merit and promotion evaluation, as well as the co-ordination of syllabus development. It is clear that this arrangement resulted in an unnecessary proliferation of departments and a duplication of human resources and services. This amounted to wastage of scarce resources which was clearly not in the best interest of the colleges, nor of the country. In addition, limited structures existed for the development and maintenance of vocational education in the education

departments of the Transkei, Boputatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) states and the self-governing territories.

2.7 MANAGEMENT OF FINANCES

The financing of technical colleges was included in the individual budgets for specific programmes of the executive education departments. Budgets were determined according to the needs identified by the technical colleges. After the amount for education as a whole was determined per education department by the Department of National Education (DNE), each education department had its own method of determining the specific amount to be allocated to its technical colleges (DoE 1994:44-45). Each executive education department divided its education budget according to the needs of the individual education sectors within their respective departments, for example, ordinary schools, special schools, teacher colleges and technical colleges. Technical colleges thus had no control over this aspect of the budget.

According to the Technical College Act, 1981 (Act No. 104 of 1981) principals of the technical colleges of the Education and Culture Service of the (ex-House of Assembly) were responsible for their own financial administration. External auditors audited the books and administration had to submit reports to the individual education departments. The technical colleges of the other departments only completed the necessary audit forms, for their respective education departments.

In the Department of Education and Training (DET), income derived from student fees was paid into the state coffers while the college council administered the college funds. The DET and the college council administered a separate amount, allocated according to the previous year's FTEs, jointly. This money was used for the running expenses of the institution.

In the Education and Culture Service House of Representatives student fees were handled in a similar manner to that of the DET. However, the budget per college was determined by the relevant Education and Culture Service and was based upon the availability of funds.

In the Education and Culture Service House of Delegates funds were allocated on a multi year forecast prepared by colleges, in accordance with norms established by the Education and Culture Service. The colleges performed the accounting function. The relevant Education and Culture Service provided the administration for each college.

Not all technical colleges had ownership of their campuses. In some cases buildings were rented at a high cost. Most technical colleges could not generate sufficient funds to purchase or build facilities and the State could not meet all the demands in this regard.

The technical colleges kept complete stock registers of equipment used/owned by them. These stock registers were used as control documents during administrative inspections and audit inspections.

Various systems for purchases were followed in the different departments. In the Education and Culture Service of the House of Assembly each college prepared a budget, which included costs for equipment. Once the college council approved of the budget, the principal was requested to proceed with its implementation. In the other three major departments multi-year forecasts were submitted and each department decided on the allocation of funds to individual colleges. DET colleges organised their own purchasing of equipment and the department on the submission of invoices, made payments. The Education and Culture Service of the House of Representatives and Education and Culture Service House of Delegates organised the purchasing of equipment themselves.

The administration of buildings in the Education and Culture Service of the House of Delegates and the House of Representatives was handled by the Department of Local Government and Housing in the respective administrations. In the DET the regional offices of the department dealt with the administration of buildings. The colleges of the Education and Culture Service, House of Assembly performed their own administration ((DoE 1993:46-57).

From the explanations above it is clear that the House of Assembly colleges benefited the most from the manner in which they were financed and were allowed to deal with their finances.

2.8 TECHNICAL COLLEGES 1982 – 1994

On the 1st of May 1982 all technical institutes were declared state-aided technical colleges. The process of transforming the state colleges to state-aided colleges was implemented gradually and completed in October 1985 (Williamson 1992: 92). As a consequence, there were two types of colleges, namely, state and state-aided colleges. The differences in governance, legal status, financing and financial management of these two types of colleges is given in Table 2.3 below (DoE 1994: 10).

Table 2.3: Difference between state-aided and state colleges

STATE-AIDED COLLEGES	STATE COLLEGES
1 GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL STATUS	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by a college council. • College council has decision-making powers. • College is a legal persona. • College council has propriety capacity. • College can own property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by governing body. • Governing body has advisory powers. • College not legal persona. • College has no propriety capacity. • State has all property rights.
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2 FINANCING AND FINANCIAL CONTROL

College funded by	College funded by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidy according to FETs. • Ad hoc subsidies to lease accommodation. • Ad hoc subsidies to erect new buildings. • Ad hoc subsidies to buy equipment. • Tuition fees determined by council. • Donations raised by college. • College has autonomy over budgets. • College operates its own bank accounts. • Principal is the accounting officer. • Council responsible for all maintenance. • Financial records audited by external auditors. • Council formulates own financial policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State pays all operating costs. • State provides accommodation. • State provides equipment. • State prescribes fees, paid into state account. • Donations paid to state. • State controls budgets. • Council manages trust funds only. • Head of education is accounting officer. • State responsible for maintenance. • Financial records audited by state. • Financial policy prescribed.

3. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council appoints staff in service of the college. • Council promotes staff subject to ministerial approval. • Council can appoint non-subsidised staff and determine their salaries. • Council responsible for all relocation costs. • Council may transfer / second staff to service with concurrence of the minister. • Council advertises posts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister appoints staff in service of the state. • Minister promote staff on recommendation of council. • Minister appoint all staff. • State responsible for all relocation costs. • Minister may transfer staff. <p>Department advertises posts.</p>
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The status of technical colleges, as displayed in Table 2.3, was made on a racial basis. The former state-aided colleges were for the whites and the state colleges were for the non-whites. Each race group had its own department. The departments had their own acts, which governed them on an unequal basis.

2.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter it was shown that; historically, technical education was motivated by the will to show charity with the idea of "redemption" thus leading to this stigma attached to this type of education. After the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley and gold in the Transvaal there was a rapid industrial and economic expansion and a great need for artisans, technicians, engineers, industrial miners and managers. Technical colleges thus came into being as a response to a change in the industry and provided technical education and training to supply the required skills needs.

In Britain in the nineteenth century education did not bring about the industrial revolution but it has responded to the industrial revolution by providing education and training for workers. (Fagerlind & Saha 1992:37-38). According to Trow (1961:147) a similar relationship prevailed in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: "The changes in the occupational structure have raised the educational aspirations of large parts of the American population, and the educational system has been responsive to these higher aspirations". It seems that education responds to changes in society and not the other way around.

Since the origin of technical colleges they were very poorly funded and staffed. This seems to be the case even up to this day, which seems to have stifled the growth and development of technical colleges in South Africa.

The poor funding and staffing as well as the negative perceptions of technical and vocational education, resulted in the colleges not contributing optimally to society.

Since the birth of technical education in South Africa the provinces were in control of the colleges. In 1925 however, the Central Government took over the control of colleges. Because it was believed that the provinces could not provide adequately for the colleges in terms of human and financial resources and that a co-ordinated and unified system of administration would lead to a more economic and efficient system.

During the previous political dispensation in South Africa, that is during the Apartheid era society was structured according to the different race groups. Education in each race group was governed by its own Department of Education, as own affairs; House of Assembly was for whites, House of Delegates was for indians, House of Representatives was for coloureds and the Department of Education and Training was for blacks. Each of these departments had their "own" colleges, thus triplicating all services and causing expenditure that the country could ill-afford.

The next chapter will deal with the transformation of the colleges and the integration of education and training in colleges in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the origin and development of vocational education and training at technical colleges in South Africa up to the year 1994 was discussed, in order to give a picture of technical college education at the time of the NCFEs investigation. In this chapter, the legislative framework within, which the transformation of the colleges in South Africa took place is discussed, followed by the transformation process of the colleges in Kimberley. The transformation of colleges stands central to the achievement of the socio-economic role assigned to colleges by the Department of Education based on the NCFE objectives. This chapter will conclude with a presentation of the policy imperative of the integration of education and training within the college sector. The integration of education and training is pivotal to the success of FET colleges instructional programme offerings given the history of technical college education in South Africa, with regards to the divide between "theory" and "practice" referred to in chapter two.

3.2 TECHNICAL EDUCATION BETWEEN 1994 TO 2004

After the historic 1994 elections that ushered in the democratic era in South Africa the desire to achieve social justice and equality for all led to the removal of the plethora of departments, acts and regulations made for the different race groups in the college sector.

Lively public debates took place around the question of technical colleges and the need for transformation in this sector. It was against this

background that the National Committee on Further Education was constituted.

3.2.1 National Committee on Further Education and Training (NCFE)

The transformation envisaged for this sector was set in motion by the appointment of the NCFE by the Minister of Education, Professor Bengo in 1996. The brief of the Committee was to design the mission, vision and goals for further education and training in order to attain equal access, and to advance lifelong learning within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and especially to strengthen the approach to the integration of education and training in the sector.

In fulfilling their task the NCFE had to investigate the sector and make recommendations to the Minister of Education on:

- “All aspects of post-compulsory education and training prior to the entry into Higher Education (HE), including a plan and time frames for the implementation, evaluation and re-development of Further Education and Training (FET).
- An audit of providers, infrastructure and resources available to FET, including all senior secondary schools; and the effectiveness and efficiency of such institutional, human and material resources.
- Curriculum-related matters, which would promote career choices relevant to specific life skills and environments, and allow for a comprehensive approach to meaningful articulation between further and general education on the one hand and higher education on the other.
- A funding model for FET, taking into account all funding implications of the integrated approach to FET.

- Elimination of gender imbalances, develop information data bases and any other matter the NCFE may deem necessary" (DoE 1997: xv).

3.2.2 The NCFE's conceptual framework, mission and vision for FET

The NCFE conceptualised FET as a "band" consisting of learning programmes between levels two to four on the NQF; which offers multiple entry and exit points and a range of qualifications at different levels, and allows for articulation within FET, general and higher education. The differing characteristic of FET is that it allows for more specialisation than general education, and provides more context-based skills in preparing learners for higher education and the world of work. According to the commission, FET involves a range of providers, such as schools, colleges and industry, which may also offer some programmes above and below the FET band (DoE 1997: 4).

The commission saw the mission of the FET as fostering mid-level skills pitched at levels two to four on the NQF; laying the foundation for higher education, facilitating the transition from school to the world of work, developing well-educated, autonomous citizens and providing opportunities for continuing learning through the articulation of the FET programmes (DoE 1997: 4).

The vision for FET, as envisaged by the NCFE, is a system which offers flexible, accessible, high-quality education and training programmes at NQF levels two to four. It needs to be responsive to individual and socio-economic needs and orientated to issues of redress and democratisation in a changing South African society. Transformation is to be achieved by restructuring the current fragmented arrangements into a co-ordinated system, with common goals and coherent planning through partnerships and representative structures (DoE 1997: 4).

3.2.3 Background to the NCFE`s research

In carrying out its work, the committee adopted a stakeholder-driven approach and acted as a link between a wide range of national stakeholders and key players in FET, namely, the Department of Labour, the Higher Education Directorate, the General and Further Education and Training Directorates of the Department of Education, the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training, the National Committee on Education Support Services, the National Committee on Gender Equity, the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) as well as a number of non-governmental and community based organisations.

The Committee divided its work into the following five focus areas:

- Audit (quantitative and qualitative).
- Governance, policy and planning.
- Programmes, curricula, support services.
- Institutional and human resource development.
- Financing (DoE 1997:xvii).

For each of the above areas, research topics were formulated and people with expertise in the relevant topics were commissioned to develop research papers. The experts, together with the Committee members, constituted working groups for the respective areas.

The Committee's data and information collection was largely derived from secondary sources. In January 1997, the Committee invited written submissions from all interested individuals, institutions and associations wishing to make an input into the restructuring of the FET system. Position papers prepared by the government, non-governmental organisations and political parties, documentation by the national and provincial education

departments, national councils, professional organisations and statutory bodies, evidence from pilot projects towards the development of FET and any other relevant literature and evidence were invited. Even oral submissions were welcomed.

The Committee thus consulted with a wide range of stakeholders with regards to key policy questions raised. Furthermore, the Committee afforded stakeholders the opportunity to review its findings in order to reach sufficient consensus of its findings.

The input of a reference group, consisting of seventy representatives of government departments with an interest in FET, such as the National Department of Education, the various Provincial Education Departments, State Departments with an interest in FET, as well as student organisations and national stakeholders, such as trade unions, the Committee of College Principals, the Committee of Technikon Principals, etc. This reference group gave direction on how the committee should proceed with its task. With regards to the process, approach and methodology to be used. Two meetings and two workshops were held with the reference group. This was followed by a series of consultative workshops in all the provinces. Stakeholders thus had ample opportunity to respond to key policy questions.

The Committee completed and presented its final report to the Minister of Education on 14 August 1997. They worked under severe time constraints as they were pressurised to complete the report by this deadline.

3.2.4 NCFEs findings on Technical Colleges

The findings of the Committee on the technical college sector were important for this study. According to the Committee, the technical college sector was not conceived as a functional system. They felt that the

technical college provision was slanted towards the pre-employed with limited technical college education for the employed and even less for the unemployed. They commented on the lack of parity and esteem regarding technical college education in the context of the traditional academic education. They felt that the technical college sector was fragmented and disorganised, that the colleges failed to come up with courses that straddled the needs of learners and did not meet the changing demands of the economy and the society, nor the specific requirements of their different target groups. There was, in short, a general lack of an overarching strategy. Technical college training lacked relevance and therefore they “trained people for unemployment”. The system appeared to have made a poor impact on society.

The teaching practices and most training equipment in technical colleges were out-dated and inadequate (DoE 1997:1-30). In spite of the above, the committee concluded that colleges were very important to the country, and did, in fact have a role to play.

After the Committee presented their report, the legislative changes that would underpin the transformation of the colleges were put into place. This was started with the Green Paper for FET, which was naturally based on the report of the NCFE.

3.2.5 The Green Paper

When new legislation is designed it is usually preceded by a Green Paper, as the first step towards the promulgation of an act. This particular Green Paper, was released in April 1998 as part of the process of formulating a new FET policy for the country. The publication of the Green Paper marked the beginning of further discussions on the nature, direction and organisation of the FET sector (DoE 1998a:iii). It identified the FET sector as vital to the development of the Republic of South Africa, and prepared

the ground for the White Paper; following the Green Paper in the legislative process as is the norm.

3.2.6 The White Paper

The release of the White Paper (4) in August 1998 on technical colleges, was the culmination of extensive processes of investigation and consultation, which was initiated with the establishment of the ministerial NCFE. The consultative process brought about general consensus about the policy framework. Ensuring that it commanded the support of all the key stakeholders in FET. The foundation for the establishment of a new FET system was laid and the long, complex, and urgent process was embarked upon (DoE:1998b:iii).

The White Paper spelled out the sequence of implementation steps for FET. It also laid the foundation for the FET Act, in that it spelled out the direction to be taken by legislators in general terms for the Act. The colleges had to become responsive, autonomous open learning centres. As is usual for legislative processes in South Africa, the Bill followed the white paper and shortly after that the FET Act No. 98 of 1998 followed.

3.2.7 The FET Act No. 98 of 1998

The FET Act No. 98 of 1998 was thus promulgated in November 1998 to replace the Technical Colleges Act, Act No. 104 of 1981. The introduction of the FET Act was to establish a national, co-ordinated further education and training system, promoting co-operative governance and providing for programme-based, further education and training.

In broad terms this act made provision for transformation and redress. Optimal opportunities for access, to the colleges would be created, and the new system would promote democracy based upon human dignity,

equality and freedom. It would establish institutions in pursuit of excellence and responsive to the labour market (Act No. 98 of 1998).

It is interesting to compare the new and old acts to note the innovations of Act No. 98 of 1998 see table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Comparison between the Technical College Act No.104 of 1981 and the FET Act No. 98 of 1998

Act No.104 of 1981	Act No. 98 of 1998
1 GOVERNANCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by a college Council. • College council has decision powers. • College is a legal persona. • College has propriety capacity. • College can own, sell and or lease its property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by a college council. • College council has decision making powers. • College is a legal persona. • College has propriety capacity. • College can own, sell and or lease its property.

1	2 FINANCING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	
2	<p>2.1 College funded by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidy according to fte`s • Ad hoc subsidies to lease accommodation. • Ad hoc subsidies to erect new/additional buildings. • Tuition fees determined by the council • Council has autonomy over its budget, expenditure and investments. • College operates its own bank accounts. • Principal is accounting officer. • Council is responsible for all maintenance. • Financial records audited by external auditors. • Council formulates financial policy. 	<p>3 College funded by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme funding: No details of funding. • Tuition fees determined by the council. • College has autonomy over its budget, expenditure and investments. • College operates its own bank accounts. • Principal is the accounting officer. • Council is responsible for all maintenance. • Financial records audited by external auditors. • Council formulates financial policy.
3	PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council recommends staff appointments subject to ministerial approval. • Council appoints non-subsidised staff and determine their salaries. • Council advertise vacant Posts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council recommends staff appointments subject to ministerial appointments. • Council appoints non-subsidised staff and determine their salaries. • Council advertise vacant posts.
4	ACADEMIC BOARD	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes provision for an academic board, functions not clearly specified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes provision for an academic board but goes into greater detail.
5	MERGER	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with merger / Amalgamation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with merger/ amalgamation but greater detail.
6.	STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL(SRC)	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes no provision for SRC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes provision for SRC and cooperative governance.
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It is clear from Table 3.1 that there is considerable correspondence between the two acts. The major innovations in Act No. 98 of 1998 was that all the duplication of the different departments, acts and regulations were removed and replaced by one act for all colleges in the sector, open access to technical education was ensured for all and the idea of programme funding was introduced. How the programme funding formula would look or be implemented is not clear as it has not been designed at this stage yet. This is evident from the following extract, coming from a directive by the Northern Cape Department of Education: “We are in the process of discussing the funding of FET colleges during the interim period whilst the new funding formulae are being developed” (Northern Cape Education Department Directive 12:03:2002). And from the following passage taken from the National Department of Education document “The objective was to design and implement a new funding system that is transparent and easily understood, based on a clear link with national goals” (DoE:2004).

The FET Act No. 98 of 1998 deals in greater detail with the Academic board, merger procedures and constituents of the council.

3.2.8 The Skills Development Act

The Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 is complemented by the FET Act No. 98 of 1998 in that both acts strive to develop the human resources of the South African work force. This is how the colleges are legislatively linked to the process of skills development and training in South Africa.

The goals of the Skills Development Act are to develop the skills of the South African workforce, to improve the life of workers to, provide better prospects for finding work, to facilitate labour mobility; to ensure quality education and training in and for the workplace and finally to provide and regulate employment services.

These goals were to be realised by establishing the National Skills Authority and the National Skills Fund, which would identify skills needed in South Africa and would provide funds to develop these skills. The funding would be channelled through the National Levy-Grant collected from all employers and amounts to 1% of their salary bills. This amount would be collected by the South African Receiver of Revenue who in turn pays these funds over to the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). The SETAs represent the different industries in the labour market and they assist in disbursing funds to employers who had trained their workforces and could provide evidence of doing so. It would be at SETA level where colleges would feature, as service providers of skills training and education. The SETAs would make use of the colleges to provide the education and training especially for the learnerships.

From the above it is clear that this act impacts directly on the college sector. Colleges are to participate in the new learnerships by registering as service providers to businesses and to government departments.

3.2.9 The Levies Act

The Levies Act makes provision for employers to pay 1% of their salary bills over to the South African Receiver of Revenue, who in turn pays it over to one or more of the twenty-five SETAs in South Africa. The South African commerce and industry is divided into sectors for example engineering, agriculture, banking, education, hospitality, etc. SETAs are

the bodies that represent each of these sectors in the South African commerce and industry.

This is the mechanism by which employers will be forced to invest in the training of their workforces. This provides a window of opportunity for FET colleges to apply for funding from the SETAs to provide education and training to the SETA members.

3.3 TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS IN KIMBERLEY

In Kimberley there was a first phase of transformation in that the first merger between R.C. Elliott Technical College and Moremogolo Technical College took place in 1997 (see figure 3.1 below) to form the Kimberley College. The current transformation process of the colleges in Kimberley was ushered in by the democratisation of South Africa. The process commenced in Kimberley in 1996 with the establishment of the Further Education and Training (FET) Unit in the Education Department of the Northern Cape Province, to co-ordinate and facilitate all FET college activities in the province. Prior to this, all technical colleges fell under the National Department of Education (see 2.3.2, p.21). Right from the establishment of this unit, it was poorly staffed and the staff members lacked practical, college experience because incumbents were not originally from the sector (NBI Report October 2000:31; O Dora Hoppers 2001:7). Even by January 2004, nine years after the establishment of this unit, it was still seriously understaffed; there were, in fact, only two staff members. One might wonder if this situation could be an indication of a lack of seriousness with which the transformation and service delivery of the colleges were perceived by the Department of Education of the Northern Cape.

A very important milestone in the transformation process was the promulgation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998, which provided the legislative

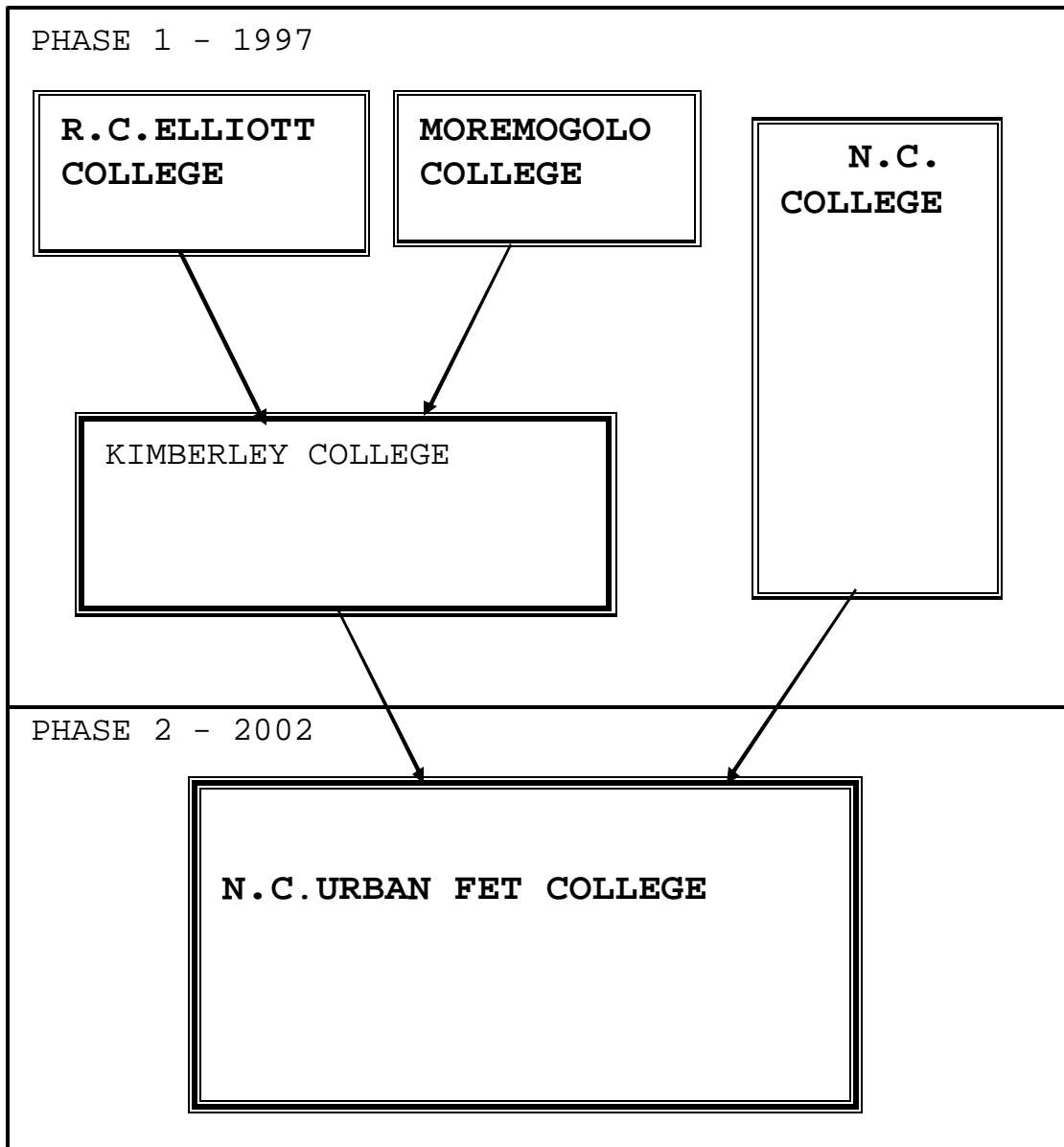
framework for the transformation of all the colleges. No regulations were promulgated for this act which left a vacuum as far as details of the implementation of this act was concerned. Regulations to acts usually deal with the finer details, which facilitates the uniform understanding and implementation of the acts by all those who have to implement them. The Regulations No. R. 900, for example, were the regulations for the Technical Colleges Act No.104 of 1981 they explained the act in its finer details thereby facilitating uniform interpretation and implementation of this act of 1981.

The merging of the colleges was one of the key transformational activities that changed the technical college landscape in South Africa. Before the merging process in 2002 there were 152 technical colleges in South Africa, they were merged to form 50 FET colleges.

The merger of the R.C. Elliott and Moremogolo colleges started in 1997 to form the Kimberley College, as the first phase of the merging process. The final phase of the merger took place with the declaration by the MEC of Education of the Northern Cape Education Department who declared the change from technical colleges to FET colleges, and the merger of the Kimberley and Northern Cape Technical Colleges to form the Northern Cape Urban FET College (see figure 3.1, p.54). The latter name given to the merged college was to serve as an interim name.

The date for the change from technical colleges to FET colleges was set for 11 September 2001 and the merger date was to be the 1st of January 2002. The National Business Initiative (NBI) assisted the National Department of Education to reposition colleges in South Africa and the merging process was set in motion by the appointment of a facilitator, whose function was to facilitate the process by means of drafting a merger plan for the merging of the Kimberley and Northern Cape FET colleges.

Figure 3.1: Diagrammatic representation of the merger



3.4 THE MERGER STRUCTURES AND THE MERGING PROCESS

For the purpose of the development and drafting of a merger plan, a specific process was activated by the creation of eight working groups

(WG), an institutional management team (IMT), a provincial management team (PMT) and an interim college council (ICC).

