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The Perceptions of Learners about the relevance of the High School Curriculum in the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape.

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ABSTRACT

Recently, in the Department of Education, there have been many changes which put demands on new skills and expertise. Since changes are “actioned” through the curriculum, it is critical

- (i) to investigate what the curriculum provides to meet the new demands
- (ii) to check with learners whether the curriculum empowers them with skills so that they could be employable or generate their own employment.

Therefore, the researcher decided to look at the perceptions of learners about relevance of the high school curriculum and to get some recommendations from the learners since they are the ones who are to benefit from the curriculum. This study was done empirically through questionnaires.

After the research had been concluded the researcher realised that there was need to improve the high school curriculum in the Eastern Cape generally and specifically the North Eastern Region. A lot can be gained by this region if the high school curriculum can be improved.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to all the educands, educators

and all those who are interested in education

and to my mother Koleka, my sisters Nelisa, Bukeka

and Ayanda and their children and to my husband

Wesley and my daughter Nangamso.

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DORETH DOROTHY KANJANA

30 JANUARY 1999

UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN WESTVILLE

DECLARATION

I, Doreth, Dorothy Kanjana declare that this dissertation is my own independent work except where I have quoted and drawn from other sources that have been acknowledged. This work has not been presented previously for any other degree in any university.

Doreth Dorothy Kanjana

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Researcher

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

The view of designing any curriculum for relevance in terms of variety of demands by stakeholders such as needs, interests, abilities, talents, etc., has been proposed as far back as the 1970's (Blaug, 1974). The stakeholders referred to are parents, learners, communities, business, industry, commerce and the government.

During the 1980's, emphasis on the relevance of curriculum to the world of work was proposed by theorists such as Jennings, 1987; Psacharopoulos, 1985; Marsland, 1987; White, 1987. This is one of the demands of stakeholders such as industry, business and commerce.

In the 1990's South Africa made a similar proposal. The Department of Education through its White Paper (1995) proposed that the curriculum choice in schools should be diversified so as to equip the young for future. This proposal had various implications. One of these was that the government was quite aware that curriculum choice in schools needed attention with regards to diversification. Some theorists proposed a curriculum that is "entirely orientated to the needs of the workplace" (Kallaway, 1992:7).

Others proposed a curriculum that would provide skills needed in the world of work (Jamieson, 1990; Olivier et al., 1997; White, 1987; Psacharopoulos and Loxley, 1985). These two groups of theorists had the same view but differed only on specificity. Kallaway was vague by not stating what he meant by a curriculum that is entirely orientated to the workplace whilst others specified that such a curriculum should provide skills. Curriculum diversification was seen by theorists such as Chaube and Chaube (1993), Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985) as one of the ways by which the demands of the stakeholders could be met.

It has been stated that the vocationalisation of school curriculum where emphasis is placed on vocational and technical could be one of the ways of establishing the link between the world of work and the curriculum. This "new vocationalism" has been thought of as the one that would ensure the provision of skills required in the world of work (Jamieson, 1990; White, 1987). It has also been believed that a diversified curriculum which includes vocationalism can reduce unemployment rate (Chaube & Chaube, 1993; Mwamwenda & Baine, 1995). This has been proved successful with vocationalism being an instrument in providing employment (Selvaratman, 1988; Psacharopoulos & Loxley, 1985 & Psacharopoulos, 1986).

This research is conducted in order to find out whether the curriculum choice in senior secondary schools is diversified or not. Also it is the aim of this research to find out about the relevance of the curriculum in senior secondary schools to the world of work. In addition the research aims at finding out about the relevance of the curriculum of high schools to the needs, interests, talents and abilities particularly of learners.

It is important for South Africa to find out whether her curriculum contributes or not to unemployment. She should find out whether the diversified curriculum cannot come to her rescue as regards employment.

In this study the following terms shall be used interchangeably; high school and senior secondary school; subjects and school subjects; writer and researcher, learners, educands and students and teacher and educator.

1.2 Rationale

As far back as 1974, the writer has been involved in curriculum matters as an educator. She has observed that in the high schools in which she taught the curriculum was mainly composed of academic and humanities streams only.

In the early 1990's, the writer has been in the management of a high school as a deputy headmaster. The writer was concerned about the large number of learners who passed Std.10 in that institution, and could not be admitted in tertiary institutions of their choice. These learners, mostly from the humanities' streams, stated that they were refused admission to the tertiary institutions of their choice. Their curriculum did not correspond with the requirements of their chosen careers in those tertiary institutions.

Research has revealed that the rate of unemployment of school leavers in South Africa is very high. This is confirmed in the media specifically in television programs and over the air in educational programs like Two Way. Some of them, who could not afford further education, could not get employment. They could not use any of these subjects for self-employment. One wonders why it is that school leavers cannot make use of what they gained at high school to provide themselves even with self-employment.

Most of the Grade 12 school leavers rush to teacher training colleges or specialise in teaching at university level. The problem at present is that when these trainees get qualified they become unemployable due to the big number of teachers with few learners to teach.

In 1995, the new government proposed some changes in the education system. Curriculum was one of the areas focussed and where changes were to be made. The proposal was that curriculum choice should be diversified to equip the young people for future (Department of Education, 1995).

According to the document Mobilisation for a Learning Nation (1996) it was also proposed that, in colleges, emphasis should be on sciences, mathematics, technology and commercial streams. It is so common in my area that many school leavers are not employed and do not further studies.

Given a few innovative curriculum programmes proposed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (1997), the writer felt the need to do an empirical investigation of the high school curriculum in the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape. The aim was to find out about the relevance of the high school curriculum. In addition the writer's aim was to find out whether there was need for innovative curriculum programmes. The government's proposals cited above form the basis of the rationale for this study.

The problem that needs to be investigated, then, is the extent to which the high school curriculum in this region of the Eastern Cape and in the Tabankulu district in particular, is relevant to the interests, abilities, talents and needs of learners. It is also important to investigate the extent to which the high school curriculum is relevant to the demands of the world of work.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study has been to examine the perceptions of learners about the relevance of the high school curriculum to the world of work.

1.4 Research questions

This study aims to answer the following critical questions;

- a) What are the learners' perception of a relevant curriculum ?
- b) To what extent is the curriculum offered in the Eastern Cape high schools specifically the North Eastern Region relevant to the
 - (i) world of work
 - (ii) needs, interests, abilities and talents of learners as well as the needs of parents and state ?
- c) What changes should be done to the curriculum to make it relevant ?

1.5 Methods of study

A descriptive and qualitative mode of study has been employed. Material for this research has been derived from three sources. These were the following :

1.5.1.Primary Sources.

Permission was granted by the district manager and the circuit managers of the Department of Education, Culture and Sport in the Tabankulu district to consult relevant documents for the purpose of authentic information. This has been an important source of information. Such documents reflected the statistics and the curriculum of each high school.

1.5.2 Literature Survey.

The literature consulted included journals on curriculum and education. These were South African and international journals on education and curriculum. Inter alia were the Journals on Curriculum studies, Comparative Education Review, South African Journal on Education and International Journals on education. These were very significant to this research.

Books dealing with curriculum and its design, diversification and curriculum in general, were consulted. All high schools were targeted in this district because it is where the curriculum changes and restructuring need to be done. Documents such as Classroom Transformation Campaign and White Paper on Education were consulted because of their relevance to this study. Programmes like Two Way in SABC II in the media have also been a useful source of information.

1.5.3 Research questionnaires

A detailed objective questionnaire with closed and open ended questions was used. The questions covered personal details, occupation analysis, curriculum relevance, recommendations and suggestions on curriculum design. Permission was granted by the

district manager, circuit managers and educator unions of the Tabankulu district in the Eastern Cape to administer the questionnaires to the Std.9 (Grade 11) learners in the five high schools of this district.

1.5.3.1 The development of the questionnaire.

The researcher decided to undertake an empirical investigation to elicit information about the perceptions of learners with respect to the relevance of the curriculum in high schools in Tabankulu district and to determine the relevance of the curriculum in addressing the needs, interests, talents and abilities of learners.

In the development of the questionnaire, the researcher was fully aware that the outcomes of this research will not be enough to improve the curriculum in the high schools of Tabankulu as well as the North Eastern region but it shall have opened the eyes of those who decide the curriculum of schools to review the curriculum. Furthermore, the researcher was aware of the increasing call made by the government that the curriculum should change so as to meet the changes that are taking place in South Africa. Moreover, the interests of learners, parents and the political persons would inevitably inform changes in the curriculum.

1.5.3.2 Choice of the sample.

All the high schools in this district offer similar academic streams. The humanities streams differed slightly. In this stream, one school had biblical studies, one had home economics and agricultural science, another had needlework and agricultural science and the rest of the high schools had agricultural science. Two high schools offered commercial streams.

The writer decided to do the research in the rural areas. The district chosen was selected because it is the most rural district in the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape.

Due to the vastness of the district, a selection of schools had to be made looking at the curriculum offered in these high schools of this district. The sample comprised Grade 11 learners of each school chosen. The Grade 12 learners could not be used as a sample because they were busy preparing for final examinations. The learners who had already passed could not be used because they were scattered all over South Africa. The writer would find it difficult in getting them.

The Grade 11 learners were chosen because the writer was quite confident that these learners have the ability to give their views on what the writer wanted to research. The Grade 11 learners are able to make career choices and know what they want and what is right and not right for them. Therefore the writer did not want to undermine the ability of Grade 11 learners to give their perceptions on what the writer researches.

In addition, Grade 11 in public and private high schools with different races are given opportunities to decide what curriculum suits their chosen careers why should Grade 11 learners in public high schools dominated by Africans, be deprived of that privilege. That is why the writer chose these learners because she had confidence in the Grade 11 learners.

My sample was chosen from these high schools. The schools offering biblical studies, home economics and needlework were chosen. One school was chosen from each of the streams that offered agricultural science and academic subjects. Both schools offering commercial subjects were chosen. The sample was composed of 400 respondents because the classes chosen per school had a student population ranging between 44 and 82. The questionnaires were sent to all the schools chosen as the sample. To ensure that the sample was representative of as broad a curriculum the questionnaire was completed by 240 respondents from both the commercial and sciences streams, 119 respondents from humanities with home economics, biblical studies and needlework and 41 respondents from humanities with agriculture.

A draft questionnaire was developed and various aspects of the curriculum related to the needs of the research were incorporated. The draft questionnaire was also developed incorporating various aspects such as curriculum relevance, recommendations on how a curriculum should be designed and how the curriculum should look like.

In the development of the questionnaire, the researcher was fully aware that the outcomes of this research will not be sufficient for improvement of the curriculum in these schools but it may open the eyes of those who decide on curriculum in schools, so that they may review their curriculum. Furthermore, the researcher has been aware of an increasing call by the government that the curriculum should aim at reducing unemployment by providing subjects that provide skills that are in demand in the world of work today. It was important therefore to find out through this research what skills do learners want and need so that the curriculum should also be designed according to their needs.