3.4.1 Working groups

As stated above eight WGs were formed. Each working group consisted of an equal number of representatives from each college in the merger and was chaired by a member of the ICC. The following eight areas were covered by the working groups (one area per working group): governance, finances, human resources, administration, physical facilities and infrastructure, student affairs, marketing and programmes. The brief of the working groups was to draft plans on how their particular working group saw the merged college functioning in the area that was allocated to them. The working groups did all the developmental work, the research and they were responsible for making recommendations. In the end, the different plans of all eight working groups were to be consolidated to form the merger-plan for the merger of the colleges (DoE 2001:39).

3.4.2 Institutional Management Team

An IMT was formed that consisted of equal representation from each college, the facilitator and departmental representatives. The brief of this structure was to evaluate the recommendations from the WGs, and to decide whether to accept them in which case they would be recommended to the ICC or to refer the recommendations back to the WGs for reconsidering or reworking. (DoE 2001:45).

3.4.3 Provincial Management Team

The PMT consisted of departmental officials from the FET unit of the department, two college principals and the facilitator. This team had to interact with the merger plans of the eight working groups after they had

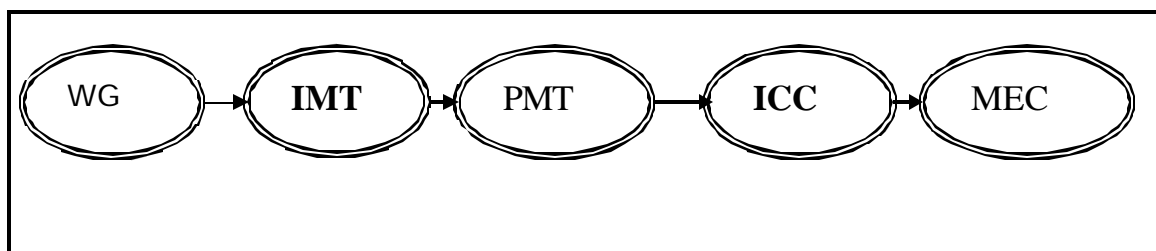
been accepted by the IMT. The PMT had to finally interact with the eight plans to resolve any problems that might have slipped through. After the PMT had made their inputs the plan was finalised and presented to the interim council for ratification and presentation to the education department (DoE: 2001).

3.4.4 Interim College Council

In accordance with section 10 of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998, an interim council was appointed in October 2001 for the governance of the two colleges in Kimberley during the transitional period from technical colleges to the FET Colleges and to oversee the merger. The Interim Council consisted mostly of new members who had no previous college experience. This fact understandably caused anxiety in the college management.

The ICC received the proposed merger plan from the PMT via the facilitator for final consideration, acceptance and ratification. From the ICC the merger plan was submitted to the MEC of education. A flow chart for the drafting of the merger plan is indicated in figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2: Flow chart for the drafting of the merger plan.



3.5 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED DURING THE MERGING PROCESS

The drafting of the merger plan was experienced as extremely difficult and very stressful to the staff members in the WGs. The following were

identified as the main aspects causing the stress. The commencement of the process was ill-timed, since it took place during the time lecturers had to complete their syllabi in preparation for the final external national examinations. Furthermore, preparations and co-ordination for the marking of the final examination scripts at the marking center (Northern Cape FET college) had to be done as well as stock-taking, a very demanding and time-consuming activity for the lecturers. This made it very difficult for them to complete their academic responsibilities, and at the same time to do the lions share of the merger plan design in the working groups as well as participate in the IMT and the single-council activities.

The lecturers who served in the working groups were mostly junior staff (on post level one, that is, the entrance level at the colleges for academic staff). The reason why they had to serve on the committees was because, logistically, it was not possible for senior staff members to man the committees. It was required of them to formulate plans around governance, finances, staffing, management, administration, marketing, students support services and physical infrastructures. Because of their inexperience and a feeling of having to do their work without any guidance they felt at a loss. They had for example, to make proposals on how to staff the newly merged institution without the availability of any official staffing norms for the FET colleges. They also had to make financial proposals without any official funding norms for FET colleges being in place. Strictly speaking, this reduced the proposed organograms (staffing), duty sheets and financial proposals to nothing more than a mere paper exercise without the necessary guidelines.

As the drafting process for the merger plan commenced very suddenly and unexpectedly, the colleges were caught off guard being without any budgetary provision for expenses for the pre-drafting and the actual drafting of the merger plan. No financial support for the process was

forthcoming from the department. This could be reflective of the fact that the provincial department, too, was not ready for the process.

A very short period of time was provided for the plans to be completed. The process commenced on the 1st of October 2001 and it had to be completed by 5 December 2001, in time for submission to the provincial and national departments. This placed tremendous strain and stress upon all involved in the process.

Due to the fact that the staff at both colleges were too subjectively involved in their task and therefore, trying to advantage their respective colleges in the merger plan, their frustration, anxiety and uncertainty over possible rationalisations of staff complicated matters. Staff members also felt that the merger planning process lay outside of their normal duties, and that they were coerced into doing the work without any additional remuneration amounted to exploitation.

Tension developed between the college staff members and the provincial department because the former could not understand why the national department was driving the process so vigorously and fast. The staff was under the impression that FET was a provincial competency.

3.5.1 Possible effects of problems experienced with the merger

Many educationalists stress the fact that no merging process is easy to accomplish (Fielden and Markham 1997). The problems experienced during the drafting of the merger plan at Kimberley clearly were mostly organisational, they impacted on the college and its staff mainly at the operational level. Another problem that arose was the naming of the newly-created institution. According to Strydom (1999), this is an activity that needs to take place ideally immediately after the formation of a new institution. At Kimberley, the naming process dragged on. Even now in

2004, two years after the merger, the college still does not have a final name. This has a negative effect on the idea of a specific culture and identity associated with the college. The feeling of belonging and loyalty, that had to be built amongst the staff of the new merged college, and which is central to the success of the merger is problematised by this fact.

There were also two specific problems that were of a policy nature, namely the lack of norms for staffing and financing. These norms are central to the effective planning, and operation of any sector or organisation. In 2004 six years after the promulgation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998, these policies are still not finalised, thereby causing serious operational problems for the colleges. These problems made it extremely difficult to implement the requirements of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998 at the colleges. An example that can be mentioned in this regard is the requirement of student support services that had to be established at colleges. This was a new requirement for colleges and it had to be implemented without the necessary staff or funding. The problems mentioned above, and the omission to finalise the above policies during the merging process could possibly have contributed to the feeling of frustration, experienced by stakeholders in the transformation process as well as, to their not having full confidence, in the planning and implementation of the process.

Another key transformational area that was legislated, was the integration of education and training in college instructional programmes. It was seen as central to the success of college education, that students be trained theoretically as well as practically, and in such a way that the divide between "theory" and "practice" be bridged. The history of South African technical colleges made it clear that practical training did generally not take place at the colleges because, the majority of colleges were not equipped with the necessary workshops and machinery to do the practical training. This led to students not benefiting from a practical side of their

training, this left students ill-prepared for future employment. Against this background, the integration of education and training was legislated. The problems with the merger, discussed above, again raised the seriousness with which the relevant authorities viewed their task to transform the college sector successfully.

3.6 INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The integration of education and training in the college sector was one of the key changes made in the new education policy. The White Paper (4) defines the concept as follows, "the human resource development policy that rejects the rigid division between 'academic' and 'applied', between 'theory' and 'practice' between 'knowledge' and 'skills' " (DoE 1998b:41).

Tsolo (2001:84) states that the legislation (FET ACT No. 98 of 1998) made provision for the integration of education and training. According to the legislation, programmes offered by FET institutions should be based on a combination of the theoretical and practical. This idea of integration was made against the background of the historic lack of integration of education and training in colleges during the previous dispensation. The question here is whether "practical training" or "work" is the responsibility of the Department of Labour or the Department of Education in South Africa? There seems to be silence from the Department of Education as to exactly how this combination of theory and practice should be achieved at the colleges in the absence of modern well-equipped workshops. Mention was made of co-operation and collaboration that needed to be initiated by colleges, between themselves and the private sector with respect to students going to the private sector for their practical training. This would be one way to achieve integration between education and training. The lack of co-operation between colleges and the private sector could possibly be an area of weakness in the attempt to integrate education and training in colleges in South Africa.

Some of the questions private companies asked when they were approached by colleges to participate in the training of students were: Why should a private company undertake the practical training of, say engineering students on their own very expensive and sophisticated machinery whilst they already contributed towards the skills levy? What benefits would there be in it for the companies who participate in the training of students? Given that the company's main objective is profit-making for their investors. Who should be responsible for costs incurred if a student is injured during training or if machinery gets damaged?

It would just seem fair that the Department of Education who legislated the integration of education and training should create an enabling environment that makes this integration possible. It seems logical that they should be providing the necessary infrastructure and equipment rather than shifting the responsibility to the colleges and the private sector. In the case of a learnership that is, the situation where a learner receives practical training at the place of employment and theoretical training at the college, is a model that has been proven to work in the integration of education and training. However, to students not in learnerships, and this is the case for the majority of students at South African colleges, will not receive the benefit of the integration of education and training, since they have no access to fully equipped workshops.

It will be unfortunate if this approach is going to be followed, because it would mean that the post-transformation era is no different from the pre-transformation era as far as the integration of "practice" and "theory" is concerned. The question arises once again whether the Department of Education seriously wants to make the transformation of colleges successful.

3.6.1 International examples

The researcher visited the Atlanta Technical College and the Valencia Community College in America in 2001 and in the Netherlands the Regional Opleidings Centrum (ROCs), namely Zadkine and Alberda in 2004. At all of these institutions the respective Education Departments were responsible for the funding of modern well equipped workshops at the colleges. These colleges strive to keep abreast with the latest equipment in the workplaces, in order to provide training for their students as close to the real work situation as possible. These institutions indicated, that in their opinions, colleges should be equipped with equipment that is at least basic to what is used in the factories in industry. This enables their students to have a fair idea of what to expect when they are exposed to the real world. These institutions could thus offer education and training in an integrated manner as is required in commerce and industry. After theoretical and practical training at these colleges, students were placed in companies for on the job training. The companies that participate in on-the-job training did so because they benefited, firstly, by receiving tax rebates from their governments, and secondly, by the possibility of employing these well trained learners.

The researcher observed during his visit to the Netherlands that the colleges there have taken the integration of education and training even a step further by training their students on real life projects. The students firstly study the theory of a particular job in the classrooms at the college, then they did practical lessons in the college workshops. After they had reached a certain level of competency, they were assigned real projects from employers where the student had to design, plan, work out costs, draw up a business plan, build a model of the project if necessary, and finally make a presentation of the project to the managers of the company. The students then had to answer questions about the project and convince the managers that they would be able to successfully

complete the project, in which case they were awarded the project for completion. The students were then placed in a real work situation where they had to complete the project. During this phase of their training the students learn teamwork, presentation and good communication skills and how to do real projects, in real work situations. The researcher noted that this type of training produced very good and well-rounded workers who could be easily placed, because the employers had the chance to evaluate them while they worked on their projects .

3.7 CONCLUSION

It was necessary for the new South African government when they came to power in 1994 to transform the college sector from the apartheid triplication of colleges, based upon race, to FET colleges. The NCFE was commissioned to do an investigation of the sector and the findings of the committee were quite revealing. The most important conclusions were the following: colleges were training learners for unemployment, there was a lack of esteem for college education in the eyes of the public and the college sector was not conceived as an integrated system.

The FET Unit in the Northern Cape Education Department was established in 1996 to co-ordinate college FET in the province, but this unit was neither adequately staffed, nor with people who had expertise in the sector. This impacted negatively on the colleges. A major step in the whole transformation process was the promulgation of the FET Act No.98 of 1998, which set the scene for the transformation of the sector. However, regulations for this act were never designed.

The planning process of the merger of the colleges had to happen almost without warning, without the necessary funding and it was expected from the junior staff members to do the major work in a very short time without official norms to plan the staffing and funding of the colleges. This made

their work in these areas no more than a useless paper exercise. The college staff members experienced the planning process of the merger very negatively and it cast a shadow of distrust and suspicion over the whole merger.

In the light of the importance of the integration of education and training, it seems regrettable that it might not take place successfully, if it is going to be implemented the way the Department of Education envision the implementation.

The levies employers started paying to the SETAs was an innovation. These levies were to be used to train the workforce of South Africa to make them better skilled workers and to fund the Human Resource Development Programme of South Africa. This, however, did not make provision for the unemployed, which is the real problem in SA.

Act 98 of 1998 replaced Act 104 of 1981 and, as indicated in the study there are great similarities between them implying that there would be many areas where changes would not be made.

In the next chapter a presentation will be made of the socio-economic role assigned to the transformed college with specific reference to the achievement of the objectives set by the NCFE for FET colleges.

CHAPTER 4

THE ROLE OF THE COLLEGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the transformation process of the colleges in Kimberley, which resulted in the formation of the Northern Cape Urban FET College. In the first chapter of this study it was indicated that the transformation of the colleges was to be effected by the implementation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998, the merger of the colleges, the integration of education and training, the introduction of relevant and responsive college programmes and finally, the introduction of programme funding that would lead colleges to the achievement of the NCFEs objectives.

This chapter will deal with the relevance and responsiveness of the instructional programmes offered at the Northern Cape Urban FET College, which is of cardinal importance and pivotal to the attainment of the NCFEs objectives. To assess the relevance of the college's instructional programmes, it was necessary to look into the provinces' labour and economic needs. The importance of assessing these various needs become clear in the light of the expectations of the Department of Education, which are, that better and more relevant programmes will make college "graduates" more employable, and that this may lead to an alleviation of unemployment and poverty.

4.2 TECHNICAL COLLEGE PROGRAMMES

The former technical college education strove to cover all fields of study required by industry, commerce and the community. Initially technical colleges offered education in six vocational fields, namely, Engineering Studies, Business Studies, Arts, Agriculture, Utility Industries and Social

Services. A seventh field, Business Languages was also instituted, but it was not administered as a separate vocational field (DoE 1994:27). Both formal and non-formal instructional programmes were offered at technical colleges and these programmes will form the focus of this chapter.

4.2.1 Formal courses

4.2.1.1 The National Certificate

Formal courses at technical colleges were offered in terms of approved curricula that led to the acquisition of a recognised National Certificate. The emphasis fell upon practically orientated vocational education, that was geared towards preparing candidates for the world of work.

Formal programmes at technical colleges normally consisted of a four-subject national certificate ranging from N1 to N6 (N1 to N3 were regarded as pre-grade twelve level and N4 to N6 were regarded as post-grade twelve level). A wide range of programmes were offered on a full-time and part-time basis in the following fields:

- **Engineering studies**

- Electrical (light and heavy current).
- Mechanical.
- Civil.
- Industrial electronics.

- **Business studies**

- Secretarial (computer practice, tourism, medical practice, etc.).
- Applied Accounting and Managing (personnel and marketing).

- *Business Practice.*
- Economic and Legal Environment.
- Commercial Studies.

General studies:

- Educare.
- Graphic design.
- Clothing production.
- Hair care.
- Food and Beverage Services.
- Cosmetic Theory.
- Child Care, Care for the Aged and Care of the Disabled.
- Art and Design.
- Music.

4.2.1.2 The National Senior Certificate (NSC)

The National Senior Certificate was offered on both part-time and full-time basis, thus providing the opportunity to adult post-school learners to acquire a senior certificate with or without matriculation exemption. A National Senior Certificate is also awarded to a candidate who obtained four N-subjects and two languages (Department of National Education. Examination Instruction No. 10: 26 February 1988).

The secondary component (N1 – N3, NIC, NSC) included studies which corresponded with levels of the Senior Secondary Phase of school education. The tertiary component, namely N4 to N6, levels also had a specific nature, which differed to a certain extent from that of technikon education, but there were also certain similarities. Report 191 (97/07) (which is the manual containing the official FET college programmes approved by the Minister of Education) gives a complete description of the types of instructional programmes offered by technical colleges, and

specific reference is made to theoretical, practical and integrated instructional offerings.

4.2.1.3 Practical training

Apprentices who were enrolled at technical colleges obtained practical training at their places of employment, whilst students who were not apprenticed received no practical training during the period they were enrolled at the college due to the absence of well-equipped workshops. This was clearly a great problem for the colleges, because the non-apprenticed students passing through the college system were incompletely trained, as they received only theoretical training. As a consequence they were not ready to enter the labour market. Employers who employed these students would have to spend money on practical training, before they could be used profitably inside the companies. For the majority of technical college students, education and training were thus, not integrated.

4.2.2 Non-formal courses

Non-formal programmes were offered according to needs of the learners, and were highly flexible and adaptable within the colleges. Non-formal education did not lead to any formal qualification and were usually offered on a part-time basis. These courses had to be self-supporting, in other words, the income generated from these courses had to pay the salaries of the lecturers, course material and all other expenses incurred. The duration of these courses varied. At their completion internal examinations were conducted, after which the institution issued a certificate to indicate that the student attended and completed the course. These courses can be summarised as follows:

- **In-service training**

These courses were offered in close co-operation with organised commercial and industrial employers, based upon their needs and that of the individual for self-improvement.

- **Adult education**

These programmes involved the retraining of persons who, due to technological changes or economic recessions, were unable to continue with their present occupation. In this way the training would enable them to once again become economically independent.

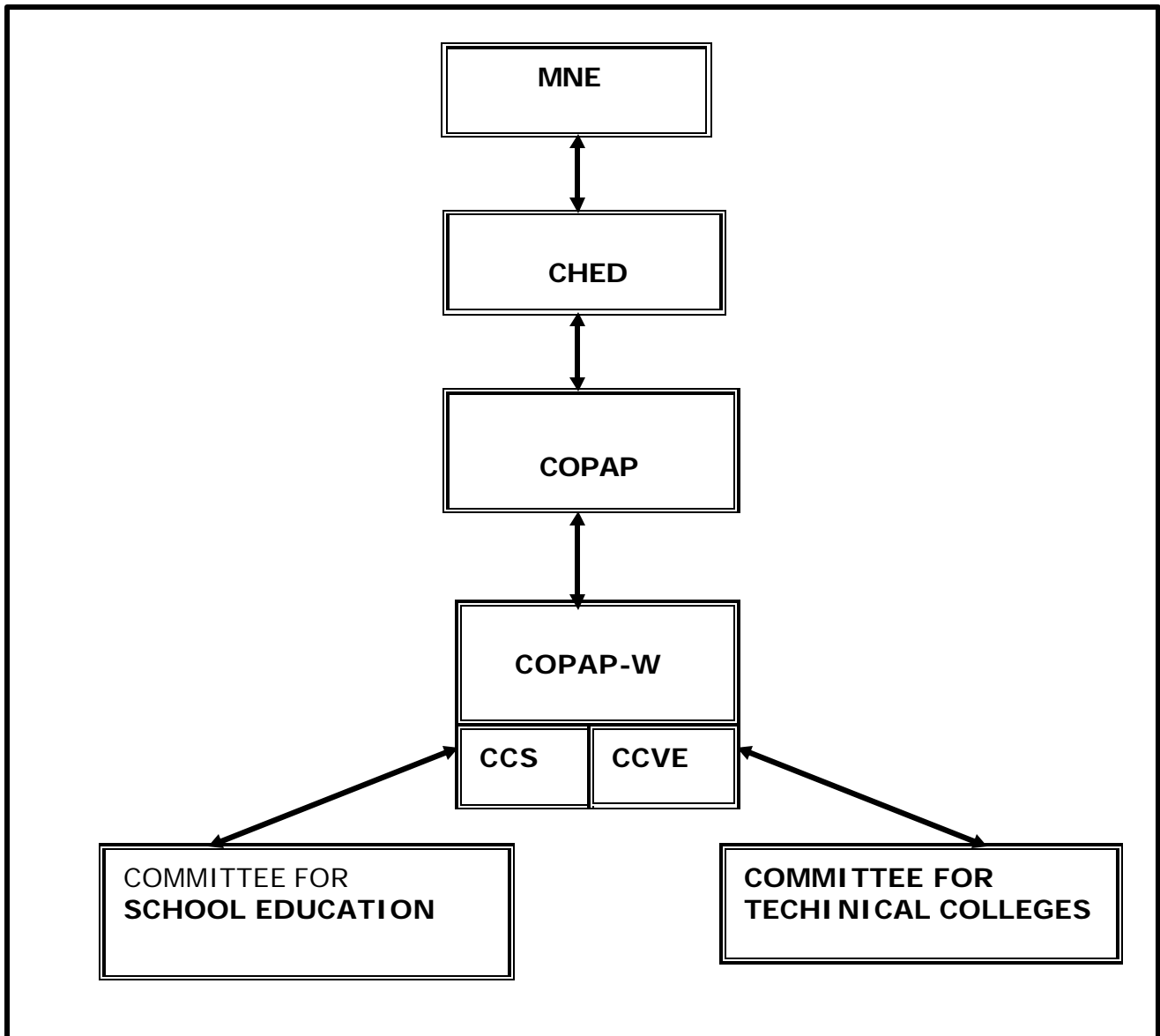
- **Cultural enrichment**

These courses were specifically drawn up to provide for the community's needs, for example, flower arrangement, art, ballet, photography, know your car, etc.

4.3 STRUCTURE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GENERAL POLICY FOR PRE-TERTIARY EDUCATION

The Framework Committees for Vocational Education did joint curriculum development for the pre-tertiary technical college instructional programmes. The Education and Culture Service (ex House of Assembly) was previously the main role player in the development of curriculums for technical college programmes. This, and the examination function, were offered as a service by the House of Assembly's Department of Education and Culture to the other departments. Figure 4.1 below represents the structure that was responsible for programme maintenance and development:

Figure 4.1: The structure for the development of programmes



- MNE: Minister of National Education
- CHED: Committee of Education Heads of Departments
- COPAP: Committee of Pre-tertiary Academic Policy
- COPAP-W: Committee of Pre-tertiary Academic Policy (Working Group)
- CCS: Co-ordinating Committee for School Education
- CCVE: Co-ordinating Committee for Vocational Education
- FWC: Framework Committee
- ISC: Inter Departmental Syllabus Committee
- SFWC's: Sub Framework Committee (where needed)

The (CCVE) was a sub-committee of the COPAP-W, which was a working committee of COPAP and resorted under the CHED. The functions of the CCVE included *inter alia*, the overall planning for pre-tertiary vocational education, and co-ordinating the work of the various framework committees (FWC) for vocational education.

These FWCs linked up with several Interdepartmental Syllabus Committees (ISCs) whose function was to compile syllabi and to draft synopses for the respective instructional programmes. These draft synopses were submitted to the CHED, after which the CHED advised the Minister of National Education on whether or not the draft should become policy (DoE 1994:35). The framework committees of the CHED, in co-operation with the ICS, developed curriculums up to N3 and National Senior Certificate levels. Certification was provided by SAFCERT up to the same levels. Curriculum development of N4 to N6 instructional programmes was done by the Education and Culture Service (ex-House of Assembly) through its ISCs on which the other executive departments were also represented.

4.4 EXAMINATIONS

National examinations were written in nearly all instructional programmes, whether on an annual, semester or trimester basis. The Education and Culture Service (ex-House of Assembly) rendered a service to the other executive education departments regarding the examination functions. The Ex-DET purchased the question papers and memoranda from Education and Culture Service (ex- House of Assembly) but provided its own markers.

The other ex-departments made full use of the examination service provided by the Education and Culture Service (ex-House of Assembly). In courses such as Engineering Studies, certain examination functions were performed by different education departments. The Department of

National Education (ex-House of Assembly) issued examination circulars, which indicated any changes that occurred in the general examination policies. It is important to note that each executive education department could also issue circulars, to change policy, and they could also change the executive functions of the institutions. The executive departments could furthermore, decide what the status would be of circulars sent out by the Department of National Education.

4.5 CERTIFICATION

Only approved formal technical college instructional programmes were certified by the various executive education departments. Non-formal programmes were certified by the respective technical colleges by issuing an attendance and completion certificate. The Act on Technical Colleges of 1981, (Act no. 104 of 1981) did not authorise technical colleges to examine or to certify, with regard to formal courses. This function was solely that of the Department of Education and Culture (ex- House of Assembly).

The Act on SAFCERT 1986, (Act no. 85 of 1986:1438) made provision for the standardisation of the learning material, examinations and the issuing of certificates at the various exit points in schools and technical colleges, (N3 and the National Senior Certificate levels). Certification of N1, N2, N4, N5 and N6 was done by the various executive education departments (DoE 1994:35).

From the above, it can be clearly seen what the implications was of having three racially-based departments of education: the triplication of services with regards to programme development, examinations and certification this meant not only an increase in administration, but also in expenditure.

4.6 RELEVANCE OF COLLEGE PROGRAMMES

The definition of the word "relevant", according to the Oxford dictionary (Oxford Dictionary 1966) is "appropriate in the circumstances, applicable to (a matter in hand), related and connected" (Oxford Dictionary 1996).

In terms of the above definition the following example would illustrate the concept of relevant instructional programmes. Before the motorcar era, horse-drawn carts were used as the main form of transport. During that period the whip was used to encourage horses to draw the carts, at that time, and given this particular set of circumstances, instructional programmes and skills in whip making were relevant; most people owned horse-drawn carts, good whips were in demand. Today, however, we live in the era of motorcars and horse-drawn carts are no longer the preferred mode of transport. Thus, whips, even if they were of a good quality, are no longer needed, therefore instructional programmes, and skills in whip-making, would be irrelevant. Whip making, as an instructional programme at a college, would be inappropriate in the present circumstances because it would not be applicable to the current situation. The above example illustrates the concept, "irrelevant programmes" in terms of the definition as cited by the Oxford dictionary and as illustrated by the current *de facto* situation.

It is the researcher's view that the concept "irrelevance of college programmes" was used very loosely when the transformation of technical colleges came under the spotlight. The main reason why college programmes were regarded as irrelevant was the fact that college students could not readily obtain employment. It was thus assumed, and the opinion was voiced by the NCFE and the decision-makers, that colleges "trained students for unemployment" (see paragraph 1.2.1, p.3). This assumption is questionable, because students currently exiting matric also do not readily find employment. According to an article by Alet Rademeyer

in *Die Volksblad* of (27 February 2004:6) more than half of the 1 million young people who write matric, or who fall out of the school system annually, do not find employment. If the same argument was used for school programmes as was used for college programmes, then it would imply that the school curriculum is also irrelevant. Dr. Andre Kraak of the HSRC was quoted by Alet Rademeyer in the same newspaper as saying that the school sector has grown during the last decade but the labour market has, however, shrunk. One can therefore conclude that it is not necessarily the school curriculum that is irrelevant, but that the smaller labour market is partly to blame for the state of unemployment of matriculants.