In addition the researcher believed that the interests of learners, parents, the province namely political persons as well as the needs of the world of work would inevitably help in generating some change in curriculum matters. Hence the researcher included the interests in the development of the questionnaire.

1.5.3.3 Structure of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into Section A, B, C, D, and E. Section A comprised questions eliciting information on personal and biographical details such as the name of the school; class attended; district where the school is situated; career choices; core curriculum; specialization curriculum and plans after passing Std.10.

Section B comprised questions on occupation analysis. The respondents were required to give their perceptions about the degree of availability of the given occupations in their districts; the role schools can play in making sure that these occupations are available; whether the introduction of these occupations in the district would be problematic or

not; the impact of these occupations on employment and unemployment; other occupations needed in the district; occupations that can provide self-employment. In each case the respondents had to give reasons for their answers.

Section C comprised questions on curriculum relevance, eliciting perceptions of respondents about a relevant curriculum and how much relevant their current curriculum was.

Section D comprised questions investigating the perceptions of respondents on how the curriculum should be designed. Section E was made up of questions where respondents suggested and motivated the type of curriculum they expected to have in their schools.

The questionnaire was used as an effective instrument to obtain facts about curriculum relevance and the status of the current curriculum in senior secondary schools. The major aim of this survey was to investigate the perceptions of learners about the relationship of their current curriculum and the world of work.

1.5.3.4 Control of questionnaires, dispatch and return.

The questionnaire was dispatched by the researcher to the principals of the schools chosen as the sample. The number of respondents per stream ranged between 44 and 82. Table 1 reflects that the return percentage of the questionnaires.

Not all questionnaires sent out to institutions were completed. Notwithstanding 94,8 % of the questionnaires were returned. According to Ary et al., (1972) and Govender (1990) a 70% return of questionnaires is sufficient to validate the research findings. As expected, questionnaire return from respondents differed. School D was very good in returning the questionnaires. The reason might be that the school was also eager to know in the end the outcomes of this research and that the school was interested in changes to be made in the high school curriculum. School A and B had an average of 68% return.

The cause of this might be that some learners did not take the research seriously and had no interest in answering the questionnaire. School C and E had a 75% return which indicates to the researcher that learners were motivated in answering the questionnaires because they were interested in what was researched.

Table 1 Questionnaires posted to and returned by various institutions.

<u>Institution</u>	<u>No.distributed</u>	<u>No. returned</u>	<u>% returned</u>
School A	120	81	67,5
School B	64	44	68,75
School C	80	60	75
School D	82	82	100
School E	80	60	75
Total	422	400	94,8

Except for school A and B the percentage of returned questionnaires meets the requirements for validity of the findings of this research as suggested by Ary et.al, (1972) and Govender (1990). The total return percentage reflected in this table also strengthens the validity of the research findings of this investigation. In the next chapter the analysis of the data and the interpretation of results shall be discussed.

1.6 Limitations of the study.

This study has some limitations. Firstly the sample of the Grade 11 learners chosen for this research might not have given much on what had been expected. The respondents did not give enough information as they were expected to do so. The reason is that these learners had not yet experienced problems since they were still at high school. Some of the learners had been unfortunate as their schools offered no career guidance programmes. Hence they might not be able to see whether the curriculum they followed would meet their career choices or not.

Secondly the research findings cannot be generalised in the whole of South Africa because this research is confined to the Eastern Cape only. Even in the Eastern Cape the findings cannot be generalised to all its six regions because the research has been done in the North Eastern Region only.

1.7 Importance of study

The study is important because it had certain reflections to the following;

Government

- To the government the importance of this study will be that, the government will know exactly what learners need and what skills they need. The government will have to consider involving learners in curriculum matters.
- The curriculum must satisfy the needs, talents, interests and abilities of learners.

Curriculum developers

- The curriculum should be designed to meet the needs of learners, parents, government and the world of work.
- Curriculum developers will find it easy to do their work because they will have some guidance on what learners needs, interests and abilities are. The developers will then design the curriculum accordingly. In addition, they will know what learners expect and what skills do learners need for the world of work.

Schools

- Schools will know what learners in that particular school require.
- Schools will also have to provide learners with career guidance.

- The curriculum in schools will be able to address the changes taking place in South Africa such as meeting the demands of the workplace.
- More learning area will be introduced in schools to cater for the abilities, interests and talents of learners.
- The schools need to review their curriculum and involve stakeholders in its design.
- Learning areas that had not been featuring in the curriculum before, have a chance to be included.
- Some learning areas like Arts and Culture, Technology and Life Orientation, had been neglected in the Tabankulu district. This is a challenge to all high schools to include these in their curriculum.

1.8 Summary

Chapter one: This chapter presents an introduction to curriculum design and diversification. Also circumstances which gave rise to the research; purpose of the research; method of study; hypotheses; literature survey; research questions; importance of the study; limitations to the study and the structure of the research, are given.

Chapter two: This chapter deals with the theoretical and conceptual framework of the curriculum. Definitions of the concept of curriculum and related concepts, are analysed.

Different curriculum models and theories on curriculum are discussed. Theories on which this study is based and the viewpoints on curriculum design in South Africa and internationally, are discussed.

Chapter three: A historico-comparative study of curriculum design in high schools in selected countries is made. Only a bird's eye view is given.

Chapter four: Here an empirical investigation of the high school curriculum in the Tabankulu district of the Eastern Cape, is made. An introduction of why the research is conducted is made; the development of the questionnaire; selection of respondents; control of questionnaires; dispatch and return of questionnaires, is given. Analysis of the empirical investigation is made and results are presented in the same chapter.

Chapter five: Conclusions derived from the literature survey as well as from the empirical investigation, are consolidated and put together. General and specific recommendations are made. The former are derived from the observations and findings from literature survey and the latter are findings arising out of the empirical investigation and the analysis of responses to the questionnaire.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

2.1. Introduction.

In this chapter, the writer intends to refer to some viewpoints on curriculum as propounded by various curriculum theorists. Hopefully, these viewpoints will be very useful in bringing about changes in the designing of high school curriculum.

Curriculum models and theories relevant to this research will also be briefly discussed. These will contribute to the formulation of a model appropriate for schools whose curriculum choice is not diversified in the Tabankulu district particularly and in South Africa generally. The relationship between the curriculum and skills, the curriculum and the world of work, the curriculum and the needs, abilities, talents and interests of learners will also be analysed.

2.2. The concept of curriculum.

Salia-Bao (1989), in his terse definition of curriculum as a concept that has a multitude of definitions, is supported by various curriculum theorists such as Eisner (1985), Kelly (1982), and Oliva (1988). This reflects that curriculum cannot be confined to one definition. For the purpose of this study emphasis will be made only on those concepts of the curriculum relevant to this study.

Amongst her definitions Oliva (1988) defines curriculum as a set of subjects as well as content. In support of Oliva's definition of curriculum as content, Posner (1988), gives a more succinct definition when he refers to curriculum as what is actually taught by teachers in class. Longstreet and Shane (1993) have a similar perception of the curriculum as content. The latter further refers to it as content arranged into subjects, programmes and syllabi.

This study intends to focus on both content as well as the set of subjects and find out about their diversity. NECC (1992) defines curriculum as all academic, non-academic, vocational and recreational learning activities. The definition given by NECC (1992) reflects a perception that a curriculum is diversified. This definition is relevant to this study because this is one of the aspects to be researched on high school curriculum.

The definition of curriculum depends to a large extent on the emphasis placed on curriculum in terms of its demands and its design. The world of work demands skilled people. On the other hand, there is a great demand for designing the curriculum to prepare the young for future and to fight unemployment (Department of Education, 1995).

It has been proposed by some theorists such as Lounsbury and Vars (1978), O'Keefe (1981) and Kelly (1982) that the set of subjects as well as content should focus on needs of learners, society and economy. The importance of this is that the curriculum shall be relevant to the needs of the stakeholders.

From the given definitions it is quite evident that decisions on curriculum were taken for the learners and learners had to abide by such a curriculum. This takes us to another focus of the definition on curriculum : the role of students in curriculum matters.

Some theorists like Hirst (1974) give democratic definition of curriculum, with emphasis on the involvement of learners. He views curriculum as:

a programme in which pupils themselves decide the precise order in which they will learn what is asked of them under the loose control of a teacher (Hirst, 1974:50)

This means that learners have a say in what they learn at school. This implies that the educators should give learners opportunities to exercise their democratic right to have a say in how they want to learn. Educators and learners need to come together in deciding what learners are to learn. This should not be the educator's prerogative but also of all stakeholders concerned like learners and parents at school level.

In support of Hirst (1974), Barber (1992) states that learners should be given opportunities to negotiate the curriculum with educators. On the other hand, Skilbeck (1984) feels that learners can also join in the discussion of what they need.

This involvement of learners in what they are to learn is further supported by Marsh and Stafford, (1988). They state that in the problem-solving approach learners are involved in the formulation of generative themes to be used in the curriculum. The advantage of this type of involvement is the commitment learners have since they have been part of decision making.

In addition, learners will learn better and will not blame educators if they encounter problems with what they were part of. Having examined the curriculum definitions given above, for the purpose of this research the working definition of curriculum could be enunciated as follows: A curriculum is a plan containing subjects formally learnt by and taught to learners with the aim of achieving positive goals and ends with learners taking an active role in the design of their curriculum. I believe that this definition will be able to address the democratic involvement of learners in curriculum decision-making, and that the curriculum should meet the needs of learners, parents, the world of work as well as interests, abilities and talents of learners.

2.3 Types of curriculum.

There are many curriculum issues in education. Operational, diversified and core curriculum are types of curriculum relevant to this study. The relevance shall be reflected in the discussion of each type.

2.3.1 Operational curriculum.

Operational curriculum is a concept that refers to a curriculum that is confined only to the classroom and entails all the activities in which the learners are involved (Eisner, 1985).

Operational curriculum is closely related to the official curriculum. The latter entails selected knowledge formally and specifically taught to learners by educators (Jansen, 1991). Both curricula emphasise the involvement of learners and both curricula are formal. This a type of curriculum that is designed by the government in order to meet its needs. The government decides what should be learnt by learners in school. The official curriculum is also defined as a prescribed range of subjects (Tunmer, 1981). He differs from other theorists because he does not confine subjects to the classroom. Although he does not do this it is clear that if there is a range of subjects learners are there.

The concept of operational curriculum is also closely related to "curricular knowledge" proposed by Muller and Taylor (1993). They see curriculum as knowledge that is packaged in the school syllabus and taught to learners. The comment by NECC (1992) that curriculum is the selection of content to be taught is relevant to the concept of operational curriculum.

It is also clear from the definition above that the informal curriculum is not equated with operational curriculum. In addition, learning out-comes for which learners are actually held responsible are part of the operational curriculum.

The operational curriculum thus refers to the content learnt by learners in schools including the activities in which learners are engaged in the classroom. This type of curriculum is relevant to this study because the writer shall be examining and scrutinising what is learnt and taught to learners in the classroom.