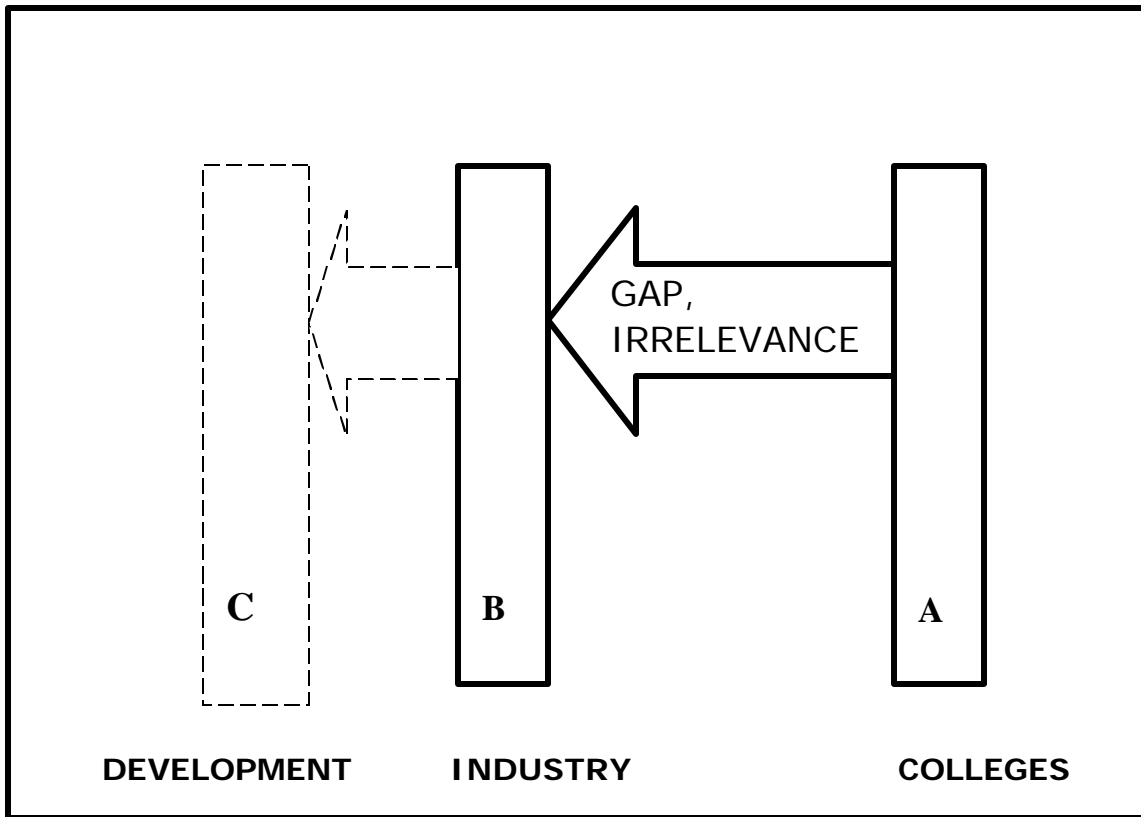
Johann van Tonder states in the *Rapport* of (28 March 2003:16) that the South African employment market's ability to employ workers has shrunk drastically. He writes (8 months later) in the same newspaper that the South African economy did not grow as was expected, and that the following years projected growth of 3% might be achieved but with great difficulty. Elma Kloppers in the *Sake Volksblad* (26 June 2004:9) quotes the Report of the South African Cities Network (SACN) when she remarks that the working population has increased by 16.8%, while there was an inability in cities to create employment opportunities. According to her, this contributed to the increase of unemployment in the country to the current 43.9%.

The circumstances sketched above could possibly have contributed to the difficulty experienced by graduates from schools, FET colleges and even higher education institutions to find employment readily. One should therefore not summarily categorise the instructional offerings of FET colleges as irrelevant because their students do not readily find employment.

Instructional programmes were also labeled as irrelevant if there was a gap as far as new developments in a particular programme was concerned. The trade of Fitter and Turner, in which the researcher served a five-year apprenticeship and worked for eight years after qualifying as an artisan in the same trade can be taken as an example. His training and work experience took place between the years 1971 and 1982. Today, Fitters and Turners still have to learn, for example, center lathe turning, horizontal and vertical milling, drilling, shaping, grinding, precision machining, fitting different types of fits, such as shrink fits, tight fits, loose fits, sliding fits, repairing mechanical machines, etc. What has changed in the mean time is that computer turning was introduced into the workplace, which means that a component of computer turning should be added to the syllabus of Turning Theory. This does not mean that the current Fitting and Turning syllabus is inappropriate, unrelated, unconnected or incorrect with regards to the circumstances, and the trade. This trade is still greatly in demand worldwide and it keeps the wheels of industry turning. The course work for this trade is as relevant today as it was before the transformation of the colleges. What is needed however, is an additional component in the turning syllabus, namely computer turning. The concept "incomplete" would better describe the situation in this trade rather than "irrelevant".

The phenomenon of which the above is an example is an international problem for vocational education and training institutions; the world of commerce and industry seems to be a few steps ahead of education in terms of technological development, research and innovation. Colleges always have to play a catch-up game to try and bring instructional programme and training equipment in line with the expectations of developments in commerce and industry, this phenomenon is illustrated in the Figure 4.2 below:

Figure 4.2: The Gap between colleges and industry



The gap between **A** and **B** in the diagram above illustrates the difference between industry and the colleges in terms of the latest and most modern training equipment and the instructional programmes. Because of this gap, the opinion generally formed seems to have an over-easily reached conclusion, that college programmes are irrelevant. This situation is ongoing, because, as soon as colleges have moved in the direction of **B** on the diagram by acquiring newer technology and adapting their curricula to suit industry, then industry has already developed, been innovated and moved in the direction of **C** on the diagram. The colleges are thus left to try and catch up again. The cycle then recommences and is repeated as new knowledge evolves. This is a natural phenomenon because new knowledge evolves all the time. And college programmes should be updated accordingly and continuously.

The *status quo* in the following fields need mentioning with regards to the above, electrical trade: electrons still flow in the same direction, the colouring of the electric wires are still the same, houses are still wired in the same way, and electric motors still work the same way and overhead high tension wires are still installed as before. The theorems in mathematics, the laws of science, the principles of accounting, management, human resource management, bank management, project management, office practice, information technology, mining, etc. are still the same as it were before. The afore-mentioned technical fields in the labour market are still highly in demand in the South African labour market. The claim that the instructional programmes were irrelevant, simply because of the perception that programmes do not address labour market needs or because an additional chapter needs to be added to a particular syllabus, is questionable as was illustrated in the previous diagram.

There are perceptions different from that of the NCFE on the relevancy of college programmes. The following needs mentioning: Michael Cosser (2001) of the HSRC did a college graduate tracer study in 2001, using the students who completed their N2, N3/NSC studies in 1999 at technical colleges in Gauteng, Kwa Zulu Natal and the Free State as respondents. The objective of his investigation was to investigate the responsiveness of technical colleges as measured by graduates with regards to:

- Satisfaction with technical college education.
- Employment situations.
- Perceptions of alignment between college education and job requirements.

The results of the study revealed that students preferred to study at technical colleges for the following reasons:

- They had an interest in the field of study offered by a technical college.
- They were afforded an opportunity to acquire practical training.
- Technical college education is affordable (vs. technikon or university education).
- Many of these students could not gain access to higher education.
- These students preferred to study at a technical college rather than to stay in school.

The students included in this study expressed satisfaction with the technical college education as illustrated in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Quality of technical college education as expressed by the students

QUALITY OF EDUCATION	MEAN
Quality of teaching	4.4
Practical instruction	3.3
Fairness in marking	4.2
Help with language problems	4.0
Help with study methods	4.1
Staff available when needed	4.3
Conditions of buildings	4.3

On a scale of 1-5 the following was found: 88 % of the “graduates” across all population groups indicated that they would recommend the technical college where they studied to their family and friends (Cosser 2001). Contrary to the NCFEs findings about the poor quality of the technical colleges programmes, it is clear from the responses above that the cohort of respondents (clients) used in this research, perceived college education as being satisfactory. The average of the mean of most responses in the above table is 4 on a scale of 1-5, indicating overwhelming satisfaction (it must be noted that the same curricula of

technical colleges are still used at FET colleges in 2004 as was used in 1996 when the NCFE did their work).

Botshabelo Maja (2001), also from the HSRC, researched the employers satisfaction of technical college graduates in 2001, by using the quantitative research methodology. He included companies in all nine provinces across the following employment fields: agriculture, construction, electricity, financial services, government, manufacturing, mining, wholesale and retail and social services all of which were affiliated to the 25 SETAs in his study.

The focus of this study was to ascertain employer attitudes to, and satisfaction levels with, technical college products by looking at the cohort of technical college graduates in their employ by focusing on:

- The nature and type of graduates in employment.
- The interaction and satisfaction levels between employers and colleges.
- The employer satisfaction levels with technical college courses.
- The employer satisfaction levels with graduate work skills.
- Overall employer perceptions of technical colleges.

From this study it emerged that employers were generally satisfied with technical college "graduates" in their employ. However, problem-solving abilities, practical job skills, and college graduates' ability to use own initiative were key worrying areas for employers (Maja 2001).

Gewers (2001) conducted research in the Gauteng Province on the "The role of FET Colleges in laying the pathway from education to work". He used the quantitative research methodology, during which he distributed 9, 781 questionnaires in Gauteng province with a return of 3, 509. The

study disaggregated original data and focused on 1, 532 engineering graduates from 17 colleges in Gauteng. He found that students were

generally positive about the quality of education received within the technical colleges and that:

- Students prefer to study at the technical colleges because of the availability of engineering as a field of study.
- The affordability of studying at a technical college and the availability of practical training were reasons for preferring technical college education.

To summarise both, Gewers and Cosser, found that students do not find the technical college programmes irrelevant and Maja came to the conclusion that employers seemed to be satisfied with the graduates of the technical colleges in their employment. These findings are in stark contrast with those of the NCFE that is, that technical college education is poor and irrelevant.

No discussion of college instructional programmes will be complete without a discussion of the envisioned, programme funding mechanism for colleges to be implemented by the Department of Education, and the possible effects it could have on unemployment, poverty and the economy.

4.7 PROGRAMME FUNDING

The proposed programme funding mechanism is to be based upon the principle of providing funding only for programmes that are in line with the labour and economic needs of the province (DoE 1998b:25). The reason for this mechanism is according to the department of education to steer colleges in the direction of offering only relevant programmes. In this

chapter the researcher wishes to identify the possible effects that the proposed programme funding could have on the Northern Cape Urban FET College. This funding mechanism has to be looked at in relation to the labour market and the economic needs of the province, and the country to show the inter-relationship between funding, labour market and economic needs.

An aspect that has to be taken into account when considering the successful transformation of colleges is the fact that the programme funding formula for FET colleges has not yet been designed in 2004, six years after the promulgation of the FET Act, (No. 98 of 1998).

Instructional offerings and the funding thereof are at the very heart of the colleges' existence. If the Northern Cape Urban FET College is forced, through programme-funding, to offer programmes in line with the labour market needs of the province, and these programmes are not what the prospective students require, they may enroll at one of the private FET institutions which do offer what they want. This could result in private FET colleges in the Northern Cape Province having a great advantage over public FET colleges, because market forces are the only guides as to what programmes ought to be offered at these colleges. Their driving force is strictly business and making a profit for their investors. A discussion of the labour market in the Northern Cape Province will be presented to illustrate how the funding tool and the labour market has to be lined up to make programme funding work.

4.8 THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN THE NORTHERN CAPE

Statistics on the employment and growth in the Northern Cape Province revealed that there has been a decline in the job market. This tendency is not just provincial, but also national. According to the National Business Initiative's (NBI) projections, only a few sectors would experience

economic growth during the period 2003 to 2004 which will impact negatively on employment opportunities (NBI Report 2000:23). Table 4.2 indicates the decline of employment opportunities in all of the formal industrial sectors in the Northern Cape during the period 1990 to 1995. The figures in the brackets in the column "growth per annum" indicate a negative growth rate. The primary industry, namely agriculture, is still the largest supplier of formal employment although there is a negative growth tendency. There is, like in the rest of the country, a shift away from jobs being found in secondary industries for example mining towards tertiary industries, namely personal services and trade, catering and accommodation, which is of a more informal sector (DoL 2001:32) as illustrated by Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Formal employment and growth by sector (Erasmus 2000: 15).

	1990	1995	% growth p.a. 1990-1995
Agriculture, forestry, Fisheries	38 767	32 921	(3,2)
Mining, quarrying	28 037	23 941	(3,1)
Manufacturing	8 659	8 017	(1,5)
Electricity, gas, water	2 437	1 936	(4,5)
Construction	9 934	8 854	(2,3)
Trade catering	18 949	18 909	(0,1)
Transport, communication	12 872	9 097	(6,7)
Finances, etc	5 067	5, 518	1,7
Social	4 540	3 663	(4,2)
Government	35 434	29 000	(3,9)
Household		11 505	(6,4)
TOTAL	180 715	153 361	(3,2)

According to the NBI, the following areas will decline economically, both at national and provincial levels:

- Community, social and personal services.
- Electricity, gas and water (amalgamation of municipalities with Escom).
- Mining and quarrying.
- Manufacturing.
- Agriculture.
- Transport.

According to the NBI (2000:23), the areas of decreased occupational demands on a national basis will also impact on the Northern Cape Province. These include occupations such as trades, semi-skilled and unskilled categories, mining, engineering, teaching, nursing, librarians and social workers. The above seems to indicate that occupational opportunities in the formal sector of the Northern Cape are not going to increase in the short term, which implies that the unemployment rate will not improve in the short term either.

4.9 UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

According to the 1996 census, unemployment was extremely high among the Northern Cape youth. More than half (54%) of the economically active youth aged 15 to 19 indicated that they could not secure employment. Amongst the age group 20 to 24, 47% were unemployed, whilst 35% within the age group 25 to 29 could not find employment. This seems to indicate that there has been a collapse of the youth labour market in the Northern Cape, and by extension, that the South African labour market is malfunctioning. The overall unemployment rate for the Northern Cape is given as 27% (Erasmus 2000:5).

It is predicted that the potential labour force in the Northern Cape will increase from 572 133 to 609 873 by the year 2006 (Erasmus 2000:5). This implies on the one hand an increase of 6,1% in the potential labour force of the province.

Whilst on the other hand employment declined in the private economy of the Northern Cape by 0,2% during the period 1970-1980 and by 2,6 % from 1980-1990. On the basis of the currently available figures it also declined in the 1990's by 2,7% from 1990-1995.

The implication of the above is that the potential unemployment figure for the Northern Cape will increase unless drastic economic intervention and stimulation in the province takes place. If not, the projected unemployment rate for 2006 might be approximately 35.8% as illustrated in the table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Projected unemployment for 2006

The existing unemployment rate.	27,0%
Plus the above-mentioned predicted labour force growth.	6,1%
Plus the above-mentioned job market shrinkage (if the historic tendency continues).	2,7%
TOTAL	35,8%

The possible effect of the deadly disease HIV/AIDS, which could claim many lives, has not been factored into the above forecast by the researcher. The above indicates the economic and labour market situation in the Northern Cape Province. The above information could be used to determine whether college programmes would receive funding or not. With

this information one could determine whether there is correlation between instructional programmes at the college and the labour and economic needs of the province.

4.10 CORRELATION BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMES AT THE COLLEGE AND LABOUR AND ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE PROVINCE

When one considers the growth areas in the labour market of the Northern Cape Province (see Table 4.2) above, one can establish if there has been any correlation between college instructional programmes (see Annexure A) at the Northern Cape Urban FET College and the labour market needs. It becomes clear that the only labour market area where growth occurred is in finances. This means that only programmes in the finance area will be “relevant” and will qualify for programme funding because there was growth and a demand for labour in that area. Programmes in all other areas, should according to the DoE, not qualify for programme funding and would be regarded as irrelevant and unresponsive to the economic and labour needs of the province.

In the light of these considerations, it seems as if there is very little correlation between the college programmes (Annexure A) and the provincial labour and economic needs. The college offers courses in the following fields:

- Engineering: Electrical, mechanical, civil and skills. These college programmes can be divided into the following labour market sections: mining, manufacturing, construction, electrical, water and gas. These fields have grown negatively and in terms of the argument that education and training should only be provided in fields where there is an economic and labour need, this would

imply that these programmes should not be offered at the college, unless without a departmental subsidy.

- Business studies: In the business studies department the college offers courses in the following fields: secretarial, marketing management, human resources, personnel management, national intermediate certificate, national senior certificate and information technology. All of these programmes bear no link with the financial sector, but accounting is an elective in all of them.

If the argument that education and training should be provided in the areas where economic and labour needs exist in order for programmes to be relevant, and to qualify for departmental programme funding, then the implication for the Northern Cape Urban FET College is that virtually all of the formal programmes offered at the college would not qualify for programme funding in other words, these programmes should ideally, as far as the Department of Education is concerned, not be offered. If the college should offer the programmes they will not be funded. Which means that the programmes will be very expensive. This will have a detrimental effect on the Northern Cape Urban Further Education and Training Colleges' existence.

For the Northern Cape Urban FET College the above mentioned funding mechanism, under the current provincial circumstances, is going to present a whole new set of challenges to seek new ways of funding its programmes.

4.11 STEERING PROGRAMME OFFERINGS

The Department of Education's envisioned alignment of college programmes with the economic and labour needs is underpinned by the

hope that education and training could be used to alleviate unemployment and poverty and stimulate the economy, as is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Straight line reasoning

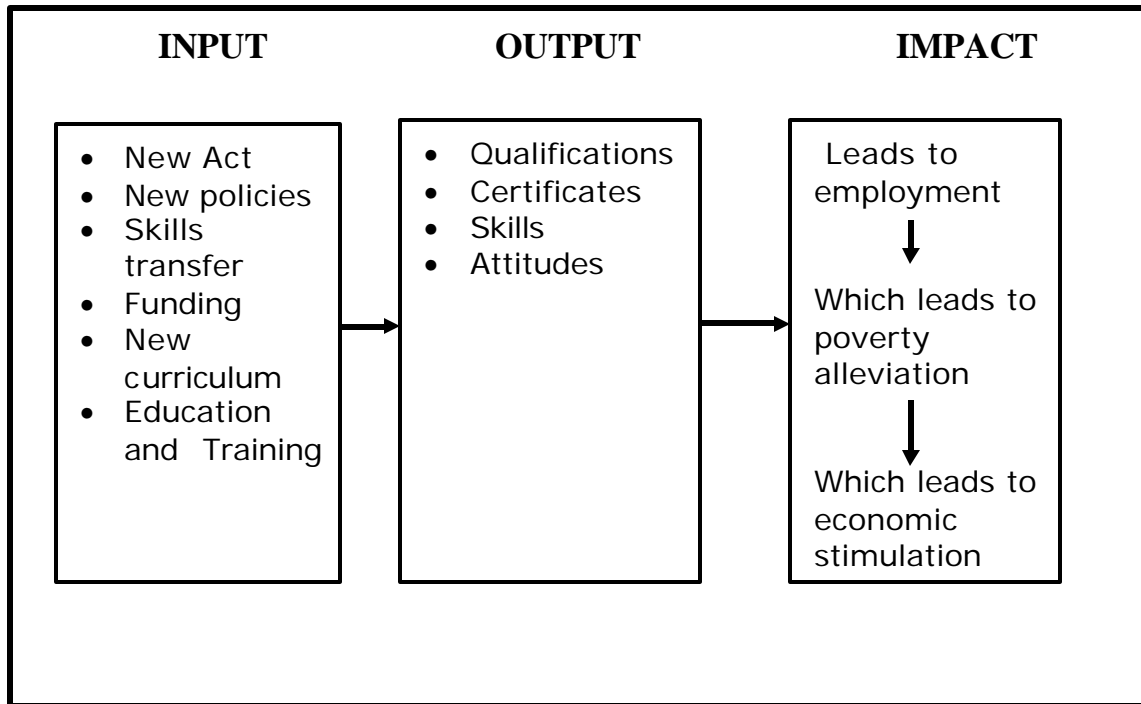
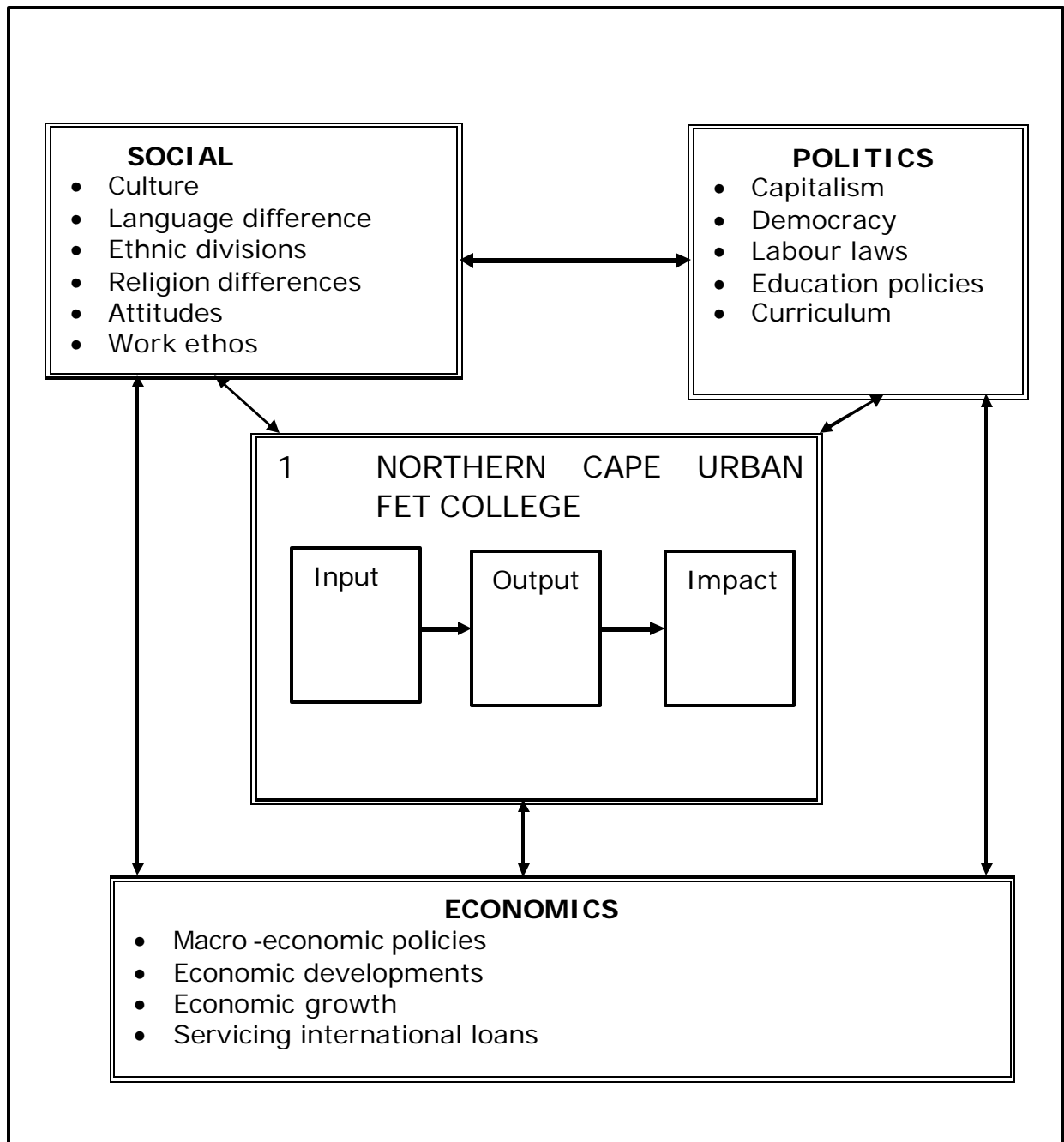


Figure 4.3 illustrates the idea, which the researcher calls straight line-reasoning, as purported by the objectives of the NCFE for FET colleges. It starts with the implementation of a new act, policies and new responsive and relevant curriculums, which lead to qualifications that are in demand. It further leads to employment, thus addressing unemployment resulting in people earning money, which will address poverty and this will impact positively on economic stimulation. It seems like a utopian idea. In reality however, there is a complex interplay between social factors such as economic policies, economic development, labour laws, labour market needs, work ethos, politics, attitudes of people, etc. Which is not indicated in figure 4.3, the latter interplay is illustrated on figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4: Social factors that interact on socio -economic development



political and educational forces that determine the impact that education and training could have on the specific community. The contribution that education can make on a society is dependent on the configuration of these forces in any given society, at any point in time. In Figure 4.4 the relationship and interplay between the social, political, economic and educational forces is indicated by the arrows. The educational forces being in the center of the model, in figure 4.4 shows that they interact with all the other forces in the model. What the researcher is illustrating in this model is that the contribution that education can make is part of a set of interdependencies between parts of the whole; it is, in other words dependent upon the interaction of all these parts in the figure. Therefore the straight-line reasoning as illustrated in Figure 4.3 is not representative of reality, it borders on utopianism.

Intrinsic to the straight-line reasoning is the assumption that there is congruity between the world of education and the world of the labour market. This implies that one could identify future employment opportunities and then train people in those areas of future needs. Those people will then occupy the jobs for which they were trained.

A brief historic presentation of the incongruity between education and training, and the world of work, will follow in order to illustrate firstly, the folly of the latter assumption and, secondly, the complexity of the relationship between the world of education and the world of work. This will make it clear that the straight-line reasoning as illustrated in Figure 4.3 is not realistic.

4.12 INCONGRUITY BETWEEN THE WORLD OF EDUCATION AND THE WORLD OF WORK

There is a real “troublesome” relationship between education and employment because of the incongruity between the world of work and education (Coombs 1985:171).

Throughout history the aim of education was to prepare each new generation for a productive working life. For example, one of the main functions of traditional puberty rites in African tribal societies was to train the young in the inherited, time-tested skills of hunting, fishing, cropping and other survival skills. In biblical times, fathers were to teach their children a trade. This is also reflected in the New Testament, where the apostles plied trades such as tent making, fishermen, carpenters, etc. In ancient China, India and medieval Europe, gifted artisans passed on their trades and skills to the next generation by training young apprentices through, what we would call today, non-formal education.

As societies grew and changed more rapidly they became increasingly more independent. With the passage of time, their societal organisation, technologies and economic systems became more integrated and diversified with regards to their larger markets. In response, education became increasingly more diversified and formalised. Today we find that education and the nature of work keep on changing and people keep on changing jobs, more than ever before especially, in industrialised countries.

After the second World War, national development suddenly became the goal and guide to both national and international policies and programmes, especially of newly-independent nations. This is very broadly the context within which the worldwide education expansion took off. The relationship

between work and education became the rationale for post-war education expansion.

In the 1950s and 1960s the linear educational expansion was almost universally adopted and it rested on three assumptions unique to that period: that an increasing supply of educated manpower was essential to national economic growth; that the inherited educational systems from the past were adequate for producing manpower needs; and that the growing economies would continue to have an insatiable appetite for all the educated manpower that their educational systems could produce. (Coombs 1985:174).

In the early 1960s educational systems kept expanding, because of the high degree of optimism as to the potential of education to contribute to both the economic growth and social equity. By the middle of the 1960s some developing countries found themselves with more graduate engineers than middle-level technicians to support them, and more doctors than nurses. This resulted in high-level professionals frequently ending up doing the work of mid-level personnel. Such obvious miscarriages inspired a broad-based demand for a new kind of educational planning that would ensure a balanced internal growth of education systems, to keep them in harmony with the needs of the economy and the labour market.

In the middle of the previous century it became overwhelmingly clear that there was an incongruity between the world of education and the world of work, which made it extremely difficult to forecast correctly how education and the world of work could complement each other (Forojalla 1993:127). Figure 4.2 above illustrates the complexity involved in trying to harmonise the world of education with the world of work, which the researcher contends is not factored into the envisioned achievement of the NCFEs objectives for FET colleges.

The manpower planning approach was adopted to try and harmonise the incongruity between the world of education and the world of work (Forojalla 1993:120).

4. 13 EDUCATION AND MANPOWER PLANNING

By the 1960s the mismatch between education and employment, referred to above, inspired a new research-based planning method that was supposed to ensure that the output of the education system would be kept in harmony with the needs of the labour market and the economy.

For this purpose the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched a series of educational-cum-manpower planning projects in several southern European countries. These efforts were soon reinforced through other international, regional, and national research and training programmes, and by numerous academic economists and other social scientists. But planning a nation's educational development in conjunction with its economic and social development proved to be considerably more complicated than it had at first appeared (Coombs 1985:174-175).

The difficulty stemmed from the lack of basic reliable data and the unpredictable changes that take place within the economy. Even the Soviet Union, with its elaborate and highly centralised system of economic and educational planning, and manpower allocation, found it increasingly difficult to match their projected labour needs with the output of their educational system. (Coombs 1985:174).

Because of the difficulty of matching education and employment needs through manpower forecasting, education planners began to use different

approaches. These forecasts often bore very little resemblance to what in fact realised beyond the next two or three years.

4.13.1 The cost-benefit approach

Those opposed to the manpower planning approach were very critical of it on various theoretical grounds and developed the so-called cost-benefit approach. They used an intricate quantitative methodology to calculate separate rates of returns on past educational investments in primary, secondary and higher education. This was done essentially by comparing the previous average costs per student at each educational level with subsequent average earnings of workers emerging from the different levels. The idea was that, by comparing these rates of return with each other and with the yields on investments elsewhere in the economy, national decision-makers could determine how best to allocate future resources in order to reap the highest marginal yield in all directions. The cost-benefit approach was subject to as many theoretical and practical shortcomings as the manpower approach. The basic idea underlying the calculations was very not stable. The fundamental shortcomings of both the manpower and the cost-benefit approaches were that each was essentially a numbers game. This is not to say that these approaches were completely useless; at least it encouraged planners to think in clearer, more rigorous and comprehensive terms about how best to allocate, limited resources to different parts of the educational system. However, neither of these approaches seemed to have had any decisive impact on the actual policies and patterns of educational development in most countries, whether developing or industrial (Coombs 1985:165-170).

4.13.2 The social demand approach

The social demand approach was much more pragmatic than the approaches described above. This approach is actually a complex amalgam

of statistical calculations and projections as well as diverse philosophical convictions, political interests and pressures (Coombs 1985: 170-179).

According Coombs (1985:176), this approach "can best be compared with an elaborate stew concocted by numerous cooks, each with his own favorite recipe and condiments". This approach reflected the voice of the people. The fact that some people have stronger voices than others helps explain why the development of rural education lagged behind urban education in virtually all developing countries and why the growth of university education out-paced all other sections of education. It also explains that educational decision making in any country is in the final analysis a political process in which people have to compromise.

The above manpower planning approaches were all problematic in that none of them could correct the mismatch between the labour needs and the number of "graduates" the education systems produced. The manpower approach is further compromised by the following difficulties: manpower forecasts do not pay attention to monetary and non-monetary incentives existing in the labour market and society at large; forecasts are usually based upon technical coefficients; and, questions on whether all the people can be absorbed at current remuneration levels or whether the individual students will actually choose the "required" educational branches and disciplines, are not actually dealt with (Coombs 1985: 175-188).

The above difficulty is related to a second set of complicating factors: substitution possibilities between different occupations and in particularly between people holding different occupations or alternatively between people holding different levels of educational attainments within the same occupational category. For example, no substitution possibilities exist between, for example, engineers and technicians at this level but there may exist several education and training paths, which make people eligible for engineering occupations in manufacturing. There is thus a substitution

possibility at this second level. The relationship between output and the educational system would thus be variable in spite of fixed coefficients. The conclusion must be that occupational forecasts are not a hundred per cent reliable; in fact manpower planning has often pointed in one direction, while the social demands pointed in another direction, thus causing huge margins of error. Insufficient attention is often paid to the problem of how to get from the present educational and occupational structure of the labour force to the required one (Coombs 1985:169-179).

4.14 MANPOWER PLANNING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR (DoL) IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

In the Northern Cape the Department of Labour (DoL) utilises the manpower planning methodology to plan the training needs of the province. A Skills Development Committee was established in 2003 comprising of government departments, organised labour, organised business, parastatals, small and medium enterprises (SMMEs). The representatives of different constituencies on this committee would report their specific sectors manpower needs to the committee. These needs from all the different constituencies would be collated to obtain the skills need of the province.

These needs identified by the Skills Development Committee are then forwarded to the DoL where this information is checked against the DoL's data base of the unemployed persons, kept by the DoL. The DoL would then determine the actual skills needs by taking cognisance of the unemployed persons on its database and the needs as provided by the Skills Development Committee. This actual skills needs would then be used to draft the provinces' skill training plan. This plan would be sent to the National Skills Fund for funding the training needs (DoL Northern Cape interview 2004).

The problem with this process and planning is, firstly, that the identified needs were not obtained scientifically; no skills audit was done and secondly, between the identification of the needs and the completion of the training, the labour market needs often changed, which is possibly the reason, for these newly trained people still remaining unemployed. The problem is further complicated by the fact that in South Africa, the Department of Education and the Department of Labour are both responsible for training, but there seems to be very little co-operation between the two departments. It seems as if there is even a certain amount of tension between the departments with regards to training issues (Mahomed 1996:45).

The DoL concentrates on the "demand side" of training, while the DoE concentrate on the "supply side". The difference in the focus areas causes tension between the two Departments. It seems as if they approach the same problem from opposite ends. Another area of tension comes in with the funding of the training. The question is whether the DoE fund the practical training done by the DoE, or does the DoL fund such training since they themselves are responsible for this type of training.

The crux of the matter is that there is a historic mismatch between the world of education and the world of work; whether manpower planning, in any of the above forms is used, it will not eliminate the mismatch. This mismatch causes incorrect projections of the availability of future employment and future skills needs. These incorrect projections will not assist the college, in that possible incorrect projections will inevitably happen. This could have serious repercussions for college programmes which may not be funded.

4.15 CONCLUSION

- It seems as if the concept “irrelevancy of college programmes” was used very loosely. According to the information provided in this chapter it appears as if college programmes were not regarded as irrelevant.
- There is very little correlation between the college’s programme offerings and the labour and economic needs of the province. This seems to imply that most of the programmes offered at the college are irrelevant in terms of the departments’ definition of the term “irrelevance”, and would possibly not be funded through programme funding.
- Numerous international reports show that manpower planning does not take cognisance of the many variables that causes students to enrol in a particular educational field such as innate ability, family income, parents’ social status, employment prospects, attitudes towards careers for women, the organisation and pedagogical structures of education, the supply and quality of teachers and other resources, the availability of scholarships and other financial incentives, peer attitude groups, etc. and so on. These factors give an indication of the dynamics, which are not factored into manpower planning and which makes the forecasts, therefore, highly fallible.
- Fallible data obtained through the manpower planning methodology could be used for determining the funding of college programmes, or whether, programme should be continued or be discontinued. This would not be in the best interest of the college.
- The transformation of the college curriculum will possibly not address the problem of college graduates not readily obtaining employment because the current programmes seem in fact to be relevant and

responsive (as indicated above). The reasons for college students not finding employment promptly after the completion of their studies. Should be sought elsewhere, and not be related to the programme offerings of the college.

- According to the literature study there seems to be no evidence to support the idea that education and training can bring about social mobility, stimulate the economy or alleviate unemployment and poverty.

The following chapter will describe the phenomenon of poverty and its causes. It will be concluded with a view of the American experiment conducted in the 1960s and 1970s to try and solve the poverty question.

CHAPTER 5

EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It is important to understand the phenomenon of poverty and the causes thereof. Without such insight alleviation or eradication will not be possible. Therefore this chapter will be devoted to this phenomenon and its causes.

5.2 UNDERSTANDING THE PHENOMENON OF POVERTY

According to Ferge and Miller (1987:15), poverty, even though it is a self-evident phenomenon, is hard to grasp in a scientifically manageable way. It has many meanings and facets, and can be defined in absolute or relative terms.

Defined in absolute terms, it generally means the inability of individuals or families to maintain, a socially minimal or acceptable level of living because of a lack of adequate resources. It is a condition of life so characterised by malnutrition, illiteracy and disease as to be beneath any reasonable definition of decency (May 1998:12). In a relative sense, poverty means that part of the population that lacks the resources, which will ensure them full social membership in a given society. It follows from the above that poverty in an absolute sense may be considerably reduced or even overcome if all or most sections of a society could profit from economic growth, while the reduction of poverty in the relative sense is related not only to an increase in resources, but also to structural changes in the allocation of resources.

Poverty could also be defined in an objective or a subjective manner. Here objective or subjective cannot be neatly separated because the "objective" approach is rooted in the subjective perception of observers, and the subjective reflections are built-in reflections of some "objective" reality. Therefore one can look at poverty in contrasting ways.

Poverty could also be defined in narrow material terms, or in much broader terms with social connotations, taking into account all kinds of resources, and all kinds of needs. Material poverty disregards the fact that people are living in a web of social relations, generating social obligations and social needs. Poverty in the broader sense, as social poverty, may be conceived in various ways. One formulation would be that poverty is not only a condition of economic insufficiency, but that it is also a kind of social and political exclusion (May 1998:18). Therefore, governments in any society should not only ensure minimum levels of income, assets, and basic services to all its citizens but also the means to attain self-respect, opportunities for education and participation in decision making.

A related definition is that families and groups are in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the proper types of diet, cannot participate in the activities nor the living conditions and the amenities which are customary, or at least widely viewed as acceptable, in the societies to which they belong. If their resources are below those commanded by the average individual or family, they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities (UNESCO 2003). Such people can therefore not accede to full membership of the society to which they belong.

According to Ferge and Miller there are three alternative, professionally supported conceptions of poverty in Europe, namely, the idea of subsistence, basic needs and relative deprivation. I will briefly discuss these three concepts.

5.2.1 The idea of subsistence

According to social scientists, families live in poverty if their income is insufficient to maintain the minimum necessary for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency. Poverty lines are defined differently in different countries; in Britain a family is treated as being in poverty if their income minus their rent fall short of the poverty line. This approach is still used in a number of countries with a few qualifications as the most practical method of defining the basis for rates of social security. The main problem with the subsistence idea is that human needs are being interpreted as physical needs: food, shelter and clothing rather than as being social needs, and yet the crucial fact about human beings is that they are social beings and not only physical beings (Ferge and Miller 1987: 12-15).

5.2.2 Basic needs

This approach to poverty was adopted formally at the International Labour Office's World Employment Conference, at Geneva, in 1976. According to this approach, certain minimum requirements are needed for a family for private consumption: food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain household furniture and equipment. This approach makes provision for essential services provided by, and for, the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health, education and cultural facilities. This approach should be placed within a nations' overall economic and social development (Ferge and Miller 1987: 15).

5.2.3 Relative deprivation

According to this approach, poverty must be conceived in the present, in relation to the conditions, obligations, expectations and customs of today, and not some absolute standard of the past. The Council of Ministers of

the European Community defined persons affected by poverty as: "individuals or families whose resources are so small as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life of the member state in which they live. Resources: goods, cash income, plus services from public and private sources" (Ferge and Miller 1987:37).

5.3 POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The incidence of poverty in South Africa (both absolute and relative) is unacceptably high. The Bureau of Market Research (1990:10) estimated that the percentage of the total population living below the subsistence level throughout South Africa was still as high as 44,8 per cent in 1989. Nine years later May (1998:22) stated that the percentage of people living below the poverty line in South Africa was 50%, an increase of 5.2%. According to Meth and Dias (2004: 30) there was an increase of 4,2 million people living in poverty in South Africa between the years 1999 and 2002.

The notion that there seems to be an increase in poverty in developing countries was also raised by Mohammed, Director of International Economic Co-operation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, when he put the following item (agenda point 99) to be discussed in the Second Committee meeting of the 55th United Nations meeting: "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the eradication of poverty". He drew attention to the fact that the Latin American and the Caribbean countries had more people living below the poverty line in the 1990s than in the 1980s, despite their better economic record of the 1990s. In South-East Asia the number of people living below the poverty line had also increased despite their revitalised economic growth. He remarked that Africa presents a "pathetic picture" in that virtually all economic and social indicators have declined. Life expectancy, infant mortality rates, per capita income and social services had been steadily deteriorating.

In South Africa absolute poverty is most widely spread amongst the black communities, notably in the rural areas and informal urban settlements. Coetzee (1991:9) quotes Wilson and Ramphele by indicating that the proportion of black households in dire poverty throughout South Africa, was about 50,5 per cent in 1980, while the Bureau of Market Research (1990:6) calculated that 50 per cent of black households earned less than R400 per month in 1989, while they estimated that the average monthly income for individual blacks was only R565. Apart from low incomes, other poverty indicators such as low literacy rates, poor health status and malnutrition all point to the high incidence of absolute and relative poverty amongst the black population groups in South Africa. Despite remarkable progress in literacy in South Africa, the Bureau of Market Research (1990:5) for instance calculated that 23,4 million people had no schooling in 1990, while 31,8 per cent (representing 4,8 million people) had only some primary education.

South Africa`s health indicators also vary widely among population groups and regions. In 1985 the infant mortality rate per 1000 live births ranges from 9,3 for whites to 61 for blacks. Life expectancy ranged from 62 years for blacks to 71 years for whites. In South Africa, poverty is racially based with high absolute and relative poverty being very high amongst the black population groups. Whitefield and van Seventer (2000:28) predicts that the inequality in South Africa will increase, because the employment of highly skilled people will increase while employment of less skilled people will decline, resulting in rising unemployment thus forcing more people into poverty.

5.4 THEORIES ON THE CAUSES OF POVERTY

There are numerous theories, on the causes of poverty, a few will be indicated below.

5.4.1 The structured theory

According to Ferrel and Miller (1987:19) some forms of poverty are regarded as structured. Social mechanisms and situations create 'niches' of poverty. Most societies have a variety of boring, low-paid, hard or risky jobs, these jobs have to be manned in some way. Social processes usually produce an over-supply of such people, which, in turn, keep their wages down. This is the most structurally dependent explanation for the origins of poverty.

There is another view that poverty, especially permanent poverty, is due to the fact that there are people whose personality traits, or whose special, usually inherited, cultural traits, make them incapable of joining the mainstream and of conforming to the dominant norms and expectations of society at large. In other words they form a kind of counter-culture, known as the culture of poverty. Permanent poverty is related to structural causes, especially the structure of the social organisation of work. Poverty actually generates special dispositions, or rather, it creates special ways of life, a special relation to social reality, to the present and to the future among those who fill the worst positions. People in these positions are deeply marked by the process of marginalisation, so that their whole life is dominated by forces that they have no or very little control over. This permeates their lives; it influences the ways their children are brought up as well as. Thus from early childhood, a certain perception of what is possible and what is out of reach is inculcated in the individual. This perception may be lasting, especially if the social conditions affecting the individual do not change significantly; facts such as poor dwelling conditions, defective diets, incomplete or unsuccessful education entrench this 'inherited' disposition to a life lived in poverty. In other words these conditions affect the chances of the individual in the labour market, often forcing him or her towards jobs, which are for the poor. The above implies

that poverty is not 'inherited' in the genetic sense but transmitted in the sociological sense. It has to be emphasised that the transmission of poverty is not an unavoidable outcome in a family. It may be interrupted by structural transformation or by gifted children in poor families who may reach the highest ranks. Mohammed (2000) cites worsening terms of trade, weak infrastructure and social services, crushing debt overhang, inefficient administrative systems, unemployment and a lack of financial resources as some causes of poverty. Khan (2002) contends that poor governance, social structures, cultural norms, value systems, attitudes, individual and collective motivations, work ethics and organisational efficiency are factors that limits financial growth and impact on poverty.

Having briefly looked at the definitions and causes of poverty, the literature seems to suggest at this stage of the study that education and training in general, and specifically by the Northern Cape Urban FET College, could possibly not address poverty and unemployment in the geographical area it serves. This idea seems to be supported by Khan (2002) when he states that education, given the feeble efforts of governments in many developing countries, does not make much progress amongst the poor. Most of what is offered to them is non-functional if not dysfunctional. He goes even further and expresses the idea that education does not function amongst the poor as a mobility multiplier (meaning that they do not progress to the higher levels of society) as it was originally assumed it would do. Levin in Weiler (1980:25) seems to share this notion when he postulates the view that it would appear as if education and training could not be used to effect socio-economic changes as illustrated by the American experience. He used the American experiment of the 1960s and the 1970s in their war against poverty to substantiate his viewpoint. Programmes such as Head Start, Job Corps, Upwards bound and Follow Through identified the American war against poverty. These programmes clearly represented an attempt to use education and training to reduce the incidence of poverty in their society.

5.5 THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

At least thirty separate federal educational and training programmes were initiated or expanded during the first ten years of the poverty programme in the United States. Table 5.1 below provides a summary of the programmes and its expenditure in particular years. Different types of programmes were designed for different population groups. At the pre-school level, Head Start was initiated to provide "readiness" skills for primary schooling. At the elementary secondary level, the most important programme was that set out by the Secondary Elementary Act of 1965, particularly the Title I. Other programmes dealt with the identification of college prospects amongst the disadvantaged, increases in the spending on vocational education and attempts to prepare teacher specialists for schools in the rural and urban depressed areas. For the young adults there was the job corps which attempted to teach basic vocational skills at residential sites. At the higher education level there were various types of grants and loan programmes, both to institutions and low-income individuals. Finally there were a number of programmes providing basic skills training to adults.

In summary, in 1973 alone the American government spent, 5,5 billion Dollars to assist people to escape poverty. It is important to note that this was apart from monies spent by the Department of Justice and the federal states' attempts to address inequities in financing elementary and secondary education.

Table 5.1: Summary of programmes and costs

Programmes	1965	1969	1973
Pre-school			
Head start	103	348	389
Elementary -secondary			
Title I-Educationally deprived	-	1,123	1,810
TitleVI- Bilingual education	-	7	50
TittleVII- Drop outs	-	5	8
Upward bound			
Lunch programmes	146	162	226
Breakfast programmes	-	3,5	18
Emergency school aid	-	-	271
Vocational education	156	248	443
Teacher corps	-	21	-
Young adults			
Neighbourhood youth	132	301	417
Job corps	175	280	193
Higher education			
Higher education Act of 1965:			
Title I-matching grants	-	9,5	15
Title III-developing institutions	-	30	52
Title IV	-	-	-
Educational opportunities grants	-	134	274
Guaranteed loans	-	71	240
Work study	-	146	274
Talent search	-	34	72
Adults			
Adult education Act of 1965	4,2	45	75
Migrant workers	15	27	36
Work experience	112	101	209
Job opportunities in business			
Sector jobs	-	161	73
Manpower development			
Training Act	397	404	381

(Appropriations in above table are provided in millions of Dollars)

Levin was of the opinion that the experiment of using education and training to address the socio-economic problems was not successful. He argued that poverty and inequality in income did not derive from a lack of ability or skills, but from the American monopolistic capitalist system. Even in the successful cases where people went through the programmes and were employed in high-paying jobs, they displaced other people from the job-market to the unemployed or under-employed in the process. Because of the aforementioned no impact was made on poverty and unemployment alleviation. From their experience, there is thus little support for the view that education and training provide a net decrease in poverty, but rather that it assisted in redistributing poverty slightly amongst the population (Weiler 1985:34).

According to Weiler (1985:34), the evidence that basic changes to education and training can produce social changes must still emerge. A review of the literature on educational reform and the implementation of programmes on the fighting of poverty suggest that the rhetoric of reform is probably the most important manifestation, rather than the changes it claims to bring about. Coombs (1985:217) posits the view that no nation in the world today, of whatever ideology, has yet come close to eradicating serious socio-economic inequalities.

Fullan (1993:1) expressed the view that, in the 1960s, globally, large amounts of money was poured into bringing about innovations and changes into education with regards to curricula, open plan schools and personal instruction, the disappointment was great when it became evident that the expectations turned out to be far removed from reality. This idea is also supported by Forojalla (1993:133) who indicated that there was an unprecedented increase in education and training in the OECD countries in the 60s but this growth did not substantially reduce social class differences. This meant that every social group was getting

more education and training, but group disparities remained the same. This calls into question the disjuncture between educational attainments, aspirations, labour market opportunities and the contribution of education to this aspect of economic development.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Poverty existed before there was an educational system, which means that education and training did not cause poverty or unemployment. To thus create the impression that education and training can be used to solve problems that did not originate from education and training seems to be an effort to divert attention away from the real causes of poverty and unemployment. These problems seem to originate from the basic functioning of the economic, social, and political institutions of society. The definitions and causes of poverty seem to support the idea that education and training did not cause the phenomenon (of poverty). The American experiment seems to indicate that education and training cannot address their unemployment and poverty problems.

If the above international experiences are in any way an indication of what to expect at the Northern Cape Urban FET College, the college will have to do something different in education and training from what was done by these countries.

In the following chapter a presentation will be made of the limits of transformation in national education systems.

CHAPTER 6

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING, ITS FUNCTIONING AND THE LIMITS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters the transformation of the Northern Cape Urban FET college was presented; the transformational process was discussed; attention was paid to the merging process, as well as programme offerings and their relationship to economic development, poverty alleviation and the labour market needs in the geographic area served by this college.

In this study the above-mentioned needs to be viewed against the socio-economic objectives set by the Department of Education, based on the NCFEs report on FET colleges. The report of the NCFE wishes to imply that these objectives can be attained through educational planning and the implementation of such plans. More specifically the report deals with the planning of and establishment of FET colleges and the reform they should effect.

In this chapter a brief presentation is made of the role of educational planning, its functioning and the limits of educational transformation. This will be presented in the form of a comparison with a schematic representation based upon Levin's model of a national education system that illustrates the relationships between the various entities in the system as well as the operation of an educational system.

This model does, very broadly, illustrate the South African national educational system. The researcher will factor the dynamics of the transformation of the Northern Cape Urban FET College into this model to establish the achievability of the NCFEs objectives for the college.

6.2 EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The popular perception is that education and training leads to development (see 4.12, pp.90-92). After the second World War, very few topics received as much attention as national development from social scientists, politicians and policy-makers. This is easy to understand against the background of the need that existed to rebuild post-war Europe, and the simultaneous emergence of new nations in Africa and the growth of old nations in Latin America and South East Asia. The circumstances at that time in history brought into focus the importance of the factors necessary for social and economic development. Since then the theoretical debates and policy decisions concerning development have varied considerably, however, throughout all these years a key variable in these discussions and practices has been the role that education and training plays or should play in the development process (Fagerlind and Saha 1992:3, Thomas 1992:2).

In the mid-1980s some developing countries such as Bolivia, the Phillipines, and Equador were spending over one-fourth of their national budgets on education. Industrialised countries tended to spend less during the same period: Sweden, the United States of America and Great Britain allocated roughly 10 per cent of their national budgets to education. Investing in education has traditionally been justified by optimistic assumptions, such as that an educated population contributed to the socio-economic development of the society as a whole and that education contributed to the well-being of individuals within the society. Nations and international organisations continue to spend vast amounts of money on educational programmes (Forojalla 1993:2), motivated by this optimistic perception that education leads to socio-economic development.

Currently, the same optimism abounds in South Africa with regard to the ability of FET to effect socio-economic changes in society, as can be seen from the objectives set by the NCFE for FET colleges (see 1.2.2, p.3). These ideals of what can be achieved, through FET institutions, in socio-economic development, were expressed from all public platforms by educationalists, politicians and policy makers in the country (see 1.2.2, p.3).