2.3.2 Diversified curriculum.

The concept of diversified curriculum is not new since it has been adopted in some countries like United States of America, Britain and South Africa (Chaube & Chaube 1993 & Kallaway, 1992). Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985) refer to a diversified curriculum as a wider range of subjects typically found in all academic or vocational secondary school. This refers to schools where there is a variety of subjects from which learners are to choose. A curriculum is also diversified if it

offers different types of courses like vocational and academic courses (Kallaway, 1992; Psacharopoulos & Loxley, 1985 & Muckle, 1988).

Further, Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985) maintain that a curriculum is diversified if one vocational course is made compulsory with a high quality academic curriculum. This means that if in a mathematics and science streams a vocational subject like woodwork is included then that curriculum is diversified. Furthermore, when a variety of learning areas is offered, where learners can choose from the courses or subjects that satisfy them, the curriculum is diversified (Brooke, 1985; Pratt, 1980; Fowler, 1988; NEPI, 1992 & Tyłowska, 1993).

A diversified curriculum might exclude vocational courses as reflected by Tyłowska (1993), Pratt, (1980), NECC (1992) and Fowler (1988). These theorists seem to suggest that a curriculum is diversified even if vocational or academic subjects are not offered as long as the curriculum has many subjects to choose from and more especially if these are offered in different learning areas. Chaube and Chaube (1993) prove this in his statement with its exclusion of academic subjects and provision of a variety of subjects to choose from. They maintain that :

students can pursue to study subjects of their choice in technical, vocational, commercial and literature groups and learn handicrafts as well.. (Chaube & Chaube, 1993:356-358).

It appears from the perceptions of the theorists above that a diversified curriculum might take different forms. The key point is that it should offer a variety of subjects from more than one learning area. The concept of diversified curriculum is applicable to this research. Most of the high schools in the Tabankulu district have a curriculum that has less than three learning areas. In addition, the curriculum excludes vocational and technical subjects. The significance of this explanation is that schools are encouraged to diversify their curriculum so as to offer learners a wide choice. In addition, if students can be given freedom of choice to choose subjects they want to learn, the diversification may be offered even if different subjects or courses are offered in some learning areas. CERI (1970) asserts that a curriculum which keeps several options open

is diversified. Calitz (1991) supports the idea of a diversified curriculum although he excludes vocational courses and emphasises courses of an intellectual, physical, aesthetic and spiritual nature. A variety of courses to choose from are offered here. Jennings (1987) argues that increasing youth unemployment has led Third World countries to diversify their school's curriculum "to prepare the youth effectively for the working world."

South Africa is one of the countries with a high rate of unemployment. The government has proposed that curriculum choice should be diversified in order to prepare the learners for the world of work (Department of Education, 1995). Dove (1980) also supports that the school curriculum should be adapted to prepare students for the market place. She recommends emphasis on academic and technical subjects.

Emphasis on science, mathematics agriculture and technology is part of the pervasive efforts of the Commonwealth countries to adapt school curricula to prepare students....work on a job-scarce world which may not necessarily be wage-employment (Dove, 1980:64).

With the current technological changes affecting South Africa such a curriculum will be suitable for schools in South Africa. Further more, Dove (1980) also states that a diversified curriculum prepares learners for self-employment. The learners will not be bound to look only for wage employment. They may become self-employed and make money for themselves. This idea is directly relevant to this research because the present government in South Africa encourages learners to have skills which will give them opportunities to provide work for themselves. This encourages self-independence and nullifies reliance on employment by somebody. This does not guarantee availability of employment but will help in providing skills that might come handy in future.

The researcher supports this fully for the benefit of those who are talented in vocational skills. Nkabinde (1997) presents an opposing view. She recommends that a purely academic curriculum should be pursued. Nkabinde (1997:151) argues that:

The postapartheid curriculum must promote academic education with strong emphasis on mathematics and science.

There is no problem with this type of curriculum if it is in the interests of learners. The researcher recommends such a curriculum in the high schools of the Tabankulu district because the government is laying emphasis on these school subjects .

Although she excludes other learning areas of curriculum, Nkabinde's idea is in line with other theorists who do not emphasise an academic curriculum but instead propose a strong diversified curriculum. The proposal about vocationally-orientated courses does not mean that academic courses should be done away with. The same will apply to the latter.

Where a learning area or learning areas are compulsory to all learners in an institution, these learning areas form a core curriculum. This is a type of curriculum with all subjects offered in an institution. If in a school group A does Biology/ Geography, History, English and group B does Accounting, English, Mathematics and Biology, English and Biology are a core curriculum because these subjects are done by all groups in Grade 11. But Geography, History, Mathematics and Accounting are not a core curriculum because they are unique only to certain groups in Grade 11. The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) (1980) in defining a core curriculum contends that the curriculum comprises a list of compulsory subjects, taken in some form or other (often a very dilute form) by all students.

In African schools, in this North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape an African Language, English and Biology constitute a core curriculum since these subjects are done by all students in the region.

Pratt (1980) and Marsh and Stafford (1988) views differ from the CDC (1980) because according to them, a core curriculum constitutes fields of knowledge that are compulsory for all schools. This is the case where a school offers one subject from each learning area and learners are bound to take these subjects. And yet each learning area is supposed to have a variety of subjects to

choose from.

2.4. Theories and curriculum models.

2.4.1 Introduction.

The relevant theories and models on curriculum are significant as they give how curriculum is designed. This provides different frameworks to choose from or which can be modified so as to be relevant to our schools. Beauchamp (1981:60) defines curriculum theory as:

a set of related statements that gives meaning to a school's curriculum by pointing up relationships among its elements.

It is for this reason, therefore, that different theories which are relevant to this study shall be discussed. These shall form the critical part of this study.

Several curriculum models exist but for the purpose of this research, only the new vocationalism, core curriculum and objective models will be discussed. The meaning of each term shall be explained when each is discussed below

2.4.2 Curriculum models.

Three curriculum models shall be discussed and these are the objective, simple and new vocational models.

The objective model is also known as the "Tyler Rationale". Its fundamental proposal is that the curriculum maker should study the needs and interests of learners. This model is appropriate in this particular study as there is need to make the curriculum in the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape correspond with the interests and needs of learners. Such a curriculum will be easily understood by learners. Consideration of learners' needs and interests when the curriculum is

supported by different many theorists such as Tylikowska (1993), Kirk (1986) and Kelly (1982).

In order to discover learners' needs, talents and interests learners should be given opportunity to voice these out to curriculum designers and schools. This can be done in various ways amongst which investigation of their perceptions through questionnaires is one. At the same time, learners should be given a chance to select subjects which "accord their vocational aspirations and personal inclinations"(Kirk, 1986:42). This involvement of learners in curriculum designing is supported by Salia-Bao (1989) where he recommends that learners should be permitted to study the things in which they are interested. Thus, the objective model recommends the involvement of learners in curriculum matters affecting them.

The advantage of the proposal of this objective model is that what the learners study will be meaningful to them. In addition learners will work better and learn more effectively when they are interested in what they learn. The simple model has been chosen because of its relevance to the study. This model differs from theorist to theorist with regard to learning areas comprising the model. Some simple models have three learning areas (Kallaway, 1992). These are academic or vocational or both vocational and academic. These learning areas provide skills needed by the market place. At the same time vocational skills can provide learners with self-employment. This can be more suitable for learners in the high schools of this North Eastern Region and the Tabankulu district in particular.

Other simple models are comprised of six learning areas (NECC, 1992 & CERI, 1970). There are also those with eight learning areas (Fowler, 1988) whilst others have nine learning areas. Vocational content is excluded in these learning areas (Fowler, 1988; CERI, 1970; Marsh & Stafford, 1988). The provision of a variety of learning areas reflects that for learners the curriculum is diversified.

The information about this model is relevant to this study. Also this model serves as a basis for the

analysis of the curriculum that will be evaluated. In addition, the model will form the basis for the design of the curriculum for schools.

Although these models exclude vocational content, they are still diversified because more than two learning areas are offered. Looking at Kallaway's model there is lack of diversity because the curriculum offers academic or vocational subjects only or both. This means that either one or two learning areas are offered. Such a model restricts learners freedom of choosing what they want. These learning areas address the interests of only a few.

The new vocationalism model is a term that is applied to a large number of educational schemes that aim at drawing the curriculum closer to the world of work. In the case of the curriculum, the new vocationalism model stresses the acquisition of certain skills that are needed in the workplace and the ability to perform vocationally relevant tasks successfully.

This curriculum model is also relevant to this study. There is need to improve the curriculum in schools to adapt it to the changes and demands of the world of work.

This model stresses the provision and acquisition of skills as well as application of knowledge to the "real world" (Jamieson, 1990 & Kallaway, 1992). Most theorists suggest the provision of various types of skills. Life skills - skills that are useful to one for one's entire life and offer one opportunities for any form of employment- have been suggested (Olivier et.al, 1997 & Carr, 1990). Vocational and technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills have been recommended (White, 1987; Calitz, 1991 and Dekker & Lemmer, 1993). Dostal (1990) further supports vocational and technical skills stating that these are necessary for economic development. Whilst Marsland (1987) feels that these skills can be acquired informally, Jennings (1987) suggests that they can be acquired formally. She asserts that the vocationalisation of school curriculum is one of the ways of bringing curriculum closer to the workplace. The writer agrees with both Marsland and Jennings. For example skills in carpentry can be acquired by a learner informally if he always works with a carpenter and sees what is done. On the other hand the learner

may acquire such skills formally when he/she goes to a vocational school and is trained for carpentry skills.

The new vocationalism with its schemes, can facilitate employability of school leavers. Mwamwenda and Baine (1995) state that vocational education can combat unemployment. It is in the light of the discussion above that this new vocationalism model has been chosen.

2.5 Theories on curriculum.

Two theories which are very important to this study have been chosen for discussion. These are the critical theory and the technical production theory..

This critical theory is against the idea of non-involvement of learners in curriculum planning. It recommends that learners should be actively involved in deciding what to learn (Freire, 1990). This critical theory lays emphasis on the emancipatory approach as well as the problem-solving approach. This research is informed by this emancipatory approach. Here learners are involved in what they are learning (Freire, 1990). This does not apply in most high schools in South Africa especially in rural areas like the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape. That is why the researcher decided to undertake this study. Rajah (1993:99), in support, states:

Through the emancipatory pedagogy, students become actively involved in the construction of their knowledge.

The advantage is that when learners are actively involved in what they learn such learning becomes meaningful. This approach is important for this study so that learners could have a say when the curriculum is designed and planned for the region under discussion.

The problem-solving approach on the other hand suggests the active involvement of learners in critical thinking and discussing matters concerning their curriculum. Freire (1990) contends that learners should "fix the formulation of generative themes to be used in their curriculum."

This viewpoint is supported by Barber (1992). Learners should be able to think critically because in the course of their work they will encounter problems which will need solutions.

The technical production theory is also relevant to the study because of the emphasis it puts on needs of learners when curriculum is designed. This research is further informed by the technical production theory which recommends the diagnosis of the needs as one of the important steps to be taken when curriculum is designed and planned. This research is undertaken in the belief that the needs that should be diagnosed are those of the learners. In the light of the proposals about learners' involvement in curriculum matters, it is assumed that this should be done by learners themselves.

For the purpose of this research, two theories discussed above, form the basis of this study. These are relevant to this study.

2.6 Viewpoints on curriculum design in high schools.

Many viewpoints have been given on the design and the development of curriculum in high schools. This resulted in a curriculum theory defined by Beauchamp (1981:160) as:

a set of related statements that gives meaning to a school's curriculum by pointing up the relationship amongst its elements.

It is intended, in the following discussions to point out the relationships between the curriculum and skills, world of work and needs and interests of learners. This will help in examining the high school curriculum in South Africa and specifically in the Eastern Cape. This will form the basis for the studying of the curriculum in the North Eastern Region and specifically the Tabankulu district. The aim behind this is to help in the restructuring of the curriculum according to the new changes.

2.6.1 Relationship between curriculum and the world of work.

The relationship between the curriculum and the world of work has been observed by many theorists (Muckle, 1988; Olivier et al, 1997; Hummel, 1992 & Moore, 1984).

Pring (1989) and Becker (1982) criticise schools for their failure to prepare learners to complete success due to their traditional curriculum with its single programme of instruction. Pring (1989) reflects schools' positive responses to this criticism. In support, Muckle (1988:34) states:

The duty of schools to prepare children for work of the society is widely accepted.

The writer agrees with the views of the theorists above because this will ensure that school leavers will be able to get jobs. This is right for South Africans. Psacharopoulos (1986) believes that the advantage of linking education and the labour market is the enhancement of the quality of primary and secondary general education with mathematics and sciences included. This will ensure that more efficient specialisation especially on the job, can take place in future.

Dove (1980) feels that emphasis on sciences and mathematics is the best way to prepare learners for the market place as is the case with Commonwealth countries which adapt curricula to prepare students for work in a job-scarce world which may not necessarily be wage employment.

The writer feels that the view of Dove is highly relevant to South Africa where jobs are scarce. In that case school leavers need to be also prepared for self employment. This means that the curriculum should prepare learners for employment as well as for self-sustenance.

Hummel (1992) and Olivier et al (1997) give different ways of maintaining the relationship between the world of work and the curriculum. This could be achieved through relevant education and instruction and by providing vocational guidance to learners. This is recommended even for schools in rural areas because these schools are always neglected.

In order to achieve this, specific ingredients have to be put in the curriculum. Such ingredients

are skills needed by the market-place and skills that can provide self-employment.

2.6.2 Relationship between the curriculum and skills.

Many theorists have the view that the school curriculum should provide skills needed by the changing world and the workplace (Ingram, 1971; Lewis, 1991; Olivier et al, 1997; Pratt, 1980; Datta, 1982 & Jamieson, 1990).

For example Bruner (1976) emphasises visual and intellectual skills. This shows that the development of the learner visually and intellectually is encouraged. On the other hand, Datta (1982) believes that employment-related skills are important. Lewis (1991) and Ingram (1971) contend that the solution to unemployability of learners is provision of a skill-based curriculum which will enable learners to generate their own work.

The curriculum should accordingly take steps to provide students with needed coping skills to combat downward employment (Lewis, 1991:374).

In addition Mwamwenda and Baine (1995) feel that the provision of vocational curriculum with its skills will "enhance employability. "This is also supported by Jonathan (1990) who feels that if young people have skills on leaving school, they will also have jobs. These theorists are supported by the present South African government's proposals (Department of Education, 1995).

Indirectly Scrimshaw (1976) supports this when recommending that the curriculum should meet the expectations. Although no specification is made as to whose expectations the writer feels that employability is one of these. Lewis (1991) feels that unemployment can be fought through vocational curriculum because he states that a vocationalised curriculum was a way to deal with the problem of unemployment. This is supported by Jamieson (1990) and Pratt (1980). Although the writer supports this view, she also feels that this vocationalisation should not be overemphasised at the expense of other types of the curriculum that provide skills. This should be Done for the sake of those learners who might not be vocationally skilled or gifted.

The researcher believes that a vocational curriculum can rescue some learners from this unemployment problem facing South Africa. Whilst most theorists encourage vocationalism, others like Pratt oppose it (1980), discouraging vocational curriculum, "defined solely in terms of the workplace or employer." He seems to suggest that vocational curriculum should also open opportunities for self-employment. The researcher agrees fully with the view because different forms of employment should be provided for to curb the unemployment rate.

2.6.3 The relationship between curriculum and the needs and interests of learners.

Bruner (1970) recommends "the relevance of skill." Although this looks vague this is relevant to the heading above. NAUT (1986) and Kelly (1982) highly recommend that the needs of learners should be considered when curriculum is planned so as to make the latter relevant to learners needs.

The breath and depth of the content of the curriculum must clearly be related to the needs and interests of pupils...(NAUT, 1986:22).

This relationship between the curriculum and the needs of learners is supported by Holmes and McLean (1989). They state that the individual needs of learners should be accommodated. Hence they feel that a diversified balanced curriculum can address this. The writer feels that such a curriculum could be suitable for schools in South Africa and specifically this North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape. The provision of the different kinds of jobs through such a balanced curriculum can also ensure that this region specifically is developed.

2.7 Conclusion.

Different definitions of the curriculum given reflect that curriculum field is wide in that curriculum has various foci like activities and experiences of the learners, the role of students in curricula matters etc. The different types of curriculum relevant to this study have been given. Also theories and models have been discussed based on the views of theorists and various models like vocationalism, core curriculum and objective model. These have been chosen amongst others

because they are relevant to this study.

It has also been intended to look at the relationship between the curriculum and the world of work, needs and interests of learners, and skills so as to get the perceptions of theorists on this and to form a basis for the research of the perceptions of the learners on the curriculum of senior secondary or high schools.

CHAPTER THREE.

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A HISTORICO-COMPARATIVE STUDY: AN OVERVIEW.

3.1 Introduction.

The curriculum design has been researched by various theorists inside and outside South Africa. This is not new but it has been important to do the study in the 1990's because of the changes that have taken place in South Africa. It has become important to know what the position is in other countries and to adapt these to suit the South African context.

Countries have designed their school curriculum to suit their needs as well as, the needs, abilities and interests of pupils, communities and the demands of the world of work. This shall be reflected in the overview of the curriculum of a few selected countries.

Unemployment, particularly among youth has been a major concern for many countries. It has influenced the design of curriculum in most countries. Understandably the curriculum from country to country differs in terms of its content.

The intention has not been to discuss curriculum development in selected countries in detail but to give a quick bird's eye view of the current situation in specific countries around the world. It is also the intention to look at the impact of the designed curriculum on employability and unemployment.

3.2 Curriculum in Asia.

3.2.1 Introduction.

In Asia the curriculum in the secondary schools offers many learning areas with a variety of

subjects to choose from. Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985) state:

Diversification of the secondary school curriculum has also occurred in Asia and the Pacific(13).

The curriculum comprises, academic and practical subjects to provide learners with skills needed for self-employment in their communities. The high school curriculum of a few countries in Asia i.e. Taiwan, Malaysia and Mainland China has been studied. For the purpose of this research the curriculum of Taiwan shall be studied in this research as representing Asia. This has been done so because the curriculum of these countries is similar. Here the common element is that the curriculum has been designed technologically and vocationally in order to make it specific to the jobs. This has proved successful (Psacharopoulos & Loxley,1985).That is why the curriculum of Asia has been chosen for this study.

It will be useful for a country like South Africa which is faced with a high rate of unemployment. The learners can benefit a lot from a curriculum that does not only provide academic skills but is diversified so as to provide other skills needed in the world of work.

3.2.2 Curriculum in Taiwan.

The curriculum is diversified. It comprises core subjects and electives. The former are subjects done by all learners and the latter being subjects where learners make choices. The senior high school curriculum comprises the language, humanities, mathematics and sciences, art and craft, and sport learning areas (Thomas and Postlethwaite,1980).

The curriculum in Asia failed to include vocational and technical subjects. This deficiency deprived those learners who had interest, talent and abilities in these subjects. The curriculum also deprived learners of the opportunity to improve their skills and specialise in the subjects of their choice for employment and self employment. These are offered only in vocational senior high schools where mechanical drawing and engineering are done. Generally, high schools in Taiwan have a completely diversified curriculum. In the high schools where vocational and technical

subjects were offered the curriculum has been technologically and vocationally designed to be specific to jobs, based on Taiwan's curriculum with its idea of developing the country vocationally and technically (Watson, 1994).

In South Africa most high school's core subjects and electives are provided in the curriculum packages in schools. The problem is that learners are compelled to choose packages as they are and not subjects they want from those packages. The lesson that South Africa can learn from the curriculum in Asia is that art and craft as well as sport learning areas are important. Those learners who have interest, abilities and talents in these learning areas can benefit by either getting self-employment or being employed. In addition, mechanical drawing and engineering should be introduced in South African schools for the same reason as those for art and craft as well as sport learning areas.

In South Africa in most high schools, mathematics and sciences are only in academic streams and yet these subjects are also crucial in other learning areas. An example of such a crucial subject is mathematics which is needed for needlework, home economics, geography, and agricultural science. The streams or learning areas in our schools with these subjects exclude mathematics. This is not the case in Asia. South Africa needs to adopt such a curriculum.

3.3. Curriculum in America.

For the purpose of this research the countries that shall be studied are the Latin America and the United States of America because of the relevance of their curriculum in this study.

In both the USA and Latin America there was an opposition to a curriculum that did not offer equal opportunities to all. The proposal forwarded was that the curriculum should not only be academic, but also vocational to cater for the academically ungifted learners (Becker, 1982). South Africa should take this as a lesson so as to open chances for those learners who are not academically gifted. The problem in South Africa is that the curriculum provided for those who are academically ungifted, is mostly the one on humanities where skills are very limited and hence

learners find it difficult to use what they have learnt to get employment if they cannot further their studies.

Resnick and Wirt (1996) emphasise the importance that the school should be linked directly to the market place. This means that the curriculum in schools should be related to the skills needed for either employment or self-employment. Unfortunately in South Africa a majority of high schools offers subjects like biblical studies as a compulsory subject in humanities' streams and no skill is provided by this subject for employment and self-employment.

The implication behind this is that the curriculum in schools should be made relevant to the world of work. This is reflected by 98,1% learners in the vocational, 96,1% in the general and 90% in the academic areas (Ekstrom, et al, 1988). All learning areas are treated equally and all of them are balanced.