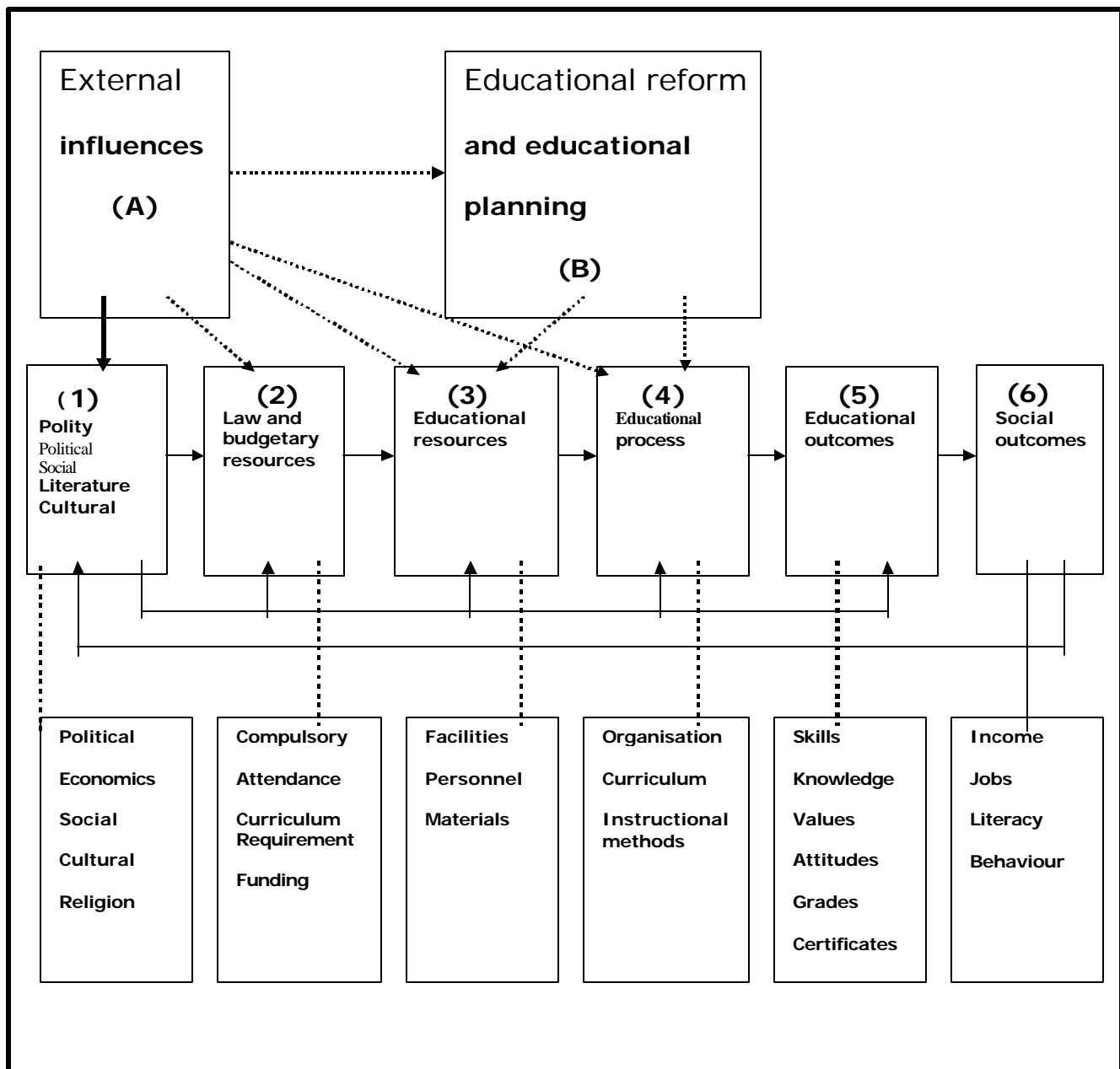
However, according to Khan (2002) the age of optimism concerning the ability of education to effect socio-economic change is being replaced by an age of caution. Education, he states, does not necessarily make people or countries more prosperous; instead it may, and does, leave the former without jobs and the latter with increasingly burdensome claims on public funds. The demand for more education, and an increasingly higher number of students entering the education system, increases the education budget, at the expense of other social responsibilities of the state. Without resulting in a concomitant increase in employment or economic development (Forojalla 1993:33). Bar (1998:322) shares this view. He states that with most school leavers appearing to be joining the ranks of the unemployed, the value of education as an investment in the medium term may well be negative. With unemployment increasing, he expressed the view that it is clear that for many people the investment benefits, of education in the medium term are zero or negative.

This leads to questioning the role of educational planning, its functioning, the limits of educational reform and how educational reform and planning might be introduced to alter the operations of an educational sector based upon existing models, such as the one introduced by Levin and quoted by Weiler (1980:17).

6.3 LIMITS OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Figure 6.1 presents a schematic description of a national educational system based upon Levin`s model as cited by Weiler (1980: 17).

Figure 6.1: Diagrammatic representation of a national education system



The purpose of this type of flow chart of activities, as in figure 6.1 above, is to indicate the relations among the various entities that define both the setting and the operation of a national educational system. The lower set of boxes describe various aspects of a national educational sector, while the upper two boxes represent two types of influences for altering the operations of the system.

The numbers that appear within the brackets below, represent those numbers in brackets in figure 6.1 above. The form of the educational system and purposes to which it will be put are reflective of the host polity (1) and its unique political, economic, social, cultural and religious characteristics as well as its history. The polity fosters an educational system that brings about certain social outcomes, which are produced by the educational system. The results may include factors such as increases in productivity, income, occupational preparation, correct political behaviour, literacy and so on. These social outcomes represent the basis for reproducing the polity from generation to generation. The return arrow represents the result of the educational process with feedback to the polity again.

The polity is able to generate the basic outlines of the educational process through generating a set of laws which determine the broad operations and objectives of the sector, as well as providing a budget for educational resources that will be used to implement the process as reflected in (2). Such laws deal with the required curriculum, admission standards, funding, ages and compulsory attendance.

The next stage of the educational sector (4) entails the organisation of these resources into the educational process itself. The results of the educational process represent some of the social outcomes of the educational sector. These results are generally not immediately observable because they tend to be removed from the educational setting both in time

and location. The observable outcomes as represented by (5) of the educational process are qualifications, skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that are inculcated in students. These outcomes will presumably ultimately translate into the social outcomes that the educational system will produce which, in turn, will characterise the polity.

This model seems to suggest that educational systems generally achieve outcomes that characterise the polity. This view is shared by Ziegler, Peak, Fagerlind and Saha as cited by Forojalla (1993:40). Changes made to educational systems generally change the operations of the system. This will not necessarily translate into socio-economic developmental outcomes, such as poverty and unemployment alleviation or economic growth, because, as indicated above, the outcomes of the educational system seems to characterise the polity.

6.4 EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND TRANSFORMATION

Figure 6.1 also shows two sets of influences for change that are often brought to bear on an educational system: external influences (A) and the influences of educational reform and educational planning (B).

6.4.1 External influences

External influences derive from outside the national polity, and can be, from other countries. The solid arrow from these external influences (A) to the polity (1) implies that these factors can have a profound effect on the shaping of the polity, and its institutions through the pattern of development, that is created by that relationship.

External influences created by other countries and entities such as multi-national corporations can also affect some of the educational processes directly, to the degree that budgetary resources, personnel, and

educational technologies are transferred from the dominant societies to the dependant ones. Staff drawn from the more advanced societies often carries out the technological applications, curriculum development and evaluations. The dominant societies, or their representatives, sometimes train local staff in the transferred educational systems. The problem arises from the fact that the contexts within which these dominant societies' educational systems operate are often totally different from those of the dependant societies, especially when the dominant society is a first world country and the dependant society a developing country.

In this regard, M.J.K. Nyerere, former president of Tanzania is quoted by Thomas (1992:225) as indicating that he sometimes gets the impression that, for Africans, education is supposed to make them black Europeans or black Americans, because they implement European or American educational systems in an African context. Thomas (1992:224) expressed the view that these borrowed models are doomed to failure because the contexts are totally different. The reason why these relationships are shown with broken arrows in figure 6.1 is because the educational assistance does not happen in a vacuum; it simply reflects the overall support provided to the dependant polity, by the institutions and the influences of the dominant society.

With regards to the FET colleges in South Africa in the new political dispensation, external influences from nations such as the British, Dutch and Australians are brought to bear on the development of the FET college sector in South Africa. These countries provided consultants and funding to assist in the development of Further Education and Training in South Africa. During 1999, for example, the National Department of Education sent nine provincial representatives to the Netherlands to study their FET system. Two years later the same Department sent middle managers of South African colleges to Britain to learn from the British further education system. In 2004, nine chief executive officers, of the newly established

FET colleges, one per province, were sent to the Netherlands to learn from the Dutch on how they manage their colleges. Both of these countries are first-world countries and the biggest difference between all of their systems and the South African FET system is that their students' study fees are paid for by their taxpayers. In South Africa, FET college students have to pay their own study fees. Both of these countries referred to above had gone through merging processes of their own colleges, a process that colleges in South Africa have recently undergone, indicating the effect of the dominant societies on the dependent societies.

6.4.2 Educational reform and educational planning

Having sketched the basic setting and function of educational reform, the discussion moves to the second set of influences, namely the educational planning (B) in figure 6.1. The role that educational planning and reform can play in altering the function of the educational system, with regards to the changing of the educational and the social outcomes. Educational planners and reformers attempt to achieve qualitative changes by obtaining modifications of laws and budgetary resources, the types and quantities of educational resources that are utilised and various aspects of the educational process, such as the curriculum.

Elaborate changes are often envisaged by educational planners to bring about very optimistic outcomes, such as socio-economic changes. But, as has been pointed out, despite all of these changes, there is little evidence that each aspect, whether taken separately or combined with others, brings about social outcomes such as equalising society in terms of poverty and unemployment alleviation or socio-economic upliftment (Forojalla 1993: 33).

With the emergence of democracy in South Africa the external influences for educational reform and educational planning have changed.

6.4.2.1 Educational reform

External reform and educational planning changed after the democratisation of South Africa in that the polity and laws regarding the FET college sector changed. As far as number (3) in figure 6.1 is concerned, (which are facilities, staff and materials) very little, if any change, took place in the sector. This is easy to understand in the light of the fact that budgets for colleges were 2% of the national and provincial budgets, before and after the transformation process of the colleges. No additional funding or staffing norms have been put in place (see 3.5.1, p.59). Number (4) in figure 6.1 represents the organisation of the curriculum and instructional methods in a national education system. Very little has changed in this area too.

In chapter 4, the integration of education and training was discussed and it was concluded that there was no enabling environment, for example legislation, that compels companies in South Africa to participate in the training of students or equipping of colleges with the necessary workshops and appropriate equipment in order to effect the integration of education and training. In the absence of this, instructional methods referred to in number (4) in figure 6.1 will possibly remain the same. It seems as if very little reform took place in this area. The reason for that appears to be a huge oversight in educational planning.

6.4.2.2 Educational planning

Educational planning can be defined as the process by which an analysis of the present conditions of an educational system is made in order to determine and devise ways of reaching a desired future state (Forojalla 1993:38). Forojalla quotes Williams' definition: "planning in education, as

in anything else, consist essentially of deciding in advance what you want to do and how you are going to do it”.

The central task of educational planning is thus to recognise the present inadequacies that point to the desirability of change. In planning there are three concepts that are crucial to the planning process, namely sequence, consistency and probability.

Sequence in educational planning basically seeks to order tasks for the achievement of planned objectives in such a manner that the minimum time is utilised. The following example will clarify this: If the plan is to have the number of colleges students in South Africa increase by 20% in two years time, that roughly translates into 27 000 students. Sequence will then dictate that provision be made for an adequate lecturer supply to man the additional classes. This will be followed by the construction of the physical facilities for the new lecturers, the furniture and equipment for the new classrooms will follow, etc. (Forojalla 1993:46-47). Although this sequence looks simple, it is frequently ignored as will be pointed out below. The second concept crucial to planning is *consistency*. In addition to sequence, it is vital that decisions and policies are consistent across all sectors and departments to ensure synergy amongst the activities and to ensure that the available resources are not exceeded. A good plan requires that all policies are aligned to each other and are in agreement with each other. Furthermore, apart from internal consistencies, a plan must also have external consistency between what is assumed about the future behaviour of key factors and actual experiences of similar situations in the recent past. For example it would be unrealistic to expect a student growth of 50% within one year if the growth was 5% over the past five years.

Probability refers to the likelihood of events occurring as planned. Flexibility must be the watchword in the face of uncertainty. The human factor and the unpredictability of what could happen in reality are factors

that can have adverse effects, on the most carefully prepared plan, this must be considered, and if necessary, adaptations to the plans has to be made.

When the transformation of the FET colleges are factored into Levin's model, it would seem as if very little educational reform took place in the FET college system, as will be indicated below.

6.5 CHALLENGES WITH THE TRANSFORMATION OF FET COLLEGES

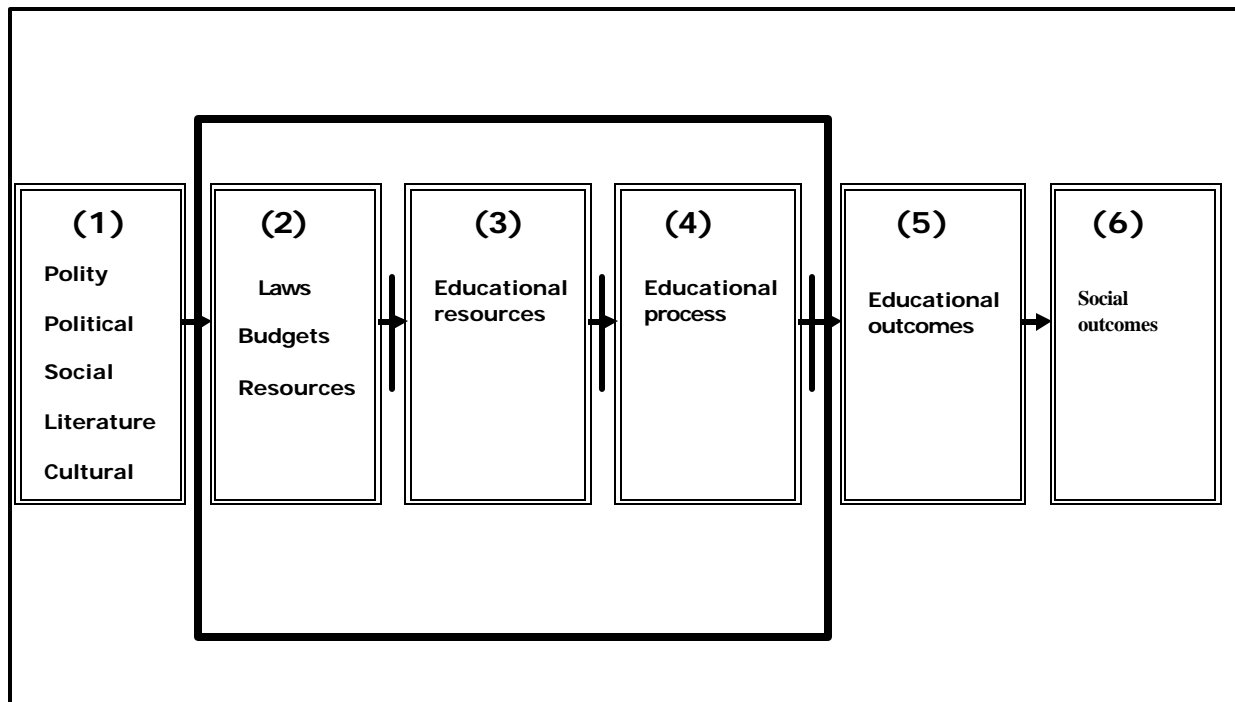
The transformational process of the colleges will be factored into Levin's model to illustrate the flow of the transformation.

It would appear as if the transformation process of the colleges lack sequence, consistency and the probability of being successful in achieving the objectives set by the NCFE, because the policies are not consistent as mentioned above. Firstly, the sequence of activities in first promulgating the FET Act No. 98 of 1998, without having the funding and staffing norms in place, was problematic. Furthermore, the policy of the integration of education and training without any legislative framework, within which the integration can be effected, was indicative of a lack of consistency of policies across sectors, and within education itself.

The transformation of the colleges amounts to structural changes, brought about by new legislation as illustrated in figure 6.1. It does not seem as if structural changes, to the educational system can bring about fundamental changes in the community, such as the achievement of the NCFEs objectives. Transforming technical colleges into FET colleges, while the budget remained at 2% of the national and provincial budgets (DoE 2001b:23), similar to before transformation, indicates inconsistency with regards to planning, in that no additional resources, (financial and human) had been put in place to implement the transformation of the colleges.

The lack of funds experienced by many young prospective students, due to poverty, prevents them from registering at the college in large numbers, in turn preventing the massification of FET institutions as was envisioned by the educational planners. This is especially rife in a poverty stricken area such as Northern Cape and specifically Kimberley. Figure 6.2 diagrammatically illustrate the challenges in the transformation process.

Figure 6.2: Lower set of boxes of Levin’s national education system model



The areas, where there are problems with regards the flow of activities in the South African FET college sector nationally and provincially as referred to above. These problems are due to planning oversight in terms of sequence, consistency and probability. The vertical lines through the arrows in figure 6.2 indicate that the flow of activities between the blocks is impeded, resulting in the transformation of the colleges not taking place as was planned by the educational planners. When a holistic view is taken

of the lower set of boxes, and the activity flow is taken on a systemic level, it is clear that the activity flow through the whole system will not happen as planned due to the above impediments.

South African history seems to indicate that the optimistic objectives set for technical colleges, by the pre-1994 government did not materialise as will be indicated below.

6.6 THE OBJECTIVES FOR THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE SECTOR IN THE PREVIOUS EDUCATIONAL DISPENSATION.

There is no formal document that specifically spell out the objectives for technical college education in South African prior to 1994. However, according to the HSRC (1991:1), technical college education was described as that part of the education system that prepared people for a specific, productive career, a trade or a career skill in commerce or industry.

The Association of Technical Colleges (1990:5) described the objectives of technical college education as being aimed at specific careers, to create productive person power for the lower and middle levels of commerce and industry. The previous Department of Education and Culture described the broad objectives of technical college education as follows:

To improve the quality of life of the communities served by the colleges and to promote the improvement of the countries economic position. Therefore the programmes offered at technical colleges have had as its aims the following:

- The economic upliftment of the community, through the opportunities created by continued studies and career training.

- The social upliftment of the community by making provision for the teaching and development of social skills.
- The promotion and enrichment of the cultural lives of the communities served by the colleges (DoE 1987:22).

It seems as if the socio-economic objectives set for technical college education by the previous Education Department were not achieved. This is evident when looking at the poverty of the previously disadvantaged communities that live around the technical colleges in Kimberley; where poverty is more prevalent. Implicit in the latter-mentioned, is the fact that education and training on its own does not seem to be able to bring about socio-economic transformation of societies. However, a very strong catalyst for socio-economic development is the political system, the health of the economy, the buoyancy of the labour market, enabling labour legislation, attitudes of people, work ethics, etc. World wide there seems to be a realisation that there is a gap between what education promises to deliver and what it does actually deliver in terms of socio-economic upliftment, poverty and unemployment alleviation (see 4.11 and 4.12, pp. 86-91). Even graduate unemployment is widespread in the field of science and technology, which is generally considered to be limitlessly expandable.

The NCFEs objectives appear to be utopian and unrealistic, as was pointed out in paragraph 4.11, p. 87. Levin maintains that there exists no evidence of education and training achieving such socio-economic objectives. He demonstrates his beliefs in his educational model; educational reform, which he sees as limited to the changing of the operations of an educational system to bring about the polity without it being able to effect socio-economic changes.

Forojalla (1993:33-35) is of the opinion that the kind of reasoning which concludes that education and training can bring about socio-economic

changes is an exercise in futility. According to Levin, there is no evidence in history to support the notion that structural changes, such as those made to the FET college sector in the South African educational system, can result in the alleviation of poverty, unemployment nor to lead to economic stimulation. Forojalla and other academics such as Blaug, Turnham, Dore, Carnoy, Levin, Hawes, Bowles and Gintis support the view that education does not support economic growth, (in the light of the widespread unemployment amongst the educated in countries such as India, Pakistan and Africa).

6.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the educational model of Levin has been used to illustrate the limits of educational transformation in terms of the realisation of socio-economic objectives. It was also pointed out that the three most important aspects of education planning, namely sequence, consistency and probability were lacking in the FET transformation process. This seems to result in the systemic impediments that make transformation of the colleges difficult.

In the following chapter a presentation of the research methodology used in this study will be presented in preparation of chapters eight and nine.

CHAPTER 7

THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN: THEORY AND APPLICATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature study presented in chapters 2 to 6 provided an overview of the transformational process from technical colleges to FET colleges. In this chapter the decision-oriented evaluation approach was used to assess the extent to which the objectives set by the NCFE for FET are achievable. This was researched through the qualitative research methodology, making use of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with experts in the field of vocational education and training. A theoretical description of the qualitative research design will be given, followed by a description of the application of the research methodology in this study.

7.2 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

The outcomes of the literature research in this study will be combined with those of the qualitative investigation. The qualitative research design was chosen because it is regarded as an interactive method of inquiry in which the researcher collects data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons (McMillan and Schumacher 2001:395). Berg (2004:7) expresses the view that qualitative techniques allow researchers to share in the meanings and perceptions of others and to explore how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives. In this study the researcher strived to tap into the understanding and perceptions of the participants who were rich in information with regards to FET, and this assisted the researcher in forming a holistic understanding of the research problem.

According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996:97), the researcher becomes the instrument in the qualitative inquiry because the researcher collects and interprets the data. This could possibly result in questions about the

results which may be judged as subjective or biased by those critical of this research design. In response to this kind of critique Coffey and Atkinson (1996:97) argue that validity, in qualitative terms, hinges to a great extent on the skills, competence, and rigor of the researcher conducting the data analysis. In the qualitative design data analysis is done without the constraints of predetermined categories such as in quantitative research. Garbers (1996:283) and Gudmundsdottir (1996:293) are of the view that this freedom to analyse data without the above mentioned constraints, contributes to depth, openness and detail of the qualitative inquiry.

Borg and Gall (1989:23) explain that the primary objective of the qualitative approach is to understand the facts that form the basis of a phenomenon, and to offer the findings in written language. During this study the researcher suspended his beliefs and predisposition's, and nothing was taken for granted. Everything was subject to inquiry. By using the qualitative method, participants were listened to whilst they were speaking about the transformation of colleges and their experiences thereof and, although everything said was not always accepted as unbiased or the "truth", they were nevertheless allowed to give their perspectives, thereby permitting the researcher to see FET from the perspective of the interviewees.

In this study the decision-oriented evaluation approach was used within a qualitative paradigm. According to Mcmillan and Schumacher (2001:536), the "decision-oriented evaluation has a broader scope than the objective-oriented approach and implies a theory of educational change". The researcher needed this broader scope, in order to pursue the aims of this study, which are broader than only the objectives set, by the NCFE for FET colleges. The emphasis was on describing and assessing the educational change and the resulting outcomes to provide information to decision-makers (McMillan and Schumacher 2001:532). The decision-oriented

evaluation in this study was done through a process of determining the kinds of decisions that were made through selecting, collecting, and analysing the information needed to make these decisions, and eventually reporting information to the appropriate decision-makers.

Key characteristics of the qualitative research design as they were realised in this study are discussed below.

7.2.1 Truth versus perspective

Truth is an evasive concept. One person may describe an experience in one way and another person may describe the same experience in quite a different way. Yet both may be "telling the truth" according to their own perspectives and their own interpretations. On this point, Berg (2004:9) expresses himself as follows: "it is not important whether or not the interpretation is correct - if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences". Consequently statements that appeared to be contradictory during the study will not be treated by the researcher as "truth" or "reality", but the views will be presented, according to the perspectives of the participants.

The participants chosen for this study were experts in their field, as will be indicated in section 7.2.6. Their inputs were based upon their experience of reality in the FET college sector, combined with their expertise of the sector. The researcher nevertheless could assess "truth" by asking the same questions to all the interviewees according to the interview schedule and this assisted in gaining an understanding of "truth" and "reality" based upon the principle of consistency among the perceptions expressed by the interviewees. This assisted the researcher in gaining a balanced view of the topic under study.

7.2.2 A holistic perspective

Qualitative researchers strive to understand a phenomenon as a whole. According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996:27), the way to gain the holistic view of a phenomenon is through coding data into segments, then into categories and finally into common elements. All the elements are then linked to form a holistic concept of the phenomenon. The emphasis on holistic understanding in qualitative research is in sharp contrast to the logic and procedures of quantitative research. In qualitative, research data is gathered on multiple aspects of the phenomenon in order to assemble a comprehensive and complete picture of the phenomenon. This means that, at the time of data collection, each case or event under study is treated as a unique entity, with its own particular meaning and its own set of relationships emerging from and related to the context within which it exists (Coffey and Atkinson 1996:27 -29).

Patton (1990:50) agrees with the above view when he asserts that the qualitative portrayals of the holistic settings assist in achieving greater impact and precision in meaning. Attention can also be given to the different shades, in meaning, within and between the components, attention can be given to the individual complexities, idiosyncrasies and context which will result in a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon.

In this study, the researcher looked at the various aspects of the FET sector, first as individual components such as staffing, funding, synergy within legislation, institutional capacity and departmental capacity, to see what impact the individual components have on the system and then to see how these components combine to form a whole. Finally the combined influences of the individual components on the whole system gave a holistic understanding of the sector with regards to the achievability of the objectives set for the sector.

7.2.3 Interpersonal subjectivity

Subjectivity undermines credibility and validity. This is the reason why critics often reproach the qualitative approach as being too subjective. The researcher becomes the instrument in the research by collecting data and the same data is interpreted by the same researcher, who becomes, in effect, almost like a referee and player at the same time. Berg (2004:2) raises the same point by stating that the stance of the researcher vis -a-vis the phenomenon under study is a matter of great debate amongst both methodologists and philosophers of science. Because the qualitative strategy requires the researcher to have personal contact with and to get close to the people and the situation under study, this approach is regarded by critics as non-scientific and invalid.

Patton (1990:55), on the other hand, posits the view that the quantitative methodology is subject to tests and questionnaires designed by human beings and is therefore also subject to the intrusion of the researchers biases and skillful manipulation of statistics to prove hypotheses. He is of the opinion that quantitative research is no more synonymous with objectivity than qualitative research is synonymous with subjectivity. Borman and Goetz (1986:42-57) and Krentz and Gilbert (1986:59-69) argue that the objectivity and subjectivity debate is futile because value-free science is impossible to attain in practice and of questionable desirability in the first place, because such a science ignores the intrinsically social nature and human purposes of research. In any credible research, whether quantitative or qualitative methodologies are used, the researcher should adopt a neutral stance with regard to the phenomenon under study, with no axe to grind, no theory to prove and no predetermined results to support. The researcher's commitment should, however, be to understand the world as it is, to be true to complexities and multiple perspectives as they arise and to be balanced in reporting

evidence whether it confirms or refutes the researcher's expectations. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:411) state that "disciplined subjectivity" facilitates rapport with participants and that self-reflection can be salutary for any kind of inquiry. Disciplined subjectivity thus reminds many researchers that the inquirer is part of the setting, context, and social phenomenon that he or she seeks to understand. In this study the researcher consciously applied "disciplined subjectivity" to eliminate the effect of personal opinions on the collected data and to allow the interviewees opinions of the transformation of the FET college sector to come through untainted.