Besides vocational skills, the curriculum of the two countries has seen an increase in the teaching of skills which empower learners to use information (Wiles and Bondi, 1993). This is one of the important skills which learners need for those who wish to specialise in information systems. Information skills are needed in the work-place. South Africa needs these skills. With these skills learners could get employment in other places in the world of work that need these skills.

In Latin America the curriculum embraces commercial subjects and scientific agriculture. The latter could be very useful to South Africa, if it could be practiced in rural areas where African communities live.

Their curriculum offers a variety of learning areas and there is emphasis on a vocational curriculum. In South Africa (and specifically in the North Eastern region of the Eastern Cape) the curriculum is more academic. Learners who are less gifted academically encounter problems. If this region could take the example from this curriculum, it would have catered for all learners.

Even where agriculture is practiced in these communities it is not scientific. For agriculture to improve, South Africa needs to introduce scientific agriculture in schools so as reproduce learners with such agricultural skills.

In order to understand curriculum design in the United States, it is important that it should be discussed in relation to its link with the world of work as recommended by (Psacharopoulos & Loxley 1985). The schools need to provide skills through the curriculum. The school policy on curriculum lays emphasis on academic and vocational subjects equally as well as courses in general culture (Hummel, 1992). This adds more to the diversification of curriculum to the advantage of learners. The curriculum seems to lack commercial and technical subjects. One therefore finds it difficult to say that the curriculum here is completely diversified. In most schools in the USA vocational and general education are given simultaneously to enable students to find means of earning a living or becoming more efficient (Chaube and Chaube 1993). This is recommended for South Africa so as to provide employment for the school leavers.

Holmes and McLean (1989) state that the curriculum in schools does cater for diversity by offering different learning areas. The latter refers to the offering of different streams and subjects. But technical subjects have been excluded. This poses a problem because these are highly demanded by the workplace. Therefore, the curriculum here, is not wholly diversified.

3.4 Curriculum in Poland.

Tylikowska (1993) gives us a picture of the Polish high school curriculum with compulsory subjects for all learners and electives as subjects of choice for pupils. Although the curriculum here excludes the vocational subjects, it looks quite diversified because learners have subjects to choose from. These are from five learning areas such as sciences, mathematics, humanities and language areas. This looks good for some learners but not so for those learners who are not talented in all these learning areas. South Africa could use this curriculum but modify it so as to suit the needs of all learners. For South Africa (and especially the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape) such a curriculum could be an advantage to learners, because learners can choose subjects

from learning areas of their interest.

3.5 Curriculum in Australia.

In Australia the curriculum comprises both a core and diversified curriculum. In the core curriculum subjects are compulsory to all learners and are selected and organised by the schools (Lewis, 1991; CDC, 1980; Marsh & Stafford, 1988). Such subjects are English, mathematics, art and craft and physical education (CDC, 1980).

The diversified curriculum has nine learning areas and a subject for a learner to choose from (CDC, 1980; Marsh & Stafford, 1988).Learners are not allowed to do more than one subject from anyone learning area. The nine areas of knowledge entail technical and vocational subjects.

On the technical side, technology is done whilst arts and crafts are done on the vocational side. The curriculum is holistic because it caters for all the aspects such as the physical, moral, and aesthetic aspects. These are catered for in these nine learning areas (Marsh & Stafford 1988).This is suitable for South Africa especially with technology which is in demand in this changing South Africa.

3.6 Curriculum in Africa.

The discussion of the curriculum that shall be made here is a general overview of Africa. Looking at the scope of the African curriculum, one finds that emphasis is placed on physical and character development, intellectual training, agriculture, trade and crafts (Salia-Bao, 1989).African curriculum programmes are based on the objective model, with its emphasis on skill development.

Skill development is very significant for any country faced with a high rate of unemployment because skill development can alleviate the high rate of unemployment. This is recommended for South Africa who is affected by this high rate of unemployment.

Selvaratman (1988) recommends that both a sound general education and vocational skills, should be given equal status. Vocational education in the school has been proved to be instrumental in providing job opportunities (Selvaratman, 1988).

For the purpose of this study three countries in Africa Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa shall be studied because of their relevance to this research.

In Tanzania the aim of education is to prepare the young people for the market place by equipping them with skills. Comprising the curriculum are agricultural, home economics, commercial and technical biases. (Nyerere, 1982).

In support, Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985) state that Tanzania has succeeded “to institutionalise” vocational subjects along with the academic curriculum. This differs from the view of Nkabinde (1997) that the curriculum in Tanzania is purely academic.

Despite the difference in opinion between Nkabinde (1997) and Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985). The curriculum in Tanzania is also suitable for South Africa because the curriculum needs to be made relevant to the workplace just as Tanzania has done.

According to Jansen (1991) the curriculum in Zimbabwe is largely academic. This indicates that other learning areas are neglected and therefore the curriculum is not diversified. Hence Nkabinde (1997) feels strongly that the curriculum in Zimbabwe is irrelevant for employment opportunities. The curriculum offered in schools does not provide learners with other skills and knowledge required by the place of work like vocational, commercial and technical skills. At least South Africa is better because in some areas and in a few high schools such subjects are offered.

The irrelevance of the school curriculum in Zimbabwe is reflected by the inability of a large number of learners who complete secondary school education to be absorbed in the job-area. This means that the curriculum offered in schools does not lead to diverse employment

opportunities. This problem is also common in South Africa where many school leavers cannot use their knowledge in obtaining jobs.

Despite the deficiency that the curriculum in Zimbabwe has Jansen (1991) reflects that there is hope for improvement on the curriculum. Jansen gives the espoused curricular goals amongst which "to increase opportunities for productive employment" is one. Although the government in South Africa also echoes the same curricular goals, it is slow in addressing these.

Although this has not yet been put into practice there is hope that the curriculum in Zimbabwe will provide various types of skills that will offer employment opportunities to school leavers. The lesson that South Africa could get from the curriculum in Zimbabwe is that any curriculum should aim at developing specific skills for specific jobs.

3.6.1 Curriculum in South Africa.

Nkabinde (1997) feels that the curriculum in South Africa has always been racist and restrictive of the mobility of Blacks in particular. This means that Blacks had a curriculum that would lead them to take up certain jobs and not others. In the past engineering for example was only for Whites. So the curriculum was restrictive of the mobility of Blacks. The curriculum that Blacks had led them only to jobs like nursing teaching, clerical job and police services. Engineering, architecture, to mention a few, were jobs open to other races and not to Blacks. This has resulted in a few young African people receiving academic education. Africans will refer to all people who are not Whites. The view that vocational education is "more useful and politically safer for the majority of African students" (Van Hook, 1994 quoted in Nkabinde, 1997) proves this point.

This reflects the discrimination that existed in the past. The Africans were deprived of academic education and instead the majority of learners took only the general subjects. This is proved by the fact that in most schools the number of learners in the academic streams is very small whilst in humanities it is very large. Even where vocational education is offered to provide labour it is insufficient.

Kraak (1991) exposes the nature of the education experienced by the South African students which did not prepare them fully for the future. Contrary to the view of Van Hook (1994) quoted in Nkabinde, (1997) Kraak feels that this was due to the curriculum which tended to be more academic and lacked useful skills needed by the market place.

The curriculum of the senior secondary school phase differed in each of the education departments that were there before 1994 in South Africa. In the House of Representatives department the curriculum was highly diversified with a variety of learning areas such as linguistic, sciences, commercial, art and craft, vocational and technical subjects. Such subjects were important in providing skills needed in the market place. Subjects such as woodwork, motor mechanics, needlework and art and craft, useful for self employment, were offered.

According to Arendse et.al, (N.D) in the sixties and seventies the curriculum in Black schools had a variety of subjects to choose from. The curriculum included commercial, scientific, humanities and vocational subjects. Even the curriculum of the Indians met the needs and abilities of learners. It seems that the curriculum changed during the eighties and it failed to address the needs, interests and abilities of all learners but was convenient for a few and specifically for those who are academically gifted.

In the early sixties, the curriculum of Coloureds was the same as that of Whites. More emphasis was placed on commercial and technical subjects (Horrel, 1970). In addition art courses and catering subjects for hotel personnel were offered for Coloureds. In academic streams a technical subject was included. This curriculum at least addressed the needs, talents and abilities of learners.

In his research, Kallaway (1992) puts it clearly that in some schools in some provinces of South Africa the curriculum has been diversified:

"...all students in the above schools were obliged to do basic academic courses, including ages, in addition to the subjects offered in the vocational/ commercial or vocational/technical stream"(Kallaway: 1992,15).

The reflection is that although the curriculum here is diversified only four learning areas are offered. These are represented by languages, mathematics and science, commercial, technical and vocational streams. With reference to other provinces of South Africa, research on curriculum diversification and its impact on employment is lacking. As a start other provinces in South Africa and especially in those high schools in the Eastern Cape, can benefit if their schools could adopt this kind of curriculum.

The conversion of schools for Africans into vocational and commercial schools as indicated by Nkabinde (1997) indicates that the curriculum is improving from being purely academic to being commercial and technical. In the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape this will start soon. Two of the former colleges of education Sigcawu and Mfundisweni are to be converted to technical colleges. Unfortunately these cannot serve all the nine districts of this region. Ngubentombi (1989) indicates that the curriculum in South Africa and specifically the then Transkei is incomplete since it neglects the widely differing abilities and vocational interests of the learners because the curriculum in these high schools is confined to a few academic and general streams only. The curriculum in South Africa lacks a variety of skills, and these need to be provided for, to enable learners to fit in the work-place (Olivier et al., 1997).

3.7 Conclusion.

Curriculum reform should consider the fact that the curriculum should be related to the workplace. No one type of curriculum should be made more important than the other. The senior secondary school curriculum should be diversified. This means that the curriculum should cater for all learners. Hence vocationalisation should be included as one of the ways of the restructuring of the curriculum.

The curriculum should be arranged into learning areas or fields of knowledge. In our brief survey of the countries across the world we have seen that in some countries even though the areas of learning are there some subjects are made compulsory and others are electives. In other countries' high school curriculum mathematics and sciences are compulsory. In most countries curriculum is

designed to meet the needs of the world of work.

Curriculum in South Africa has been prescriptive and only met interests of the minority group, i.e. those who were in power. Learners, parents and stakeholders like industry were never involved in curriculum planning. There has never been any democratic diversified curriculum for the Africans.

That is why literature on a democratic diversified curriculum has been very scarce. It is even for that reason that this kind of research has been conducted to ensure that learners air their views about the curriculum which involves them.

In the next chapter an analysis of the empirical investigation into the perceptions of learners about the relevance of the high school curriculum is made. The research was carried out by questionnaire in the selected schools in the North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape.

CHAPTER FOUR**EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN
THE NORTH EASTERN REGION OF THE EASTERN CAPE.**4.1 Analysis of data and interpretation of results.

The data collected from the sample of this research through the questionnaires shall be analysed and results will be interpreted. The questionnaire collected data on biographical details, occupation analysis, curriculum relevance, and recommendations on what the respondents expect about a curriculum.

4.1.1 Biographical details.

In considering the personal particulars of the respondents as pertinent to this survey, numerous observations are relevant. Figure 1 shows the respondents and their percentage in respect of their intentions after passing Grade 12.

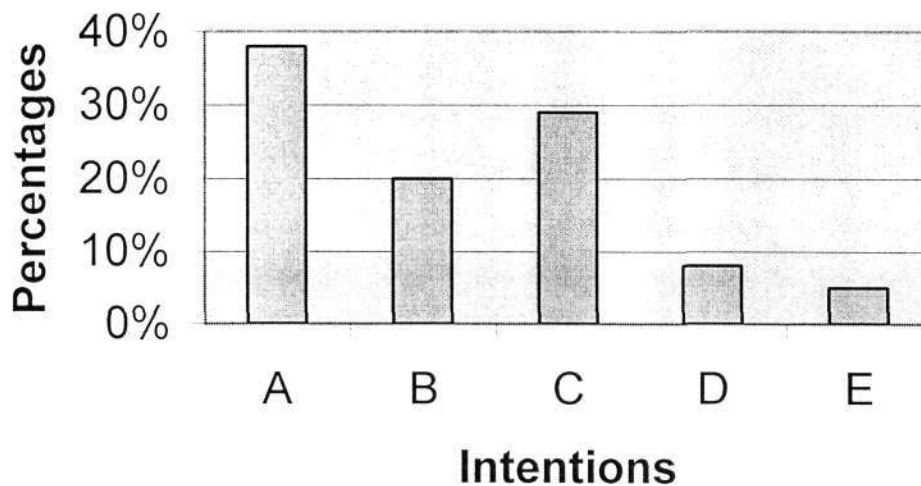


Figure 1 Bar graph showing intentions of respondents after passing Grade 12.

- A. Going to a technikon
- B. Going to a teacher training college
- C. Going to a university
- D. Other careers
- E. Taking employment

Thirty eight of respondents indicated their intention to go to a technikon. Only 29% wanted to go to a university. This might have been that the courses they wanted to take were not offered in technikons. Twenty percent expressed their intention of becoming teachers or police. Eight percent of the respondents wanted either to go for other careers not offered at tertiary institutions whilst 5% indicated that they would choose employment. The percentages above reflect that a large number of respondents intended to get tertiary education. The 5% of respondents who wanted to take employment seemed to have problems which made them not to think of furthering their education any more. It became clear that there were still many respondents who wanted to be teachers. This raises fears in the light of the retrenchment of the teachers today. It became clear also that the curriculum of schools should cater for what learners intend to do after passing Grade 12. This will prevent cases where learners find themselves take up careers which were not in their interest.

The curriculum of respondents was composed of a core curriculum as well as specialization curriculum. Table 2 reflects this curriculum.

All the respondents studied Xhosa and English. This was their core curriculum. The 100% next to each of the subjects in table 2 indicates that all respondents studied these subjects. None of the respondents would be disadvantaged where careers required these subjects.

Table 2 Curriculum of the respondents.

Subject	Percentage
Xhosa	100
English	100
Biology	68.25
Geography	68,25
History	30,75
Biblical Studies	10,75
Home Economics	3,25
Needlework	6,25
Mathematics	69,25
Agricultural Science	10,25
Physical Science	37,5
Accounting	31,75
Business Economics	31,75
Economics	31,75

The table reflects that all the respondents except the commercial stream studied geography. This is confirmed by the 68,25% of respondents in geography instead of 100%. Thus a 31,75% of respondents did not study this subject and in the table those were commercial stream respondents.

A big number of respondents, 69,25%, studied mathematics. The table reflects that those were 37,5% respondents from sciences and 31,75% respondents from commercial streams. This was a good combination for both streams. Mathematics is a requirement with most subjects. The science stream respondents would benefit more in careers which require mathematics and geography, mathematics and biology or mathematics and physical science. Thus the respondents in the science stream had a wide choice of careers to follow. The respondents from the commercial stream could only follow commercial careers.

The 30.75%, 31,75% and 37,5% respondents in the humanities, commercial and science streams respectively reflects that there was a balance in the streams taken in the sample of high schools.

Very few respondents studied needlework, home economics as well as agricultural science. The worst part of it is that the careers which require these subjects require that each of these three subjects be combined with mathematics. In the case of home economics and needlework a commercial subject is also required. Therefore, the respondents in the humanities streams had slim chances for a wide choice of careers. The table also reflects that 10,75% of respondents studied biblical studies. This subject is problematic because it is not a requirement in most careers unless for ministry and for teaching. Therefore, undoubtedly 10,75% of respondents were already in trouble of being unemployable.

On one hand, table 2 reflects that the curriculum of the respondents was diversified because it covered four learning areas namely sciences, humanities, languages and economic sciences. It failed to cater for learners who wanted to study subjects from other learning areas other than the ones above. On the other hand, it was prescriptive because even the streams with these learning areas had compulsory subjects which learners were compelled to study. No other subjects were offered to choose from. Table 2 reflected another serious omission. No vocational or technical subjects, art and craft and computer science were offered in the high schools of the district where this research was undertaken.

4.1.2 The relationship between the respondents chosen career and their curriculum

The respondents were also asked to choose careers they would follow in future. The careers chosen by the respondents varied from those that needed further tertiary education to those that one could engage in and get on the job-training. Table 3 reflects the chosen careers of the respondents. Examples of on the job-training careers were traffic inspection, clerical work, and television presenting. Most of the other careers required a learner to enroll for further education at a tertiary institution.

Table 3 Career choices of respondents.

Careers	Percentage %
1.Nursing	31
2.Teaching	20
3.Social Work	20
4.Agricultural Farming	9.25
5.Medicine	9.25
6.Police	2.5
7.Dressmaking and Tailoring	2.25
8.Engineering	2.25
9.Fashion Designing	1.25
10.Clerical Work	0.5
11.Journalism	0.5
12.T.V.Presenter	0.25
13.Traffic Inspector	0.25
14.Minister of Religion	0.25
15.Scientist	0.25
16.Manager	0.25

The curriculum of the respondents was examined against the requirements of tertiary institutions for each of the chosen careers of the respondents. For the purpose of this research the brochures of some of the tertiary institutions in South Africa which reflected these careers were used. These brochures have been used so as to show what the requirements of tertiary institutions for entrance in each career are. This would help in analysing the relevance of the curriculum of the respondents to their chosen careers. The brochures of the following institutions were used i.e. Witwatersrand Technikon, University of Witwatersrand (Wits University), University of Pretoria,

University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Western Cape (UWC), Rhodes University, University of Durban Westville (UDW) and University of Natal. The brochures of these tertiary institutions were chosen because they were representative of other universities which offered the same careers chosen by the respondents.

4.1.3 Respondents' curriculum and social work.

The universities' specific matriculation language requirement in the University of Pretoria is English or Afrikaans. Wits university and others stipulate English only. Figure 2 illustrates the curriculum of the respondents who wanted to do social work. The 20% of the total respondents offered both English and an African language and specifically Xhosa in this district. In the case of tertiary institutions where English only is required the curriculum is relevant. Even in those tertiary institutions where there is a choice between Afrikaans and English the curriculum is still relevant because Afrikaans is also an alternative requirement. As can be seen, none of the learners offered Afrikaans. There is a positive relationship with respect to the curriculum of respondents who wished to pursue a career in social work. In addition these respondents studied mathematics and commercial subjects.

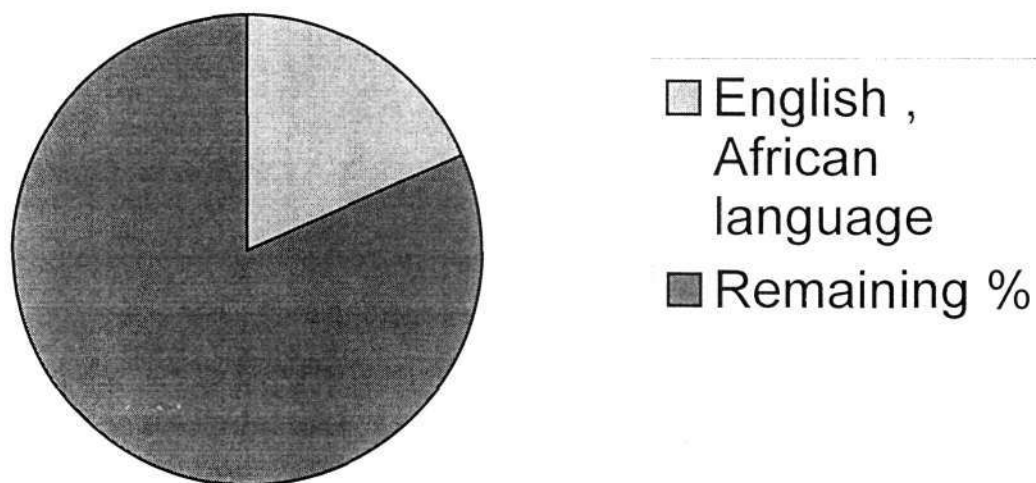


FIGURE 2. Respondents who had chosen social work and their curriculum

Figure 2 reflects that only a few respondents wanted to do social work and that their curriculum had the subject that are a requirement for social work.

4.1.4 Respondents' curriculum and police services.

Table 3 reflects that 2,5% of respondents wanted to be police. The low percentage reflected that this career was unpopular to the youth. The respondents gave as their reasons the high rate of crime which they wanted to help in curbing it. In addition they wanted careers which would help them earn money whilst training. Since the police services deal with crime as a major aspect, it would have been proper if criminology as a subject was included in the curriculum. Figure 3 shows the curriculum of these respondents.

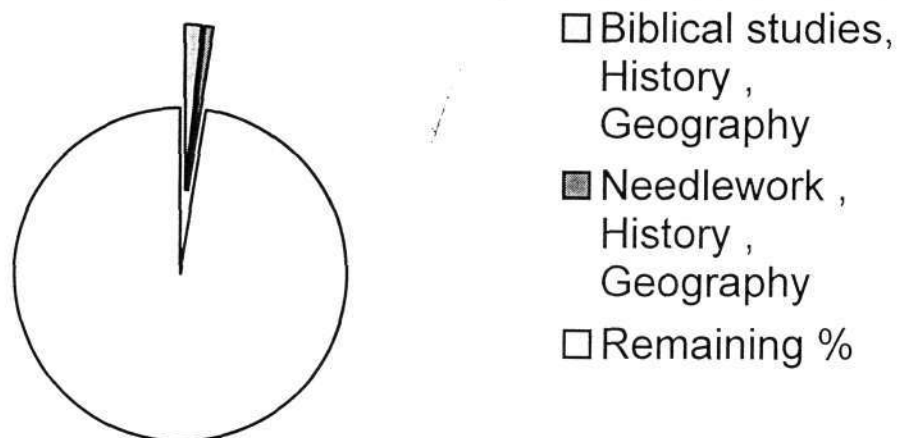


FIGURE 3. Respondents (police services) and their curriculum

Of the 2,5% respondents, 1,75% studied biblical studies whilst 0,75% of them did needlework instead of biblical studies. The whole curriculum is irrelevant as these subjects have nothing to do with police work. In addition these 2,5% of respondents studied history and geography subjects that had no bearing whatsoever on careers of their choice.