7.2.4 Sampling

Qualitative research is characterised by purposeful sampling techniques. According to Patton (1990:169), purposeful sampling means selecting information rich cases that may yield ample information for studying a phenomenon in depth. The advantage of purposeful sampling lies in the selection of knowledgeable participants who are able to provide the required data for the research. Each individual participant has a unique set of data in a particular area that is needed to form a holistic understanding of the phenomenon. In this research process it was of utmost importance for the researcher to select those participants who possessed the necessary information and who were willing to share the information with the researcher in a manner that ensured that all areas of information required by the research topic were covered.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:401) makes the point, that the power and logic of purposeful sampling, is that a few cases studied in depth may yield many insights about the topic. Patton (1990:169) supports this view when he asserts that qualitative research does not normally make use of large samples. According to him the validity of a sample is not dependent on the number of participants, but rather on the degree of trustworthiness

of the participants and their information. He further states (1990:185) that validity, meaningfulness, and insight generated from the qualitative inquiry have more to do with the richness of information of the cases selected and the observational and analytical capabilities of the researcher, than with the sample sizes.

In this study the researcher's selection of the participants was done purposefully, based upon the participant's experience and expertise in the FET sector. The participants included seven ex-principals from previous technical colleges. They were chosen because of their experience in vocational education and training and their expertise in managing huge colleges. Three of the principals were newly appointed chief executive officers of the newly formed FET colleges. This experience places them in the ideal position to compare the two institutional types (old technical colleges and the new FET colleges). Lecturers and students of colleges in South Africa, a president of a technical college in the United States of America; three presidents of Dutch institutions as well as lecturers, students and administrators of the Dutch system were also included. In order to provide an international perspective of the problem under study, the researcher purposefully chose participants from the Netherlands and America possessing experience and knowledge of vocational education and training. This provided valuable information that contributed to the formation of a broad understanding of the college sector *vis-à-vis* the attainment of the objectives set for the sector by the educational planners and the Department of Education.

The following persons were chosen for the interviews:

- Interviewee A is a principal of one of the biggest colleges in South Africa, served as a chairperson of the provincial Committee of Technical College Principals (CTCP), is currently a member of the National Board for FET and also serves on various national bodies for

colleges. The interviewee is regarded as very knowledgeable on colleges.

- Interviewee B was a principal of a former technical college and is currently a campus head of a FET college that is regarded as a leading college with regards to transformation into the new FET system.
- Interviewee C was a senior staff member of the now defunct CTCP and later of AFETISA, also defunct. The interviewee is regarded as rich in experience on policy and curriculum matters, pertaining to colleges.
- Interviewee D was a principal of a former technical college of the previous Department of Education and Training. The interviewee is currently a campus head of one of the newly -formed FET colleges.
- Interviewee E was a principal of a former technical college and is currently a chief executive officer of a newly formed FET college. The interviewee was an executive member of the now defunct AFETISA and is currently an executive member of the South African College Principals Organisation (SACPO). He also serves on various national and international organisations where colleges are represented.
- Interviewee F was a principal of a former technical college, is currently a chief executive officer of a newly-formed FET college, serves as an executive member of SACPO and is a member of various national bodies where colleges are represented.
- Interviewee G was a principal of a previous technical college and is currently a senior manager at a very big FET college. He has fifteen years of experience in the sector.

- Participant H was a principal of a previous technical college and is currently a campus head at a FET college, he has twenty years of experience in the sector.
- Interviewee I and J are two ex-college students who are presently unemployed. They were chosen to give a perspective of how they viewed the college programmes they followed and if and how the college programmes were related to their unemployment.
- Interviewees K and L are two ex-students who were employed. They were chosen to give their perspective on the college programmes they followed and how these impacted on their finding employment.
- Interviewees M, N, and O are presidents of ROCs in the Netherlands. They have close contact with all structures related to commerce and industry in their communities and are well placed to give information on the impact of their colleges on socio-economic development, one of the objectives of the NCFE for colleges in South Africa.
- Interviewee P is a president of a huge American technical college and she has twenty years of experience in vocational education and training.
- Interviewee R is a strategic planner at ROC Zadkine in Rotterdam.
- Four focus groups, the first consisting of four lecturers at a FET college, the second, of five chief executive officers of FET colleges from different provinces, the third, of five lecturers of a ROC in the Netherlands and the last, of thirty students in the Netherlands formed the four focus groups. The information they provided focused on how they perceived the objectives of the NCFE.

The total number of persons who took part in the interviews were 61, of which 17 took part in one-on-one interviews. The number of participants in the focus group discussion is 44.

7.2.5 Data collection

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:405) views qualitative data collection as a process of different phases of data collection and analyses, which are interactive and occur in overlapping cycles. These are called data collection and analyses strategies; techniques that are flexible and dependent on each prior strategy and the data obtained from that strategy. In this study data collection started with the interviews conducted in the United States of America at the Atlanta Technical College during a study tour in 2002. These interviews focussed on the integration of education and training in technical colleges, they were followed by interviews conducted in the Netherlands during March 2004 and the data collection was concluded in October 2004. When the appointments were made for the interviews, the researcher informed the interviewees of the purpose of the research. The interviews commenced with a brief introduction by the researcher introducing himself, who made use of an interview schedule (see Annexure B for an outline of the interview schedule), containing all the aspects that needed attention during the interviews to ensure that nothing would be omitted.

The two focus group discussions with the lecturers and students were conducted in a committee room at Zadkine, ROC. The focus group discussion with the students took place after the focus group discussion with the lecturers. In the Netherlands, not all interviewees were comfortable with being tape-recorded. So the content of most of the interviews had to be recorded only in writing.

As indicated above the researcher collected data through interviews with the president of Atlanta Technical College during a study visit to the United States of America. This interview concentrated on the integration of education and training in vocational education and training.

In South Africa the relevant interviews were conducted during May, June and July 2004. Here, all the interviews were tape-recorded and notes were also taken during the interviews. In the evenings, after the interviews were conducted, the researcher transcribed the tape-recordings. This assisted with the formation of a holistic understanding of the phenomenon, in that the tape recordings and the transcribed notes could be played and read repeatedly. This helped in creating a focused process of the coding of the data, pattern seeking and identification of categories of meaning. The two focus group discussions with four lecturers and five principals took place in a committee room of one of the colleges.

The analysis of the data began as the researcher mentally processed many ideas while still collecting the data. The data collection drew to a close after the last interview and focus group meetings were conducted.

Since the in-depth interview and focus group discussion methods were used in this study, these two methods will be discussed in more detail.

7.2.6 The in-depth interview

The purpose of the interviews in this study was to gather information including that which could not be observed directly, such as feelings, thoughts, intentions and behaviour with regards to FET and the transformation of the sector. Therefore the researcher had to conduct interviews personally to access the interviewees' perspectives on the topic under study.

Patton (1990:278) posits the view that qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspectives of the interviewees are meaningful, knowable and that the interviewees are able to make them known. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:444) put it succinctly by stating that in-depth interviews usually focus on individuals who have special knowledge, status, or communication skills and who are willing to share this with the researcher. That is yet another reason why purposeful sampling was undertaken for this study. According to Patton (1990:278-280) the in-depth interview is regarded as an acceptable method for gathering research data in qualitative research. Data was gathered from the interviewee's personal experience and knowledge, and this assisted the researcher in forming a holistic picture of the phenomenon under study. During the in-depth interviews the researcher kept his personal contributions to the minimum and only suggested broad themes for discussion. The in-depth interviews consisted of open-response questions to obtain information from the participants and to discover how the individuals perceived FET, the objectives set for the sector and how they made sense of what was busy transpiring in the sector at the moment. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:443) make the point that in order to stay focused and to ensure that all the important aspects of the study are covered, the researcher has to design an interview schedule (see Annexure B and 7.3). The issues in the schedule need not be taken in any particular order. The actual wording of questions to elicit responses about those issues to be covered need not be determined in advance. The interview schedule simply serves as a basic checklist during interviews to make sure that all relevant topics are covered.

Patton (1990:280) states in this regard that the interviewer is required to adapt both the wording and the sequence of questions to specific respondents in the context of the interview. In this study the

interview schedule was to ensure that information on the same issues was obtained from the interviewees by posing the same questions, covering the same subject area to all the interviewees. The audio-recordings of the interviews proved to be indispensable in the data analysis process, and increased the accuracy of the data collected. They also permitted the researcher to be more attentive to the interviewees' verbal and non-verbal reactions.

The questions in the schedule were chosen strategically to answer the vital questions that were pertinent to whether the colleges were succeeding or not, in fulfilling the expectations of the NCFE objectives and executing the mandate given to the colleges by the Department of Education.

7.2.7 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions can be defined as an interview style designed for small groups. Using this approach, researchers strive to learn through discussion about the conscious, semi-conscious, and unconscious psychological and socio-cultural characteristics of the interviewees and the interaction between various groups. These group discussions can take the form of guided or unguided discussions addressing a particular topic of interest or relevant to the group and to the researcher (Berg 2004:123). Patton (1990:335) is of the opinion that the groups should be kept to approximately six to eight persons who participate in the group interviews for periods of not more than half an hour to two hours.

The interviewer's task in this type of interview is to draw relevant and important information from the participants regarding topics of importance to a given research investigation. These discussions are usually conducted in an informal manner, which allows for an easy atmosphere in which the participants feel free and speak freely. Because of this, focus discussion

groups are regarded as an excellent means of collecting data. Berg (2001:124) is of the opinion that focus group discussions are extremely dynamic, because interaction between the group members stimulates discussion; one group member will readily react to the contribution of another member. This dynamism allows for one member to draw from another or for all members to brainstorm ideas collectively. A far larger number of ideas, issues, topics, and even solutions to a problem can be generated. It is this characteristic of the group discussions that distinguishes it from the one-on-one interviewing approaches (Berg 2004:123-130).

Patton (1990:335) is of the opinion that the focus group discussion method has a number of advantages such as “providing some form of quality control on data collection, in that participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other that weeds out false or extreme views”. It is also seen as a highly efficient data collection tool, because an interviewer can gain information from approximately eight persons (depending on the size of the group) in one time-slot instead of from one person, as in a one-on-one interview situation. It is therefore not difficult to assess the extent to which views are shared by participants in the group (on the phenomenon under discussion).

This method also has some disadvantages, such as, that the response time to a given question is increased because of having a number of people responding to the question. Thus the number of questions that can be asked in an hour are limited. It is also important to be aware of group dynamics that could play itself out amongst any group of individuals. As an individual might for example attempt to dominate the interview or the interviewer will have to incite the less verbal participants to also contribute to the interview. Care also needs to be exercised to avoid power struggles and diversions during the interviews.

Despite the disadvantages of the focus group discussion method, Berg (2004:123-126) is of the opinion that the focus group discussion is an innovative and evolving strategy for gathering information that might otherwise have been fairly difficult to obtain. He sees the focus group discussions as a means of data collection that can stand on its own or as an additional line of action in a research project.

The researcher handled the focus group discussions in this study with circumspection, because cognisance had to be taken of the dynamics within and amongst groups of people as explained above. The discussions were perceived as fruitful, since all members participated in the discussions and provided valuable information with regards to the research topic.

7.2.8 Analysis of qualitative data

The culminating activities of qualitative inquiry are analysis, interpretation, and the presentation of the findings. During the analysis phase of the research, sense had to be made of a voluminous set of data; patterns were identified while similar trends were categorised, and afterwards comparisons and contrasts were made of the different categories. In this manner the dominant opinions on the different topics were identified. The researcher made use of an interpretive, subjective style of interpretation.

Each qualitative study is unique, therefore the analytical approach used will also be unique. A characteristic of qualitative research is the simultaneous collection and analysis of data that takes place during all phases of the research. The overlapping of data collecting and analysis improves both the quality of the data collected and the quality of the analysis. The researcher has to take care, however, not to allow these initial interpretations to distort subsequent data collection (Patton 1990:377-378; Burgess 1985:9).

During this study the final analysis and the interpretation took place after the data collection had ended. Transcripts of the tape-recordings of the interviews were made and the data was coded and compared. The notes made during the interviews were also studied intensively to form a holistic understanding of the views expressed during the interviews as is suggested by (Anderson 1990:82). Where there were uncertainties, the participants were reconsulted to clarify and to validate the data. After all the data was carefully processed, the researcher coded the data in terms of recurring themes. The data was then organised into emerging patterns. The process of data analysis was very time-consuming and it needed to be done thoroughly. This required continual cross-referencing of data to ensure that sound conclusions were reached as is suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:464).

7.2.9 Validity and reliability in the qualitative design

In qualitative research the degree to which the explanations of the phenomenon match the real world is referred to by the terms of validity and credibility. Validity addresses questions such as these: Do researchers actually observe what they think they observe? Do researchers actually hear the meanings that they think they hear? In the words of McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407), validity of qualitative designs is the degree to which the interpretations and the concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher.

Qualitative researchers use a combination of strategies to ensure validity. In this study, the researcher made use of verbatim participant accounts, tape-recorded data; participant review, prolonged fieldwork and triangulation of qualitative data sources. According to Patton (1990:467) the latter means “comparing and cross checking the consistency of information arrived at, at different times and by different means within

qualitative methods". In this study, the researcher went back to the South African interviewees four months after the initial interviews took place and rechecked his interpretation of the initial data collected for consistency and correctness. Another form of triangulation that was used in this study is "the comparison of perspectives of participants from different points of view" - such as perspectives of lecturers of colleges in the Netherlands and South Africa to those of principals, middle management staff members and students (Patton 1990:467). This was facilitated by the choice of participants in this study. The researcher is of the opinion that the use of the above combination of strategies of this study enhanced the credibility and validity of the research.

7.2.10 Confidentiality

For ethical reasons, the researcher assured the participants that confidentiality will be respected, and that no one except the researcher will have access to individual data or the names of the participants and that the researcher will make certain that the data cannot be linked to individual participants. To ensure the anonymity of the participants the letters of the alphabet were linked to the participants in reference. This practice undoubtedly enhances the trustworthiness of the study.

7.3 THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

An interview schedule was necessary to focus questions on what is important and needed to be addressed by this study, and to prevent the omission of important information during the interviews. In addition, the broad areas to be covered were chosen strategically to provide answers to whether the colleges would be able to succeed in the attainment of the objectives set by the NCFE. The interview schedule consisted of a variety of open-ended questions.

The key question revolves around the expectations for FET colleges, in terms of relevance and responsiveness to the labour and economic needs of the region in which the colleges are situated, so that college graduates will be empowered to become employed and that unemployment and poverty can be addressed in the process (see 1.3, p.5).

The reason why these questions were asked is that colleges are currently required to report on their achievements with regards to the alleviation of poverty and unemployment. This resulted in questions focusing on the support given to colleges by the Department of Education to assist in the achievement of the objectives, the capacity of colleges to achieve the objectives, the capacity of the Department to assist the colleges, the relevance of college programmes, the completeness of the FET policy framework, synergy between and amongst FET policies and whether it creates an enabling environment for the achievements of the objectives, how the transformation process has contributed to the attainment of the objectives at this stage of the transformation, and, the role of planning with regards to the whole process. These questions formed the basis of the interview schedule.

The following questions were clustered together because they dealt with the college curricula and their role with regards to the expectations of colleges' alleviating poverty, unemployment and assisting in stimulating the economy.

- To what extent are college programme offerings relevant and responsive to the labour and economic needs of the country?
- Can a change in programme offerings make college graduates more employable? (and in the process alleviate poverty)?

- To what extent could the offering of entrepreneurship as part of the college package to all of its students bring about more employment opportunities?

Rationale: The researcher wished to establish whether the college curricula was regarded as relevant and responsive because the content of the curricula was held up as the reason why college students were not readily employed after finishing their studies.

- Could poverty be alleviated through education and training? Substantiate your answer.

Rationale: The aim of this question was to establish whether the interviewees were of the opinion that education and training brought about socio-economic changes or whether education and training only responded to socio-economic changes.

- To what extent do you think that programme funding could steer colleges into delivering relevant and responsive programmes that could address the socio-economic problems?

Rationale: This question aims to assess the views on the possible impact that the proposed funding mechanism could have on colleges.

- To what extent is the support forthcoming from the DoE sufficient to enable the colleges to carry out their mandate and to implement the FET Act No. 98 of 1998? Substantiate your answer.

Rationale: The idea behind this question was to establish whether in the opinion of the interviewees, the DoE, has created an enabling environment for the colleges to transform into the envisioned "mega - 21st century institutions" that deliver relevant and responsive programme offerings and

that could bring about socio-economic changes. At the same time the researcher also intended to test the interviewees' perception of the Department of Education's capacity to provide leadership and guidance to the colleges.

- In your opinion is there sufficient synergy within the FET policy framework and other policies that impact on FET to assist in the smooth implementation of the FET Act No.98 of 1998 and the other skills development legislation in South Africa? Substantiate your viewpoint.

Rationale: The aim here was to investigate if the policies were seen as communicating to each other that is, were consistent, and whether the same policy language was spoken across the sector and inter-sectorally.

- How do you see the integration of education and training in the college sector being realised successfully?

Rationale: It was important to investigate how the interviewees saw the proposed integration of education and training taking place at colleges under the prevailing circumstances, given that the integration of education and training was one of the key pillars of the new educational dispensation.

- Please reflect on whether colleges have sufficient capacity in terms of human and other resources to deliver what is expected by the DoE?

Rationale: With this question the researcher wished to determine if interviewees thought that the staff establishments of the colleges made provision for the new demands placed on colleges with regards to learnerships and skills development; whether the staff had the necessary

skills for the new challenges they faced; whether the colleges had the necessary finances to implement the transformation; and lastly if the legislation concerning staffing allowed the colleges to use the staff in a manner that would make the colleges responsive to labour needs.

- In your opinion are there at this stage of the transformation process any indicators that point in the direction of the achievement of the objectives set for the colleges?

Rationale: This question wanted to generate views on the general trend of the transformation from the vantage point of those involved in the reality of the transforming colleges *vis-à-vis* the attainment of the objectives set for the sector.

- Reflect on the effectiveness of the structure of the FET plan as well as that of the implementation plan for FET.

Rationale: The researcher wanted to investigate whether the planning for FET was viewed as thorough and whether a gap was seen between what the planners envisaged and what was panning out on the ground.

7.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has given reasons for the use of a qualitative research methodology and discussed the theory of this approach. It has been explained that in-depth and focus group discussion interviews were the main vehicles used for data collection. Purposeful sampling was used to select information rich individuals (see 7.2.6). The validity and credibility of the research were assured by the use of multiple qualitative research strategies. Participants were assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be respected in this study. The information gathered during the study will be analysed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

OUTCOMES OF THE QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the perceptions of the participants interviewed during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in South Africa, the Netherlands and America. On some of the topics there were convergence of opinions while on others there were divergence. The data obtained through the interviews was analysed by using the interpretive, subjective style of interpretation.

8.2 EXPECTATIONS FOR FET COLLEGES

8.2.1 Relevance of college programmes

The irrelevance of college programme offerings was held up by the authorities as one of the major reasons for the transformation of the sector (see 4.6, p.73). Views in this regard are presented below:

An ex-principal of a former technical college and currently a senior manager of a FET college expressed the opinion that the colleges' instructional programme offerings are not irrelevant, instructional programme offerings such as Engineering Science, Mechanotechnics, Mathematics, Strength of Materials, etc. in the Engineering Department are based upon natural scientific principles which are unchangeable and as such stays relevant. On the other hand he was of the view that in the Business Studies Department, instructional programmes such as Accounting, Information Technology, Project Management, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Financial Management, etc. are all very relevant (Participant G 2004).

Another ex-principal of a former technical college and also currently a senior manager of a FET college, expressed the view that all college programs cannot be tarred with the same feather of irrelevancy. He supported the above view of interviewee G very strongly. Because as far as his understanding went, the Business Studies programme offerings are all, very relevant some may need a little updating here and there. According to him it is a case of “the natural evolution of knowledge” and not of merely irrelevancy (Participant B 2004).

A third Interviewee felt very strongly and expressed himself as follows: “I support the view that certain programme offerings are obsolete in that the mechanism used to offer these programmes is not in line with the current way of thinking. Large parts of the current content, provision and style of provision still have symbols of the apartheid regime. We should have taken the bold step to have abolished the NATED 191 document (see 4.2.1.2, p.67) and have developed a complete new curriculum for colleges. What is happening currently is that we are taking the same programmes and placing them into new glossy wrappings but the fundamentals have not been changed”. He went on and postulated the view that, “I know that the skills needed for carpentry today, are still the same, as they were ten years ago and that goes for all, or most other trades, but I feel that learners need to be trained in a much broader way, they need business skills, marketing skills, project management skills and financial management skills so that they could become entrepreneurs” (Participant E 2004). It is interesting to note that this interviewee did not say that the programme offerings are irrelevant; his objection is rather against what he perceived as programmes containing, “symbols of apartheid”. He further put forward the view that the same skills needed for carpentry and most other trades, are the same today, as they were ten years ago. Per implication, the skills taught today are as relevant as ten years ago.

A very knowledgeable interviewee on curriculum matters shared the view postulated by Interviewee E, on the fundamentals that is needed, to be added to the college instructional programmes in order to give learners a much broader perspective of their core subject areas: "Content needs to be brought in line with industry. Fundamentals such as languages, computers, and life skills are missing and Mathematics for example need to be contextualised with the core subject areas" (Participant C 2004). This participant seemed to be in agreement with participant E in that programme offerings needed to be updated in certain areas, but that the core subject areas seemed to be in order. Per implication the core subject matter was perceived as relevant.

A chief executive officer of a newly formed FET college spoke with conviction with regards to the relevancy of college programmes when he stated that: "Knowledge is virtue, we'd better say we broaden and redirect knowledge, rather than saying, the courses are irrelevant. I think it is irresponsible to advocate that viewpoint. NATED 191 is still relevant. I don't think we can ever say throw this out completely, it is irrelevant" (Participant F 2004).

From the above responses it seems clear that there is a common thread that runs through all the interviews, which is that the college programmes are not regarded irrelevant, although updating is needed in some instances.

In the Netherlands all participants expressed the view that their programmes are relevant and responsive and that there is a continuing process of collaboration between the ROCs, commerce and industry to keep the curriculum abreast of the expectations from the business world. They were of the opinion that they trained and provided qualifications and skills to satisfy the needs of the business world as a primary objective and

not for the alleviation of unemployment or poverty, nor for economic stimulation.

Considering the above responses, one may conclude that the general perception of the interviewees was that the college instructional programmes are regarded as relevant but needed updating in certain areas. This conclusion is in line with the literature study described in sections 4.6 and 4.15.

8.2.2 Relevance and responsiveness of programmes and employment and poverty alleviation

The following is a summary of the views expressed by participants, related to relevant and responsive instructional programmes, employment and poverty alleviation:

The view was expressed by a chief executive officer that the economy plays a major part in the availability of employment opportunities in any country. "I am not convinced that the economy is able to absorb the large numbers of learners that come out of our system" (Participant E 2004). The implication is that relevant and responsive instructional programme offerings at colleges, on their own, are not sufficient to create employment and poverty alleviation in the absence of an economy able to absorb the students (see 4.11, p.87 and 5.5, p.108).

An ex-principal of a technical college and currently a senior manager of a FET college, put another view forward, namely: "Dit is nie die formele kursusse wat by kolleges aangebied word wat sal voorsien in die werkloosheidverligting nie, maar die wegbeweging vanaf die formele programme in die rigting van informele vaardigheids kursusse wat die werksloosheid sal aanspreek" (Participant B 2004). (colleges needed to move away from the formal courses in the direction of informal courses,

which should provide learners with basic skills that could enable them to earn a living). Interestingly, the participant did not in any way allude to the formal courses being irrelevant, he seemed rather to suggest that colleges should refocus on informal courses. It appeared as if he agreed, in principle, with participant E above that relevant programmes did not seem to be enough to create employment.

Another chief executive officer of a FET college seemed to concur with participant E, when he expressed the opinion that colleges should move in the direction of informal courses. "To alleviate unemployment, a start needs to be made with the informal basic skills (not for qualifications) that will teach people survival skills like brick making or needlework for example, where people can apply the skills acquired immediately to provide in their needs. People need to be made aware of the potential of their environment" (Participant F 2004). This participant also did not express any problem with the relevancy of the formal courses offered at colleges (see 8.2.1, p.150), but suggested that informal courses should receive more prominence at colleges.

An expert on curriculum matters brought another aspect to the fore: employers require practical experience from prospective employees. He put forward the view that relevant programmes on their own are not enough for students to find employment "Employers are looking for people with experience and the learnership programmes at colleges could assist with the unemployment problem since the learnership offers experiential training. This should assist the learner to obtain employment if it exists" (Participant C 2004).

What seems to emanate from the above responses is firstly that the current formal courses are not regarded as irrelevant but a refocusing on informal courses should be considered. [This is in contradiction with the National Qualifications Framework requirements.] Secondly that practical

experience is required to assist students in becoming employed. In addition, there were three participants who were of the opinion that the provision of skills and practical experience did not necessarily alleviate unemployment. They expressed the view that, the person who acquired the skills could possibly not have the correct work ethics, could have insufficient motivation to work, and could possibly have attended the college as a last resort because they did not qualify to enter technikon or university education. Or they could have entered the college sector because their parents insisted that they do something to keep them off the streets.

Another aspect was brought to the discussion by Participant H when he posited the view that for college graduates to find employment, the economic and labour markets need to grow consistently to absorb the ever-increasing number of new prospective entrants into the labour market. He was of the opinion that, in the absence of this condition, the best training and skills would not be able to alleviate unemployment (Participant H).

In the two focus group discussions, conducted in South Africa, there was general consensus amongst the participants that the objective of unemployment alleviation for colleges could possibly be linked to political promises of jobs for all, and that colleges will have great difficulty in achieving this objective, as it is not part of their primary and core function (Focus group discussions 2004).