The diagram reflects few respondents who wanted to be police. In addition the diagram reflects the irrelevant curriculum they had for their chosen career.

4.1.5 Respondents' curriculum and medical sciences.

The respondents had chosen two careers viz. nursing science and medicine which are two careers under medical sciences. The Bachelor of Nursing Science as well as training for nursing requires mathematics and physical science or biology.

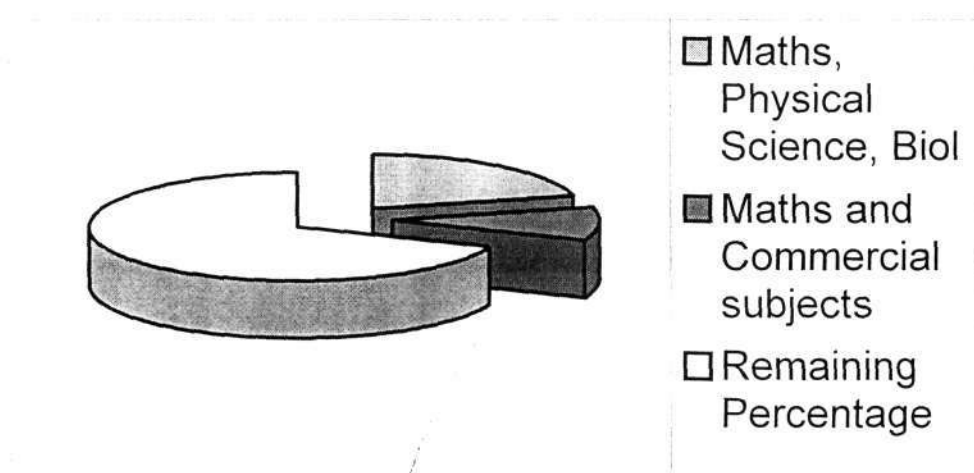


FIGURE 4. Respondents (nursing) and their curriculum.

The pictorial diagram in figure 4 reflected that 31% of respondents wanted to join the nursing profession and all had biology in their curriculum which is one of the required subjects for nursing. Another requirement is mathematics. Twenty one percent of the respondents had geography ,mathematics biology and physical science. Their curriculum was relevant because it offered the required subjects for the career in nursing. The other 10% of respondents had an irrelevant curriculum to nursing science because they studied commercial subjects. The only relevant subject which they studied was mathematics. This subject could not help them because they needed to have the other required subjects for nursing. The writer thinks the educands in the sample had not been exposed to career guidance before grade 11. They should be in a position to know the type of curriculum that suited their career choices. The remaining 69% did not choose nursing although they studied biology.

The diagram reflects that a large number of respondents did not choose nursing. What is also

reflected in this diagram is that few respondents had a relevant curriculum whilst less respondents had an irrelevant curriculum because the latter did not have biology, physical science. Therefore the career of only a few respondents has been addressed by the curriculum.

The second career chosen by respondents under medical sciences was medicine. The specific requirements for medicine are mathematics, biology and physical science. Figure 5 reflects the curriculum of those who wanted to study for medicine.

The diagram reflects that the majority of respondents had not chosen medicine. Also what is reflected here is that few respondents had a relevant curriculum and the rest had an irrelevant curriculum because their curriculum did not meet the requirements for medicine.

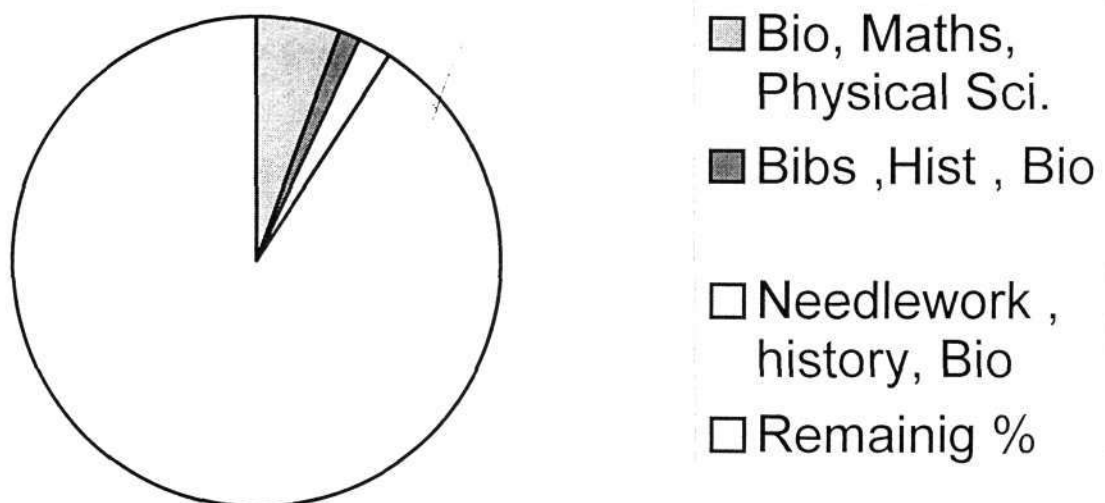


FIGURE 5. Respondents (Medicine) and their curriculum

Out of 9.25% of the total respondents who had chosen medicine as their career, 8.25% preferred to be medical practitioners whilst 1% wanted to be specialist doctors. The curriculum of 5.5% of the total respondents who had chosen medicine was relevant because it offered biology, mathematics

and physical sciences. This showed that they were knew which subjects they needed for their chosen careers. The remaining 3,75% of the total respondents had an irrelevant curriculum because 1,5% studied biblical studies and 2,25% studied needlework. In addition all of them studied history. The dreams of the 3,5% of respondents were shattered because of the irrelevance of their curriculum.

4.1.6 Respondents' curriculum and clothing-related careers.

Dressmaking, tailoring and fashion designing are clothing related careers chosen by the respondents. Each of these had specific requirements. The National Diploma in Clothing Management requires accounting, business economics and mathematics, needlework or Home Economics (Witwatersrand Technikon 1998).

Figure 6 shows the curriculum of the respondents who wanted to specialise in dressmaking and tailoring.

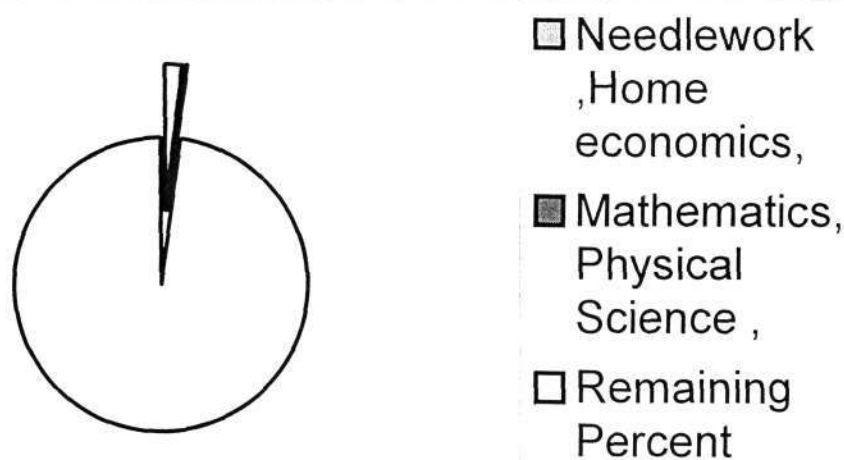


FIGURE 6. Respondents (dressmaking and tailoring) and their curriculum.

The figure reflects that the majority of respondents did not intend to be dressmakers or tailors. Even out of those who intended to be, few had an irrelevant curriculum because it did not have mathematics, and even where mathematics was offered other subjects required were not offered.

Two and a quarter percent wanted to do dressmaking and tailoring. Two percent had chosen dressmaking as their career whilst 0,25% had chosen tailoring. Of the 2% respondents who wanted to specialise in dressmaking 0,75% studied needlework whilst 1,25% studied home economics. Their curriculum did not meet the requirements of the tertiary institution which offered the careers chosen by the respondents. The 0,25% that wanted to do tailoring had mathematics and physical science. It was also slightly irrelevant because it had only mathematics from the required subjects. All of them studied geography. Therefore the curriculum of the respondents who wanted to do tailoring should have included the required subjects for a career in clothing management.

For fashion designing the matric subject required is English as well as art, needlework or home economics and one of the following: accounting or business economics or mathematics (Witwatersrand Technikon:1997). Data collected by the researcher reflected that 1,25% of the respondents intended to be fashion designers. Figure 7 illustrates the curriculum of these respondents.

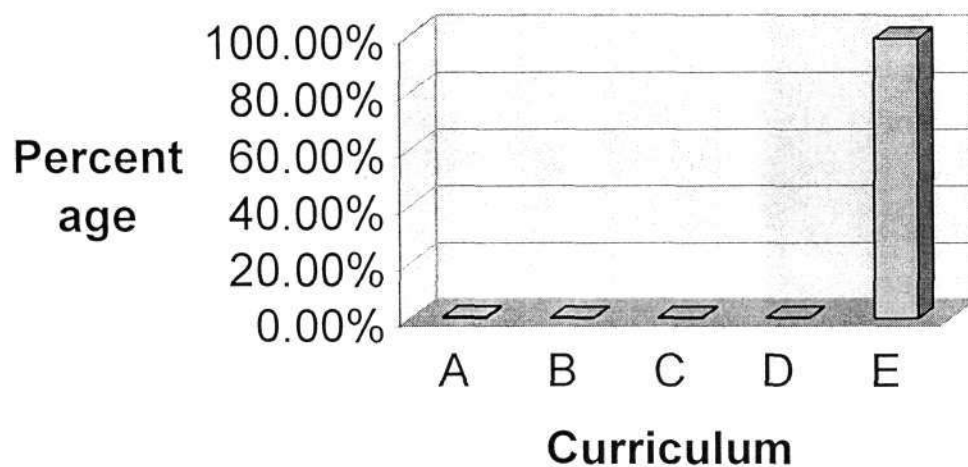


Figure 7. Respondents (fashion designing) and their curriculum

- A. Needlework, biology, history
- B. Home economics, history, geography
- C. Mathematics, physical science, geography
- D. Remaining percentage

The figure reflects that many respondents did not choose fashion designing. Very few did and they all had an irrelevant curriculum because the curriculum did not meet the requirements for fashion designing.