Most of the participants were of the opinion that colleges could not directly nor indirectly, create employment, since the college's core function is to educate and train. Creating jobs was the responsibility of the business sector supported by a healthy economy, investments, business friendly legislation and the necessary incentives to encourage entrepreneurship.

In the Netherlands, participants were unanimous in their opinion that, ROC programmes needed to be in line with the needs of business, but on its own, education and training could not alleviate employment nor poverty. They were of the view that, this responsibility rested outside of the ROCs.

Participants in this section can be divided into four categories according to the way in which they responded to the question:

- Those who argued that informal skills should be offered to assist people in becoming employed. These participants did not say that the formal instructional programme offerings of the colleges were irrelevant.
- Those who argued that qualifications or skills, whether formal or informal, were not enough for people to find employment.
- Those who were of the opinion that the economy plays a major role in the availability of employment opportunities.
- Those who were of the view that the idea of colleges assisting in the alleviating unemployment and poverty could possibly reflect on political promises made.

All participants, despite the different angles of entry into this issue, nevertheless shared the view that the problem was not so much the “irrelevance” or “unresponsiveness” of the college’s instructional programme offerings that rendered students unemployed, but the inability of the economy, and the labour market, to absorb the unemployed. The literature study (see 4.6, p.73 and 4.15, p.97) and the empirical study (see 8.2.1, p.150), both indicated that the instructional programmes of colleges were not irrelevant. This seems to render the argument that, if

colleges offered relevant and responsive programmes they would possibly alleviate unemployment and poverty, as questionable.

8.2.3 Entrepreneurial training as a solution to unemployment and poverty alleviation

Entrepreneurship seems to be presented, as the panacea for the economic woes of South Africa. In this section, the researcher tested the opinion of participants on the offering of entrepreneurial training at FET colleges as a means to address the unemployment problem and the accompanying poverty. The following responses reflect the different perceptions of the participants on this matter:

The view was expressed that all students should be taught entrepreneurial skills as part of the normal college instructional programme package. Where after, they should be assisted by taking them through an incubator system where they will learn practical business skills (Participant E 2004). This participant was of the view that this should enable students to create their own employment, if they could not obtain employment in the labour market.

Two chief executive officers of FET colleges and two ex-principals of the former technical colleges agreed with the view expressed by Interviewee E, that is, that the job market does not create sufficient job opportunities. They were of the view that training entrepreneurs would assist in creating jobs and possibly employment opportunities for others, as the only solution. This, they believed would also assist with the stimulation of the economy and poverty alleviation.

Another angle to the discussion was introduced by Participant H who posited the view that a balance was required between businesses, if any business was going to be successful. He explained his point by using the example of a person opening a bakery: Should this person sell bread it would reduce the bread sales of the other existing bakeries, and each bakery would earn less money than before. Should this happen many times over, that is the introduction of another player in the business world, the fine balance that should exist between businesses would be eroded. This could lead to bankruptcies if all students should venture into the business world and flood it.

He further expressed the opinion that, for business to be successful, there needed to be stability, local and international confidence in the economy, user-friendly legislation and finally the crime rate should be at an acceptable level. All of these factors should be factored into the equation (see figure 4.4) and not just taking entrepreneurial training on its own, and presenting it as the solution (see 4.11, p.87). This kind of reasoning, where only one factor is taken into consideration, seems to be tantamount to straight line reasoning.

A similar view to the one expressed by Participant H was voiced by an ex-principal of a former technical college when he stated that "there is only a small percentage of true entrepreneurs in any society". In terms of his understanding, all students could not become entrepreneurs, because should that happen, the employment needs of commerce and industry would not be served; since colleges needed to produce people who would be working in banks, hospitals, schools, ect. According to the interviewee, all students did not have the temperament to be entrepreneurs, as not everyone was a self-starter, could not lead or motivate other people, were not sufficiently committed and were not hardworking enough. Therefore, some of them would have to work for employers. The interviewee further raised the issue of the saturation point of businesses that needed to be

taken cognisance of otherwise bankruptcies would result (Participant A 2004). From the responses above it becomes clear that entrepreneurship was also not seen as a final solution.

A complementary view was expressed by a participant who said that: "all students could not become entrepreneurs because it is very difficult for those who have just completed their studies at a college, in the absence of practical experience, the right attitude, work ethic and capital, which is also not readily available to students without experience, most of whom do not have security or collateral to obtain funding or loans" (Participant C 2004). It was thus regarded as extremely difficult for students to enter the business world because of the hurdles that needed to be scaled. This reality makes it extremely difficult for students to become entrepreneurs.

The participants in the Netherlands indicated that the offering of entrepreneurship at the ROCs was aimed primarily at their students starting businesses and not at creating jobs since their unemployment figure is very low at 3,8%. Despite this fact, participant P saw the creation of new small businesses in the Netherlands as risky because "of the small and medium enterprises that were started five years ago in Rotterdam, almost 90 per cent had gone bankrupt". The reason given for this was that the "Dutch people are not so keen to spend their money as they were before, especially after the currency change from the Gulder to the Euro" (Participant P 2004).

As can be seen from the above responses, five South African participants were of the opinion that entrepreneurship was the solution, to the question at hand, while four participants, including a Dutch interviewee, were of the opinion that entrepreneurship is not the solution to the problem. It is interesting to note that the interviewees who were pro-entrepreneurship as a solution, did not advance any reasons to support their position. They seem to have merely repeated rhetorical phrases, rendering their

arguments tantamount to straight-line reasoning (see 4.11). The participants who did not regard the one-dimensional approach of entrepreneurship as the solution, however, did advance reasonable motivation for their position, which careful consideration, reveals to be in line with the conclusions reached in the literature study (see figure 7).

8.2.4 Poverty alleviation and education

Education is often very optimistically seen as a vehicle for development and socio-economic improvement of a country (see 4.12). South Africa currently seems to embrace this mind-set, thence the objectives set for colleges in South Africa by the NCFE (see 4.11; 4.12; 6.2 and figure 6). The following responses were obtained from the interviewees with regards to this mind-set:

A view was posited that the colleges can alleviate poverty but then they first had to be made "fit for purpose" by means of the necessary infrastructure, staffing and strategic planning, spelling out exactly how these objectives should be achieved (Participant F 2004).

The above view was supported by Participant G who expressed the view that colleges could play a significant role in assisting with poverty alleviation, but before it could be done effectively the colleges needed to be restructured in terms of infra-structure and relevant programmes (Participant G 2004).

A chief executive officer was also of the view that the colleges could alleviate poverty, provided that the students could become employed: "During my lifetime I have seen young people who went through the college system, then obtained employment, and in such a manner they could extract themselves from their bad economic situations, that was in cases where there was employment available" (Participant E 2004).

The above interviewees were of the opinion that colleges could assist with poverty alleviation provided that the colleges first be equipped for this purpose, got better infra-structure and that employment opportunities were available. These perceptions clearly do not take cognisance of the causes of poverty (see 5.2 and 5.4), which need to be addressed if poverty is to be alleviated.

Another participant was more circumspect "Dit is 'n baie moeilike kwessie; veel navorsing moet nog gedoen word om definitiewe uitsluitel te kan gee oor hierdie punt. Ek sal dus nie 'n standpunt waag nie" (Participant B 2004). (it was a complex matter; much research needed to be done before one could arrive at a definite position on this matter. He would therefore not take a stance in this matter).

An ex-principal of a former technical college aired the opinion that: "Onderwys en opleiding bring die verkryging van kwalifikasies mee, nie noodwendig armoedeverligting nie, daar is ander faktore wat in aanmerking geneem moet word soos byvoorbeeld die salarisse waarvoor mense werk, persoonlike eienskappe, die vlak van die opleiding en die stand van die ekonomie om maar 'n paar faktore te noem" (Participant A 2004). (education and training produces skills and qualifications, and it does not necessarily bring about poverty or unemployment alleviation. He was of the opinion that other factors had to be considered like the salaries people earned, personal characteristics, the level of training and the state of the economy). This interviewee's response seems to indicate that unemployment and poverty alleviation cannot be achieved by following a one-dimensional approach (see figure 7).

All interviewees in the Netherlands were of the opinion that ROCs educate and train students to obtain skills and qualifications. They were of the opinion that their core and primary goal was to provide education and

training. After the students have completed their studies at the ROCs, the ROCs attempt to place them in employment and, if they do not succeed, it becomes the students' own responsibility to obtain employment.

A ROC president was of the view that "the obtainment of employment does not necessarily mean the alleviation of poverty; we do not yet have tools to measure the levels of poverty of our students when they enter the ROC system, and again after they entered the job market to ascertain whether the education and training provided at the ROCs impacted on poverty alleviation" (Participant N 2004).

In summary

Three of the participants expressed the view that the FET colleges were able to effect poverty alleviation by, providing skills to the poor which would enable them to either create their own employment or find employment at an existing enterprise. This would make them financially active and in such a manner address poverty. It would appear as if this line of reasoning is utopian (see 4.11, p.86 and figure 4.3, p.87). One participant was of the view that the education versus employment issue was a very complex matter that required more research and thus did not want to respond to the question.

The Dutch were unanimous on the matter that their primary responsibility as ROCs was to provide education and training.

Another view was that education and training does not necessarily bring about poverty alleviation, as other factors played a role and needs to be considered. The literature study also seems to indicate that education and training does not alleviate unemployment or poverty (see chapter 5). It thus seems as if education responds to economic changes and it does not cause them (see 2.9, p.38).

8.2.5 Programme funding as a steering mechanism

The proposed programme funding for colleges has been proposed to force colleges to become relevant and responsive in their instructional programme offerings (see 1.2, p.2 and 4.11, p.86). This policy proposal is based on the assumption that college's instructional programmes were irrelevant and unresponsive to the students' and labour needs (see 3.2.4, p.46). The participants' responses varied from supporting the policy proposal, to stating that they had no information about the policy details.

It was maintained by four of the interviewees, that the proposed programme funding, could serve as a tool to force colleges to take part in poverty alleviation through relevant and responsive programme offerings. The revised instructional programmes would result in students becoming more employable, which would lead to a reduction of unemployment as well as the alleviation of poverty (see 4.7, p.80).

Most of the participants were not aware of precisely how the programme funding would work, because the funding formula had not yet been designed at the time of the interviews and discussion group sessions (see 4.7, p.81). Thus the participants were not all able to respond to this question.

The Dutch interviewees indicated that they did not receive funding based upon the nature of programmes but funding based upon student numbers. 80 % of their funding depended on student numbers and 20 % depended on students' successful completion of their studies.

In the light of the fact that the programme funding formula had not yet been designed, it is understandable why most of the participants despite being experts in the field could not provide information on this issue. It is

also necessary to take cognisance of the fact that the four interviewees who were in agreement with the proposed funding mechanism, were only repeating the official position, without giving substantive reasons for their position on this matter.

8.3 SUPPORT TO THE COLLEGES

The researcher wanted to determine whether in the eyes of the participants, the department of education was providing the necessary support to colleges to make it possible for them, to comply with the departments expectations.

A chief executive officer expressed himself as follows: " No absolutely no, no sufficient support is forthcoming from the Department" (Participant C). Interviewee E expressed himself as follows: "I respectfully say the support is totally inadequate. I am convinced that the management of the Department of Education is only paying lip service to the college sector. The greatest disaster for colleges was when they were provincialised. The FET college sector is the smallest component of the South African education system, thus they receive very little emphasis with regards to policy development, staffing and budget allocations. The provincial departments do not have the capacity or capability to give strategic leadership to colleges, nor do they have the financial ability to appoint all the staff necessary at colleges" (Participant E).

Interviewee A made the point that the departments, both provincially and nationally, could not provide sufficient support to colleges, because: "Staffing of the National Department of Education's FET Unit only consisted of two staff members in 2004, six years after the promulgation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998. It seemed as if the Department was not serious with college transformation. This is a tendency in all provinces where the FET Units are grossly understaffed" (Participant A 2004). Almost all

participants expressed the view that provincial departments generally, seems to appoint incumbents in the FET Units, who are from outside of the sector, without any college experience or suitable qualifications which seemed to exacerbate the plight of colleges.

All the participants expressed the opinion that very little support and no progression in the area of programme development were forthcoming from the Department. In view of the fact that the irrelevancy of programme offerings was offered as one of the main reasons for the transformation of colleges, the Department of Education's meager support, created the perception that there seems to be a lack of seriousness about FET colleges in South Africa.

All of the respondents pointed to the fact that there were no funding norms for the new FET Colleges. Funding for the colleges was still on the same basis as before the transformation of the colleges, i.e., 2 % of the national and provincial educational budgets. In the area of institutional staffing, all the respondents expressed the view; that no staffing norms were in place. This led to big problems at institutional, operational levels because the colleges were expected to deliver in terms of the FET Act, No. 98 of 1998, which requires that certain services be provided, for example student services, for which the old act did not make provision. This meant that colleges had to make college council appointments. A ex-principal of a former technical college and currently senior manager of a FET college stated that: " by sommige kolleges is 30% tot 50% van die van die kollegepersoneel, raadsaanstellings dit stel die kollege in staat om om die diens te lewer soos vereis deur die wet op kolleges" (Participant B 2004). (at some colleges 30% to 50% of college staff are appointed by the college councils to enable the colleges to deliver the services required by the FET Act).

Because of the situation described above most of the participants expressed the view that it would be in the colleges' best interest if colleges could be removed from the provinces, as a matter of urgency and could resort under the National Department of Labour. The focus group, consisting of principals from different provinces was of the opinion, that the colleges would fit in better with the objectives of the skills development programmes of the Department of Labour, than with those of the Department of Education, and that the availability of funds from the Department of Labour for skills development would probably be better than the Department of Education's budget allocation of 2% of provincial and national educational budgets for colleges.

As far as financial support for FET college students was concerned, which is non-existing at this stage, all the participants, without exception, were of the opinion that students in the FET college sector should also be able to access a loan or bursary scheme like the students in the higher education band.

The participants in the Netherlands indicated that the ROCs were autonomous, they employed their own staff, designed their own staffing structures as well as their own programme offerings. Student fees were paid by the State in the form of once-off transfer payments to the ROCs. Therefore the participants were of the opinion that they got sufficient support from their authorities.

All South African participants were unanimous in their viewpoint that insufficient support was forthcoming from the Department of Education and that there was a serious lack of capacity, on the Department's side, to provide the necessary support. This was interpreted as the authorities not being serious about attaining a successful transformation of the colleges. The remarks made by the respondents clearly indicate that there is a very

serious problem and great concern with regards to departmental support for colleges.

8.4 SYNERGY BETWEEN FET POLICIES

The researcher wished to determine whether the policy environment was creating an enabling environment that facilitates the smooth implementation of FET policies.

One participant was of the view that sufficient synergy existed between policies in the FET college sector. He indicated "that there is sufficient synergy between and amongst FET policies" (Participant F 2004). When asked to substantiate the viewpoint, the participant evaded the question by stating that "I do not have a mandate to speak about national policy issues".

All other participants felt that there was not enough synergy between the FET policies because the FET Act was promulgated without any regulations, funding, staffing norms or a legislative environment enabling the integration of education and training for FET. This caused gaps that made implementation of the requirements of FET difficult (see 6.5, p.121).

Participant E indicated that: "there seems to be a lack of synergy, with regards to the remuneration of lecturers who teaches SETA programmers at colleges. Is it the DoE or the DoL who is responsible for remunerating the lecturers? This leaves colleges in a difficult situation because legally they should offer only official college programmes, as indicated in the NATED 191 (97/07) document; however, the new paradigm requires of the colleges to offer SETA programmes which belongs to the DoL". On the one hand, the DoL refuses to remunerate the lecturers for offering the SETA programmes, because colleges would then be guilty of "double

dipping". On the other hand, the DoE does not want to pay, because these instructional programmes are not theirs.

A chief executive officer expressed the opinion that: " a big problem exist in the college sector in that college lecturers and school teachers are appointed under the same act. Which means that the working hours for college lecturers are the same as that of schoolteachers, with fixed school/college calendars, which determines the school/college holidays. This is problematic in the new FET college era because if colleges are to deliver on the expectations of commerce and industry with regards to training then the rigid working hours and calendars of lecturers will have to be changed to make them compatible with the working hours of industry if colleges are going to service industry effectively" (Participant E 2004).

All the participants expressed the opinion that, in the South African situation, the DoE and DoL were two separate departments both doing training, the one concentrating on the "demand side" and the other on the "supply side". The view was expressed that there seemed to be tension and a lack of co-operation between these two departments, because both were doing training but approached it from two different angles (see 4.14, p.96). The responses illustrate the lack of synergy between the Departments in their training approach.

Most of the respondents expressed the view that the integration of education and training apparently did not seem to have any enabling environment, in place, to effect the integration of education and training at institutional level, nor was there any mechanism in place to compel commerce and industry to participate in the training of students from the colleges. The view was expressed that as long as the choice of participation in the training of students depended upon the goodwill of companies, it did not have a good chance to be successful.

The respondents in the Netherlands were of the opinion that there was sufficient synergy between their policies because the ROCs influenced policies directly. They worked closely with the politicians, their education Department and role players in commerce and industry. According to them, there was good co-operation between the stakeholders because they believed that they had common interests and needed to solve problems collectively.

From the above responses it is clear that there was an overwhelming opinion that there was not sufficient synergy between FET policies and across departmental boundaries.

8.5 INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In this section the researcher attempted to determine, how the participants viewed the important policy imperative of the integration of education and training at FET colleges. Given the Department of Educations proposed implementation approach with regards to the matter.

According to interviews conducted in America (participant P) and in the Netherlands (participants M, N and O), the view was expressed that fully equipped workshops were essential for the integration of education and training. In both cases, the funding for the workshops came from their Departments of Education. Teaching could then take place in the lecture rooms after which the students moved to the workshops where practical training took place on the subject matter that was dealt with in the theory classes. This is how they integrated education and training within the colleges. Only after their students had reached a certain level of competency were they placed in the industry for on-the-job training.

The Dutch had structures in place that facilitated the training of students in companies. These structures were situated between the colleges and the industries, and they were industry-specific. In other words, the banks would have their own structure as well as other areas of commerce and industry. Furthermore, 1 % of tax levied by the municipalities had to go back to training institutions to fund training. Big companies donated the latest machinery to ROCs in the Netherlands and also to colleges in the United States for training students on these machines in the college's own workshops. The benefit company's got from this arrangement was that their prospective employees would be well-trained.

Most of the respondents in South Africa were of the opinion that the South African notion of principals, having to negotiate practical training for their students, at companies was problematic. Participant B was of the view that this was not such a simple matter as it was made out to be: "who will be responsible for damages to the machinery if it occurs or if the students suffer injuries? This is especially relevant if students go to the companies without basic practical experience gained in the college's workshops. Then, if companies were situated far away from the colleges, who will be responsible for the transport costs? This could make the training very expensive" (Participant B 2004). This participant also asked: "and what happens in the rural areas where there is not much industrial development and subsequently very few, if any, companies or factories for training purposes? This could make successful negotiation with companies very difficult".

Most of the participants expressed the view that companies were of the opinion that they were already paying 1 % of their payroll as a levy to the SETAS for training and therefore feel, that they had done enough as far as training was concerned.

In the Netherlands and America the interviewees indicated that they were satisfied with the level of integration of education and training in their systems.

From the above responses it becomes quite clear that the approach of not establishing workshops at colleges, but that principals had to negotiate training at companies would be problematic in the South African context. This approach would impact negatively on the integration of education and training in South Africa.

Internationally, colleges have their own workshops, fully equipped, the integration of education and training takes place at college level and thereafter the training moves to on-the-job training at companies.

8.6 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

In this section the level of institutional readiness vis-a-vis the expectations for FET is investigated.

With regards to the institutional capacity to deliver on the Department's expectations for colleges, this view was put forward: "Before colleges can deliver on their mandates they have to be fit for purpose infra-structurally, in terms of human resources, funding and that kind of thing" (Participant F 2004).

There was agreement between Interviewee B and the above interviewee on the question of institutional capacity, as interviewee B responded as follows: "Nee! net 'n kort antwoord nee. Minder as 10% van kollege personeel weet wat 'n leerlingskap is. Ons het 'n diensstaat ontvang maar mag nie die poste adverteer nie want die poste is gevries [...] Nee, kolleges het nie die kapasiteit nie" (Participant B 2004). (*Colleges do not have the required capacity. Less than 10% of college staff are acquainted*

with the learnership concept. We have received a staff establishment but the posts are frozen. Colleges do not have the capacity).

Furthermore, the opinion was expressed that: “the department does not have the financial capacity to appoint the staff needed at colleges or to build infra-structure that is fit for purpose for FET colleges. Colleges have been moved into buildings designed for teacher-training colleges or schools” (Participant E 2004). The above responses seem to indicate that, in terms of infra-structure and staffing, colleges do not have the capacity to deliver on the expectations.

An ex-technical college principal responded as follows: “Ons het nie genoeg kapasiteit om die nuwe programme soos leerlingskappe aan te bied nie, ons het beslis nie die mannekrag daarvoor nie, hulle is te min en alreeds oorlaai. As ons die idealistiese doelwitte van die owerheid wil bereik, sal ons baie groter kapasiteit moet hê” (Participant H 2004). (We do not have the capacity to offer the new programmes, such as learnerships. We do not have the person power. The staff is already overloaded. If we want to achieve the idealistic objectives of the authorities we need greater capacity).

The two focus groups, the first, consisting of principals from different provinces the second, of four lecturers from a FET college, were in agreement with the opinions expressed, that there was a lack of human resources and a lack of capacity of staff to implement the new ideas at colleges such as learnerships and other new programme offerings. Part of the reason for this was that the staff establishments of colleges did not make provision for the new requirements. No provision was made for staff to perform the duties required by the FET Act such as student support services, librarians, psychologists, counselors, learnership developers, curriculum developers, sports officers and life skills trainers.

At management level the only posts filled were those of chief executive officers. The necessary management support positions were not filled. The participants were of the opinion that the latter impeded the capacity of the colleges to deliver on the expectations for FET.

The opinion was also expressed that institutional capacity was also greatly impeded by the lack of redress and transformation funding. All the participants raised funding as a big problem and stated that transformation without the necessary funding was not possible.

In the Netherlands the respondents indicated that their autonomy gave them the power to employ staff with the right competencies and qualifications and they could offer the incumbents market-related salaries, thus their institutional capacity in terms of human and other resources was adequate.

From the above responses it is clear that there are very serious problems around institutional capacity in the college sector in terms of staffing, funding, and infra-structure.

8.7 THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE NCFE'S OBJECTIVES RESULTING FROM THE TRANSFORMATION

In this section the participants' experience of the transformation process and their perceptions of whether the process is moving into the direction of the attainment of the objectives set for the colleges, was probed.

Most of the participants were of the opinion that the transformation process at college level, to date, consisted mostly of the promulgation of the FET Act, No.98 of 1998, the declaration of FET colleges, the merging of the colleges from 152 to 50 FET institutions and the appointment of the chief executive officers.

Participants A and B expressed the view that, apart from the appointment of the new chief executive officers and the merging of the colleges, no real transformation had taken place at institutional level; lecturers still taught their old instructional programmes, at their old campuses and the expectation of the “modern, mega-multi campus sites offering twenty first century, responsive and relevant programmes and being leaders in the technological fields seems very far in the future”.

The opinion was put forward by a chief executive officer that, at this stage of the transformation process, no significant movement towards the achievement of the NCFEs objectives had been made, because the transformation process in itself was problematic. There were shortcomings in terms of staffing, funding, synergy in legislation, compatibility of legislation with the demands of industry, institutional incapacity, departmental capacity, etc. (Participant E 2004).

The five teachers in the focus group from the Netherlands expressed the view that the fusion of their ROCs led to economies of scale, greater negotiating power and better quality of service delivery, but a disadvantage was that the ROCs became too big and too impersonal. Also the merging process in the Netherlands had not yet closed, eight years after their first merger had taken place, they were still merging colleges, so the ROCs were still getting bigger. The impact of their transformation was that their ROCs became more powerful, in terms of finances or bargaining power but they had become very big institutions that were difficult to manage. The interviewees were not aware if the ROCs impacted on poverty alleviation or job creation in the Netherlands. Their big problem was their very high student dropout rates that did not improve, in spite of their transformation (Focus group discussion 2004).

The responses indicated that the transformation process at this stage has not brought the colleges closer to the achievement of the socio-economic objectives.

8.8 EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

The researcher wanted to determine whether in the light of the problems experienced by the colleges planning for FET was done thoroughly, and whether there was a gap between what the planners envisaged for the sector and what was actually happening.

The opinion was expressed that: "It appears as if the problems that arise in the system come as a surprise, were not anticipated and not planned for either" (Participant C 2004).

The above view seems to be shared by an ex-principal of a former technical college who was of the opinion that: "the seeming lack of proactive planning appears to have serious negative implications for vocational education and training in South Africa" (Participant A 2004).

The perceptions of the above interviewees seem to concur with those of two other interviewees: "It is difficult to express an opinion on whether there was proper planning done, but when one sees how the process unfolds one can't help wondering if there was planning at all" (Participant G 2004) and the following view was expressed by an ex-technical college principal that: "Daar kon nie ernstige beplanning plaasgevind het nie, te oordeel aan hoe die proses besig is om uit te rol" (Participant B 2004). (Serious planning could not have taken place if judged against, the way the process is unfolding).

A chief executive officer expressed himself as follows: "I have serious doubts about the departments ability to give leadership and guidance

based upon thorough planning. Things seem to happen in a reactionary manner and on an ad hoc basis" (Participant E 2004).

The respondents from the Netherlands indicated that their planning took place between the ROCs, the community, all stakeholders and politicians on an ongoing basis. They identify common problems and together they plan how to solve their problems. (using their "polder model", they would negotiate until they accomplish consensus). The politicians would then take the plans to their cabinet, present them and seek funding for them. The approved plan together with the necessary funding would then be handed over to the ROCs for implementation.

Most of the participants expressed the view that very promising plans were often produced in South Africa, also with regards to FET, but there seemed to be a problem with the implementation. It would appear as if planning around the resourcing of the plans, both financially and in terms of human resources, were problematic. This led to serious problems with the entire unfolding process of FET.

8.9 CONCLUSION

The overall impression gleaned from the perceptions of the participants at the operational level is that, other than, rhetoric pronouncements made by the authorities on the importance of the FET college sector, it was still, in practice, the "Cinderella" education. FET colleges do not seem to be a priority to the Department of Education. The participants have also consistently raised problems that need urgent attention if the sector is going to develop and make a real positive impact on society. The achievement of the objectives set for colleges, at this stage, appears to be extremely difficult for the colleges to attain. In the following chapter the conclusions and the recommendations of this study will be presented.

CHAPTER 9

SYNTHESIS OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the transformation of technical colleges into FET colleges, by using the Northern Cape Urban FET College as a case study, to establish the achievability of the NCFEs objectives for FET colleges. In this chapter, attention is given to the conclusions reached by the researcher by analysing the data collected during the empirical study. These conclusions successfully answer the major research question posed at the beginning of this study, namely whether the socio-economic objectives, that is, the alleviation of unemployment and poverty as well as stimulating the economy, were in fact achievable. It is hoped that the recommendations arrived at could serve as guidelines for policy-makers and educational planners when educational policies and objectives are formulated in the future.

9.2 THE EXPECTATIONS FOR FET

9.2.1 Relevance of college programmes

The participants had the following perceptions regarding the relevance of the college's instructional programme offerings during the empirical study:

The perception that college programmes were irrelevant and non-responsive to economic and labour market needs, seemed to have been accepted unquestioningly by the NCFE and decision-makers, who saw this as the reason why college students did not readily find employment, and that colleges, in fact "trained students for unemployment" (see 1.2.1, p.2).

The research done for this study revealed that the colleges' instructional programmes were firstly not irrelevant, but some of them need to be updated. Secondly, the study also put forward evidence that colleges did not train students for unemployment as was perceived by the NCFE (see 4.6, pp.73-80).

To ensure that the problem above is resolved, it is recommended that the college's instructional programmes, where necessary, are updated as a matter of urgency, and that the incorrect perception that the instructional programme offerings are irrelevant be publicly corrected at a national level to restore the image of college education.

9.2.2 Relevance and responsiveness of programmes and employment creation and poverty alleviation

In the literature study the Northern Cape's economy was used as an example to illustrate that the labour market and the economy could not absorb all the new entrants to the labour market of the province (see 4.9, pp.83-84). The research identified this as a possible reason why students from colleges could not readily obtain employment.

The perception that changing the Northern Cape Urban FET College's instructional programme offerings, to make them responsive and relevant to labour market needs, and this would make students more employable, does not seem to hold water. In the literature study this perception was identified as an example of straight-line thinking, and moreover unrealistic and utopian (see 4.11, p.87). In chapter 4, the literature study indicated that, what was needed, was to achieve interaction between social forces such as, politics, economics and education, which are all interdependent. Achieving a favourable balance between all these elements could bring about socio-economic changes (see 4.11, p.89). The empirical study supported the literature study in its findings, that is, that merely changing

the instructional programme offerings will not necessarily result in employment for college students and poverty alleviation (see 8.2.2, p.157).

Education could provide relevant skills and qualifications, but, on its own, education is not the “magic potion” it is made out to be for South Africa’s economic problems. It cannot bring about significant socio-economic changes, as is implied by the objectives set for FET colleges. More and better education and training may create the conditions for improved social and personal development and act as a lever for social change, but the exaggerated view that education, can on its own, solve economic problems, is clearly flawed. The research done suggests, on the contrary that education responds to economic development, rather than causing economic development (see 2.9, pp.38-39).

In order to change the perception that the transformation of colleges’ instructional programme offerings, will solve the problems of unemployment, poverty and a weak economy. It is recommended that a realistic view be presented to the stakeholders as a matter of urgency, because this perception places unfair expectations upon the college sector. Students who are not immediately employed after finishing their studies at a college could become very sceptical and disillusioned about the value of college education. Moreover, politicians could place the Department of Education under severe pressure to account, for not achieving the college’s targets to alleviate unemployment and poverty.

It is further recommended that cognisance be taken of the complex relationship between education and employment (see chapter 4, p.65) when objectives for education vis-à-vis employment are made. Education should not be seen as having any other purpose than education.

9.2.3 Entrepreneurial training as a solution for unemployment and poverty

The idea of creating employment through the offering of entrepreneurial courses in all fields of the college programmes was also presented as a possible solution for the unemployment and related problems experienced in South Africa (see 8.2.3, p.158). The empirical investigation indicated that there were serious problems that prevented college “graduates” from becoming entrepreneurs (see 8.2.3). It also pointed out that, if too many students should get into business, especially, in semi-rural areas the balance that is supposed to be amongst businesses, to make them viable, could be eroded and could cause bankruptcies of established businesses. This would clearly result in the very problem (unemployment) that needs to be addressed.

The researcher is of the opinion that offering entrepreneurial courses across the board at colleges will not in itself solve the problem of unemployment and poverty (see 8.2.3). As part of a holistic strategy, it could, however, play a role in assisting in addressing the problem.

Therefore, it is recommended that the stumbling blocks (see 8.2.3) be removed to make entrepreneurship possible for the ordinary person in the street, with the proviso that regulations be implemented to ensure that new entrepreneurs do not flood existing markets. Entrepreneurship needs to be complemented with initiatives to encourage investments that could result in job creation. The Government could also encourage corporate South Africa with the necessary incentives, to play a more prominent role in creating employment, thereby putting more money into circulation in order to support the new entrepreneurs.

9.2.4 Poverty alleviation and education

The literature study pointed out that, if poverty is to be alleviated an understanding of the concept is necessary. Firstly, in a scientific way and secondly, as to what its causes are. The literature study indicated that poverty could be defined in narrow or broader social terms. In the narrow sense, poverty could be defined as economic insufficiency, malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, etc. In the broader sense, the economic insufficiency definition disregards the web of social relations, generating social obligations and social needs. Here exclusion from ordinary living patterns, customs or full membership of society is seen as poverty (see 5.2, p.99).

Poverty is caused by social structural causes, such as low remuneration jobs. Social processes usually produce an over supply of such jobs which in turn keep workers wages down. Poverty can also be transmitted in the sociological sense, from one generation to the following. From the above, it can be deduced that poverty is not necessarily caused by a lack of skills or education (see 5.2).

It is thus recommended that the idea that colleges can assist in poverty and unemployment alleviation and economic stimulation should not be promoted, because it is unrealistic, utopian and places unfair expectations on colleges (see 4.11, p.87). The problems under discussion could possibly be addressed through co-operation, collaboration and partnerships between social drivers such as politics, education, legislation, economics, etc. (see figure 4.4, p.88). Poverty should be addressed through social structural interventions, not necessarily through education and training.

9.2.5 Programme funding as a steering mechanism

The literature study revealed that programme funding was seen as a steering mechanism by the Department of Education to compel the colleges to offer programmes in line with the national and provincial, economic and labour market needs (see 4.7, p.80 and 8.2.4, p.161). It was believed that this would steer the colleges into offering relevant and responsive instructional programmes, which would assist, with students becoming more employable. This should according to the Department of Education assist with the achievement of the NCFEs objectives for colleges. A presentation was given of the economic and labour needs of the Northern Cape Province. A comparison between the Northern Cape Urban FET college's instructional programme and the above-mentioned needs, indicated that there exists very little correlation between them. (see 4.10, p.85). The implication was that for the majority of its programmes, the college would not receive programme funding. That would mean that the college would have to either find alternative funding or stop offering most of the programmes currently offered.

This proposed programme funding is orientated towards the "demand side" rather than towards the "supply side". The mechanism is supposed to re-orientate college programmes towards the needs of the market place and not towards the needs of the learners or the communities in which they live. Private FET colleges would have a great advantage over the public FET colleges in that they are driven by the "supply side". The dilemma is that the private FET colleges will only serve those students who have the ability to pay their higher tuition fees. The danger here is that, in the bigger picture, economic and labour needs will determine the content of the college curriculum and what is valuable as knowledge. This will imply that the curriculum of colleges will be commercialised and knowledge will be commodified (see 4.7, p.80, 4.10, p.85 and 4.11, p.86).

This study pointed out that the results obtained from using the manpower planning method is questionable and should be treated with caution. These questionable results obtained from using the manpower planning methodology will be used to determine whether the colleges should or should not receive programme funding for its instructional programmes (see 4.13, p.92).

This funding mechanism could bring about the demise of colleges such as the Northern Cape Urban FET College and other peri-urban colleges in the country. Colleges will be forced to find alternative funding in order to continue their instructional programmes, this will be detrimental to the college's future existence. This mechanism could also contribute to the commercialisation and commodification of education and training, where industry would determine what is good and valuable for education.

It is therefore recommended that programme funding as presented should not be implemented at all because it will not be in the best interest of colleges. It is further recommended that manpower planning should not be used to make projections that will determine funding for the colleges. Funding should be based upon the needs of the students and the communities in which they live and not on questionable projections.

9.3 SUPPORT TO COLLEGES

The literature study and the empirical investigation revealed the following problems regarding support to the colleges by the Department of Education:

Provincial FET units were established and staffed by officials from outside of the sector. This impacted negatively on the colleges in the sense that the colleges were not receiving sufficient support from the Department of

Education possibly due to the officials' lack of skills with regards to FET colleges, and its operations, which is a specialised area. The consequences are that colleges do not function efficiently at institutional and provincial levels (see section 8.3, p.166). In the Northern Cape Province, for example, the provincial FET Unit is inadequately staffed; The FET Unit consist of only two officials coming from outside of the sector. The colleges experienced this lack of qualified officials as very problematic (see 3.3, p.52). The provincialisation of colleges was regarded by the interviewees as not being in the best interest of colleges (see 8.3, p.166).

The lack of support with regards to the allocation of posts to the colleges in terms of the functions required from them. This is to be understood against the lack of staffing norms. Whatever the reason, it is a stumbling block to efficient service delivery at the colleges (see 6.5, p.121).

On provincial and national levels the college sector is insignificant in terms of student numbers in the sector. Relative, to general education and higher education student numbers and it appears as if little attention and emphasis is placed on the smallest component of educational system in terms of budget allocation and policy development. Because of the aforementioned it seems as if colleges might not be regarded as a priority, or as of little importance, to the Department of Education (see 8.3).

The year 2003 was declared the year of FET with great fanfare but the question was asked, what was in effect done for the sector in terms of redress, transformation, funding, staffing, curriculum, etc. apart from appointing the chief executive officers, and sending middle management and principals to Britain and the Netherlands respectively for training. Little seems to have been done to address the real needs of this sector.

There is a government bursary scheme for higher education students but this is non-existent for FET college students. Considering the lack of

support for college students from the Department, one wonders if the announcements of the importance of the sector is not just lip service and whether the colleges are not still the “Cinderella” of the education system in South Africa.

To rectify the problems discussed above the following recommendations are made:

Colleges should be removed from the provincial Education Departments’ authority as a matter of urgency and be placed under the National Department of Labour.

Staffing norms for colleges should be developed and implemented as a matter of great urgency.

Colleges should be provided with the posts needed to enable them to carry out their mandates.

The college sector should be separated from the school sector and be given a separate focus and should be funded by the National Department of Labour.

A national student bursary and or loan scheme for the FET sector should be implemented as a matter of urgency.

9.4 SYNERGY BETWEEN FET POLICIES

The literature and empirical studies revealed that there was not sufficient synergy between FET policies and between departments. It was also pointed out that the FET Act No. 98 of 1998 was promulgated without any regulations. Neither were there any funding or staffing norms in place for the newly established FET colleges even six years after the promulgation of the FET, Act No. 98 of 1998.

The implications of the circumstances described above are that institutions cannot be adequately funded or staffed in the absence of norms. There is

a serious flaw in the approach of the DoE if the assumption was made that transformation of colleges could take place without additional human and financial resources.

The Department of Labour (DoL) and the Department of Education (DoE) are both responsible for education and training in South Africa. The FET college sector resorts under the DoE and the official programme offerings, funded by the DoE, were approved by the Minister of Education. These programmes are the NATED 191 programmes (see 4.2.1.2, p.67), which are the official college programmes. The DoE is also responsible for learnerships and other skill training. The dilemma arises in that the latter-mentioned programmes are not funded by the DoE. Legally this is correct because these programmes are DoL programmes. The DoL is also not obliged to fund programmes offered by the colleges, because colleges do not resort under the DoL. This is problematic to the colleges and it seems as if there is a lack of synergy (see 8.4, p.169).

To address the above-mentioned problems, the following recommendations are made:

Regulations for the FET Act No. 98 of 1998, a funding formula and staffing norms are to be developed urgently.

Synergy should be established within the FET college policy framework and all policies should be aligned with one other. When an act is promulgated it has to be accompanied with the necessary budgets, funding frameworks, staffing framework and synergy within and across departments.

9.5 INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

As far as the integration of education and training is concerned, the literature and empirical studies suggest that there seems to be a policy

gap that makes it very difficult to integrate education and training. Firstly, as long as there are no fully equipped workshops at the colleges, students will not be able to receive both theoretical and practical training at college level (see 3.6, p.60 and 8.5, p.171). Secondly, the notion that principals of colleges form partnerships with private businesses to provide college students with their practical training at the private companies is problematic. Since there is no legal framework within which such arrangements can be made. This kind of partnership will not flourish if companies could decide to participate or not (see 3.6).

It is therefore recommended that colleges be provided with fully- equipped workshops and enabling legislation implemented to facilitate the participation of the private sector in the practical training of students.

9.6 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The empirical and literature studies seem to suggest that there is a definite problem regarding the institutional capacity of the college sector to comply with the requirements of the FET Act, No.98 of 1998.

Firstly, there is a serious lack of staff capacity to deliver on the expectations of learnerships, skills and new programmes. Secondly, there is a shortage of staff in terms of the requirements of Act No. 98 of 1998 such as, librarians, councilors, sports officers, psychologists, curriculum developers and life skills trainers. Thirdly, the colleges have limited financial and infra-structural capacity to realise the expectations of the authorities. Since the inception of vocational education in South Africa it was poorly funded and staffed. This situation seems to have remained unchanged even up to today (see 6.5, p.121 and 8.6, p.173).

To rectify these problems the following recommendations are made:

Existing college staff members are to be trained to enable them to participate in the new programmes.

Additional staff members should be appointed to do the work required by the FET Act No. 98 of 1998.

Additional financial resources should be made available to colleges in order to effect the transformation and to play the important role given to colleges by the authorities.

9.7 THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE NCFE'S OBJECTIVES RESULTING FROM THE TRANSFORMATION

The literature and the empirical studies indicated that some transformation did take place, although participants during the interviews were of the opinion that the contribution made through the transformation process, was insignificant in achieving the NCFEs objectives.

Some of the changes that have been achieved at this stage of the transformation process is the promulgation of the FET Act No.98 of 1998, the provincialisation of FET, the establishment of the provincial FET units, the merger of the 152 colleges into 50 FET institutions and the appointment of the 50 chief executive officers heading the FET institutions (see 3.3, p.52). Participants expressed the opinion that, apart from the above, nothing has actually changed on the ground; lecturers still taught their same subjects at the same campuses, no significant curriculum change had taken place, no funding or staffing norms were developed, furthermore synergy between policies was still lacking, there was a shortage of staff, and funding, and finally the existing infra-structure was still not "fit for purpose", etc.

From the above it is clear why the participants expressed themselves as strongly about the FET sector. To change the current view, that the transformation in the college sector was not making significant strides in

its achievement of the NCFEs objectives, it is recommended that serious attention be given to the sector in terms of developing, as a matter of urgency, funding and staffing norms, securing funding to eradicate the staffing shortages and to recapitalise the infra-structure to make it “fit for purpose”, and to synergise the FET policies.

9.8 EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The study has shown that educational planning is central to efficient and effective educational transformation. Educational planning is defined as a purposeful activity involving choices and decisions about future action, choices between alternative ends and alternative means of achieving them (see 6.4.2.2, p.199). Educational planners need to take cognisance of their educational objectives, that give direction to the implementation of their plans, and the establishment of criteria through which they may assess how successful they are in achieving their objectives.

Some questions that need to be answered by the planners are:

Is the educational system sufficiently equipped with relevant human resources to realise the set objectives? What are the likely financial implications of their plans? What educational structures will carry out the objectives? Why are there discrepancies between statements of objectives, expectations and reality?

This research has revealed that the implementation of the transformational process was impeded by blockages in the system, (see 6.5, p.121). These blockages seem to be due to oversight as far as the planning process was concerned with regards to budgeting, staffing, infra-structure and legislation in order to achieve the

integration of education and training. It seems as if planners did not

ask themselves the above questions, which could possibly have averted the problems experienced in the system.

It is recommended that, when policies are developed, an implementation plan should be designed. Small-scale implementation should be embarked upon so that “teething problems” and possible oversights could be identified at that level. Rather than implementing a policy at national level, just to discover that all legislative frameworks have not been put in place.

9.9 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented. A summary of the most important conclusions and recommendations will follow:

9.9.1 Summary of conclusions based on the literature study

- Colleges were historically poorly funded and poorly staffed and this could have contributed to its negative image (see 2.3.3, p.25)
- Since 1925 colleges were under national control in order to manage the colleges more effectively (see 2.3.1, p.20).
- Education responds to the economy rather than causing socio-economic changes (see 2.3, p.18 and 2.9, p.38).
- The proposed programme-funding mechanism is not appropriate for the sector, since this mechanism is orientated towards the needs of the market place and not towards the needs of the students or the communities in which they live. The implementation of the proposed funding model, will mean that, economic needs, will determine the content of the college curriculum and what is valuable as knowledge. College curriculums would thus be commercialised and knowledge would be commodified (see 4.7, p.80).

- The successful transformation of colleges seems not to be regarded as very important by the Department of Education (see 3.3, p.52).
- Departmental FET units are poorly staffed and by incumbents, generally, from outside of the college sector without the necessary experience (see 3.3, p.52).
- College programme offerings were not regarded as irrelevant by the interviewees nor did they regard the colleges to be training students for unemployment as was suggested by the NCFE (see 4.15, p.97).
- The literature seems to indicate that education and training does not cause poverty and thus cannot be used to alleviate it (see 5.5, p.106).
- Education responds to changes in society, it does not cause these changes (see 2.3, p.18 and 2.9, p.38).
- The literature study seems to suggest that education and training does not bring about socio-economic development in terms of unemployment and poverty alleviation (see 4.15, p.97).
- Education and training systems seem to have a limited capacity to achieve socio-economical objectives (see 6.2, p.114).
- Educational planners should take cognisance of factors such as consistency, sequence and probability of success in their educational planning (see 6.4.2.1, p.119).

9.9.2 The most important conclusions based on the empirical study

- College programme offerings were not regarded as irrelevant by the interviewees (see section 4.6, p.73 and 8.2, p.150).
- Changing programme offerings will not lead to unemployment alleviation (see 4.11, p.86, 4.12, p.89, 4.15, p.97 and 8.2.1, p.150).
- Entrepreneurship is not the panacea for South Africa's economic problems (see 8.2.2, p.153).

- Poverty alleviation cannot take place through education and training on its own (see 5.5, p.106 and 8.2.3, p.158).
- Funding and staffing frameworks for the colleges had still not been designed even six years after the promulgation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998 (see 3.5, p.57 and 8.3, p.165).
- Insufficient support is given to the colleges in terms of staffing, funding and leadership (see 3.3, p.52 and 8.3, p.165).
- Colleges should not resort under the provincial Departments of Education and colleges should get a separate focus away from the schools (see 8.3).
- There is no bursary or loan scheme for the college sector in South Africa (see section 8.3).
- Education and training will not be integrated successfully in colleges in South Africa without establishing fully -equipped workshops at colleges (see 3.6, p.60 and 8.5, p.171).
- Policy gaps identified during the transformation process are problematic (see 8.5, p.171).
- FET colleges do not seem to be very important to the Department of Education; it seems as if the “Cinderella status” still cling to the colleges (see 8.3, p.165 and 8.9, p.179).

9.9.3 The most important recommendations of this study

- Some of the college programme offerings need to be revised.
- The perception that the changing of programme offerings and the offering of entrepreneurship as part of the programme package will alleviate unemployment which will address poverty, needs to be corrected. Such a perception places unfair expectations upon the colleges and students may become very sceptical and disillusioned about the value of college education.

- Programme funding should be rethought and perhaps not be implemented.
- A bursary and or loan scheme for FET college students should be instituted urgently.
- Colleges should be provided with fully -equipped workshops in order to integrate education and training.
- Colleges should be removed from the school sector as a matter of urgency.
- Colleges should resort under the National Department of Labour.
- Policies and objectives concerning colleges should be designed in a coherent and realistic fashion based upon empirical information.

9.10 CONCLUSION

This study has shown that serious attention and a disposition change towards FET college education in South Africa need to take place urgently. Greater focus is needed on the long-term effects of the transformation envisaged, and the actual process of transformation, rather than on short-term solutions driven by financial constraints and short-term political gains.

The study has also indicated that educational objectives should not be based on planners' wishful thinking, but rather on empirical evidence that such objectives can be successfully attained. Objectives should be concrete and feasible, accompanied by time schedules, source of funding, human resources, institution responsible, etc. for the implementation of the set objectives.

A re-evaluation of the implementation strategy of the FET college policy is necessary. This should be done from the vantage point of practice, rather than the ideal-type statements of intentions, blueprints and magic potions. And if necessary be adapted in collaboration with experts in the field. If

the current approach is not reviewed because it is seen as the only alternative, then this chosen approach could itself become the policy 'problem' that might work against the very objectives it strives to respond to.

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PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with the following participants:

Participant, A. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 8 June. Motheo College, Bloemfontein.

Participant, B. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 11 June. Ekurhuleni East College, Springs.

Participant, C. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 9 June. Motheo College, Bloemfontein.

Participant, D. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 2 May. Northern Cape Urban College, Kimberley.

Participant, E. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 15 June. Northlink College, Cape Town.

Participant, F. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 17 June. Kathu College, Kathu.

Participant, G. 2004. Interview conducted according to the interview schedule, annexure B on 5 July. Kimberley College, Kimberley.

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Annexure A

PROGRAMMES CURRENTLY OFFERED AT THE TWO DELIVERY SITES

NORTHERN CAPE CAMPUS		KIMBERLEY CAMPUS	
COURSE	SUBJECTS	COURSE	SUBJECTS
		N2	Business Practice Business English Economics Computer & Typing
NIC	Business English Sake Afrikaans Business Practice Accounting Computer & typing Economics	NIC	Business English Sake Afrikaans Business Practice Accounting Computer & Typing Economics
–	–	N3	Business English Office Practice Computer Practice Public Administration
NSC	Business English Sake Afrikaans Accounting Office Practice Computer Practice Small Business & Entrepreneurship Public Administration	NSC	Business English Setswana Accounting Office Practice Economics Computer Practice Small Business

Introductory	Introductory Communication Introductory Computer Practice Introductory Marketing Introductory Entrepreneurship Introductory Accounting	Introduction	Introductory Communication Introductory Computer Practice Introductory Marketing Introductory Entrepreneurship Introductory Accounting
N4	Management Communication Marketing Management Entrepreneurship Computer Practice Financial Accounting Computer Financial Systems	N4	Management Communication Marketing Management Entrepreneurship Computer Practice
N5	Management Communication Sales Management Marketing Management Economics Public Relations Computer Practice Computer Financial Systems	N5	Management Communication Sales Management Marketing Management Computer Practice

<p>N6</p> <p>Marketing Research Marketing Management Sales Management Computer Practice Public Finance Computer Financial Systems</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>- - - - -</p>		<p>N6</p> <p>Introductory</p>	<p>Marketing Research Marketing Communication Marketing Management Sales management</p> <p>Introductory Communication Introductory Computer Practice Introductory Personnel Management Introductory Entrepreneurship Introductory Accounting</p>
<p>N4</p>		<p>N4</p>	<p>Communication Computer Practice Public administration</p>
<p>N6</p>	<p>Communication Information Technology Office Practice Computer Practice Public Relations Legal Practice</p>	<p>N6</p>	<p>Communication Information Technology Office Practice Computer Practice Public Administration</p>

ENGINEERING STUDIES	
NCOR	Mathematics Science Communication Drawing Technology
Motor Body Repairing	Mathematics Body work Theory Drawing Science
Electrical	Electrical trade theory Mathematics Science Electronics Drawings Electrotechnics Mechanotechnics Supervisory Management Science Electronics Electrotechnics Mechanotechnics Supervisory Management Science Electronics

Mechanical	Mathematics Science Drawing Motor Trade Fitting & Turning Diesel Trade Electrotechnics Mechanotechnics Supervisory Management Strength of Materials
Bridging UFS	Psychology Accountancy Chemistry Economics Sociology Mathematics English Computer Practice Foundation course

Enrichment	Needle work Cake icing Flower arrangement Art of entertaining Interior decorating English conversation Sign language Cosmetology Welding Computers Windows, Word, Excell, Pastel, Internet, E-Mail, A+ Know your car Fashion design Material painting French and German for beginners
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Annexure B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Introduction

- The researcher introduces himself to the respondents.
- Stresses the confidentiality of the interviews
- Permission to record interview on tape recorder.

2. Expectations of FET colleges

- To what extent are college programme offerings relevant and responsive to the labour and economic needs of the country?
- Can a change in programme offerings make colleges graduates more employable? (and in the process alleviate poverty)
- To what extent could the offering of entrepreneurship as part of the college package to all of its students bring about more employment opportunities?
- Could poverty be alleviated through education and training? Substantiate your answer.
- To what extent do you think that programme funding could steer colleges into delivering relevant and responsive programmes that should address the socio-economic problems?

3. Support for colleges to achieve the expectations for FET

- To what extent is the support forthcoming from the DoE sufficient to enable the colleges to carry out their mandate and to implement the FET Act No. 98 of 1998? Substantiate your answer.

4. Synergy between FET policies

- In your opinion is there sufficient synergy within the FET policy framework and other policies that impact on FET to assist in the smooth implementation of the FET Act No. 98 of 1998 and the other skills development legislation in South Africa? Substantiate your answer.

5. Integration of education and training

- How do you see the integration of education and training in the college sector being realised successfully?

6. Institutional capacity to deliver the objectives set by the NCFE for colleges

- Please reflect on whether colleges have sufficient capacity in terms of human and other resource to deliver on the expectations of the DoE?

7. The achievement of the NCFE's objectives resulting from the transformation

- In your opinion at this stage of the transformation process are there indicators that point in the direction of the achievement of the objectives set for the colleges?

8. Educational planning and policy implementation

- Reflect on the possible effectiveness of the structure of the FET plan as well as that of the implementation plan for FET.