The curriculum seemed irrelevant for fashion designing because none of the respondents above had the required combination of subjects. For example none of them studied art, accountancy and business economics. Few of the respondents studied needlework whilst 0,25% studied home economics, and both groups offered neither art nor one of the required subjects. Although 0,25% did mathematics, they did not have the other required subjects in their curriculum. The 0,25% of respondents who studied agricultural science had a completely irrelevant curriculum because none of the recommended subjects featured in their curriculum. All of them did English and geography. The language is the only compulsory subject they had. One percent studied history.

4.1.7 Respondents' curriculum and engineering.

The specific matriculation subjects required by tertiary institutions for the diploma and degree in engineering are mathematics and physical science (University of Pretoria; Witwatersrand Technikon). There is electrical as well as mechanical engineering. Two and a quarter percent of the total number of respondents wanted to pursue engineering as a career, 1% wanted to specialise in electrical engineering and another 1,25% wanted to become mechanical engineers. Figure 8 depicts the curriculum of the respondents. The remaining 97,75% chose other careers.

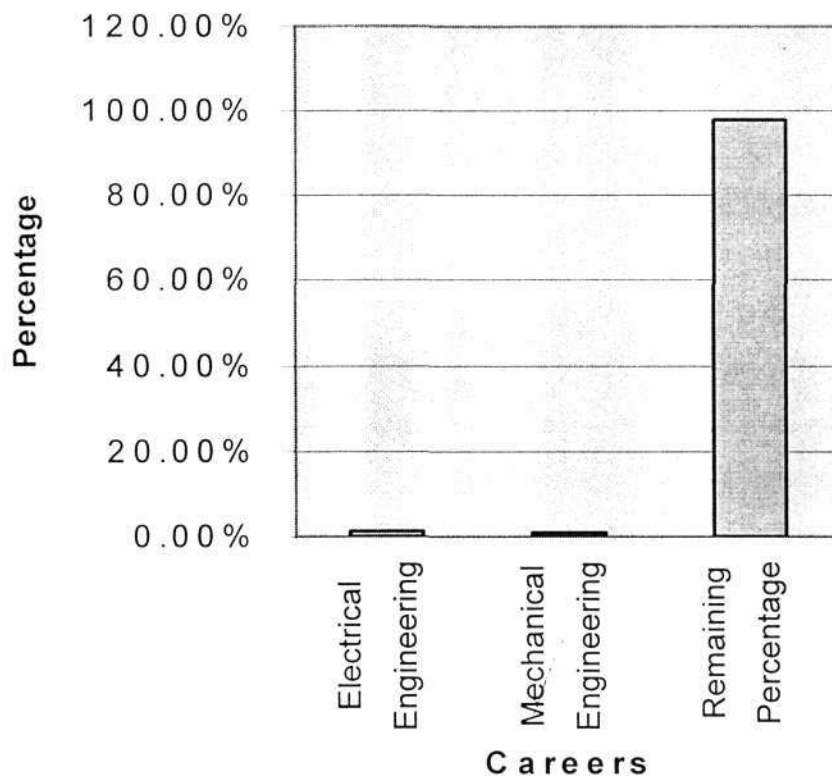


FIGURE 8 Respondents and their chosen careers in engineering

It is interesting to note that the curriculum of these respondents is relevant to their chosen careers because they were studying mathematics, physical science and English. These are subjects required by the various tertiary institutions offering these courses. In addition the respondents also studied geography. The small number of respondents who intended to be engineers reflected a shortage of the engineers in the near future.

The figure reflects a majority of respondents who did not choose engineering as a career. Few intended to be mechanical engineers whilst fewer intended to be electrical engineers.

4.1.8 Curriculum and miscellaneous careers.

Miscellaneous careers in this research entail journalism, clerical work, television presenting, traffic inspectors, minister of religions, managers and scientists. Figure 9 reflects these careers.

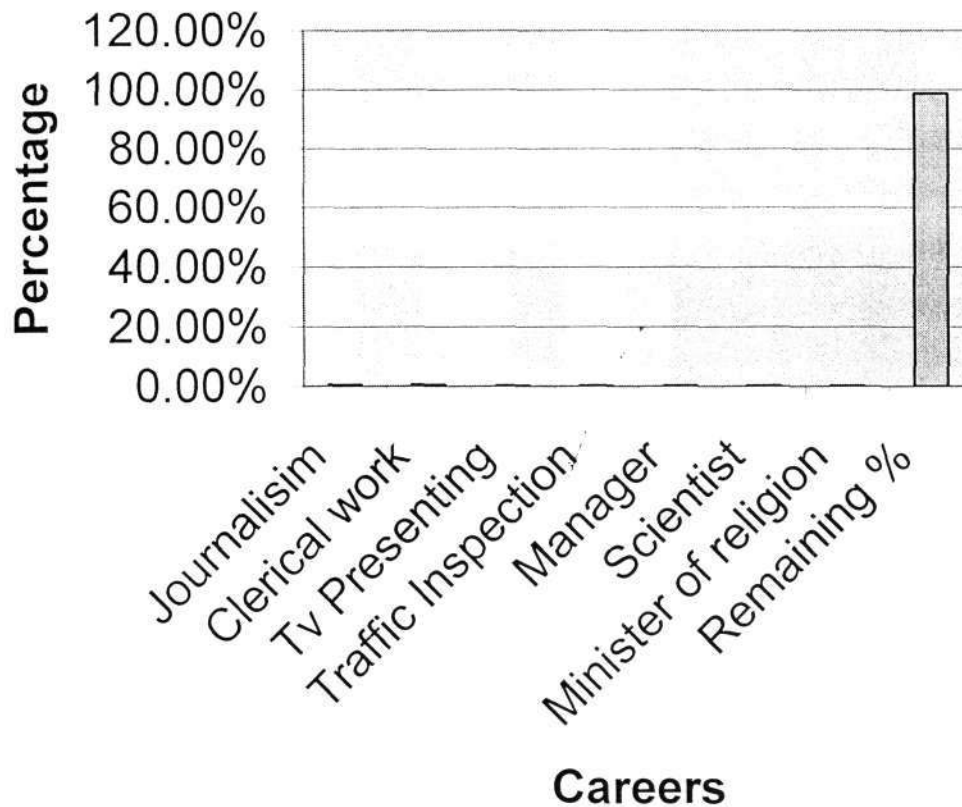


FIGURE 9. Respondents and miscellaneous careers.

The requirement of the degree in journalism is that one should have English as a compulsory subject. This curriculum is relevant to 0,5% of the respondents who preferred to become journalists. In addition these respondents also offered history, geography and home economics. These subjects had little impact on the employability of the respondents.

Only 0,5% of the respondents wanted to do clerical work. Their curriculum lacked related

subjects with respect to office management, computer skills and typing. In short their curriculum was irrelevant in relation to their proposed fields of employment. They were studying mathematics and commercial subjects which would have little or no impact on their employment opportunities.

Respondents indicating careers such as television presenters, traffic inspectors, minister of religions, managers and scientists constituted 0,25% each. The required subjects for scientists are mathematics and physical science or biology. To become a minister of religion some universities require a theological subject like biblical studies. Others do not need this as long as one has a matriculation certificate. No tertiary institution offers course leading to traffic inspection. Since the fundamental task of a television presenter is the introduction of certain programmes and communication language becomes a critical subject. The curriculum of the respondents who wanted to be television presenters was relevant because of the two languages done in schools: African Language and English although respondents were restricted only to those programmes that used these two languages. Any of the four subjects these respondents studied including home economics, was also relevant for certain programmes over the air.

With respect to the other choices the curriculum of the respondents also seemed relevant. For instance the 0,25% of the respondents who wished to be scientists were studying mathematics, physical science, geography and biology. The 0,25% of respondents who wanted to be traffic inspectors and 0,25% of respondents who wanted to serve in the Ministry of the Church offered history, geography and biblical studies-the latter being relevant to the Ministry of the Church. Mathematics and commercial subjects done by the 0,25% intending to be managers were relevant to managers of businesses.

The graph reflects that very few respondents intended to be journalists, clerks, traffic inspectors, managers, scientists managers and ministers of religion.

4.1.9 Respondents' curriculum and teaching.

The respondents who wanted to follow a career in education constituted 20% of the total number of respondents. Their curriculum was appropriate to the teaching field if respondents were going to specialise in subjects which they studied in their streams at high school. Figure 10 shows percentages of respondents wishing to specialise in the teaching career according to fields of specialisation.

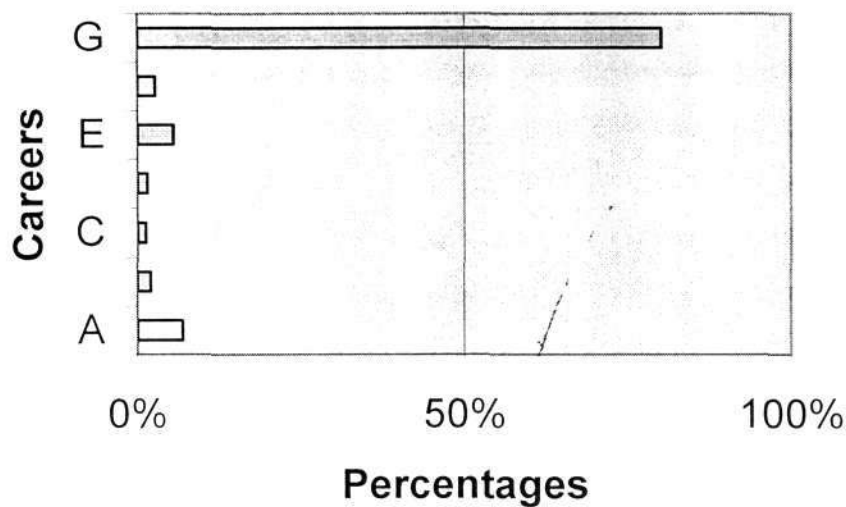


FIGURE 10. Respondents and their teaching career choices.

- A. Mathematics and Science educators
- B. Needlework educators
- C. Home economics educators
- D. Agricultural science educators
- E. Biblical studies and history educators
- F. Commerce educators
- G. Remaining Percent

What was interesting here was that 7% of the respondents preferred to be science and mathematics educators. Generally there is a shortage of educators in this stream or learning area. Two percent of respondents wished to be needlework educators whilst 1,25% of respondents preferred to be home economics educators. It became clear from these percentages that it would take time to have enough educators for these subjects. That also meant that very few schools would be able to offer these subjects. Therefore it would take time for the high schools in the sample district to have a purely diversified curriculum that would cater for all learners. Only 1,5% of the respondents chose to be agricultural science educators. Respondents which constituted 5,5% indicated their intentions to train in humanities specialising in subjects like history and biblical studies. As compared to home economics and needlework, this meant that there would be many educators for these subjects and in return many schools offering these subjects. This comparison reflects that there would be few educators who could provide useful skills that learners could use for self-employment as compared to the big number of educators that would teach subjects that could hardly be used for self-employment. With home economics learners could open small businesses involving cooking, and baking and selling to people whilst with needlework learners could sew garments and sell these to people. Biblical studies offers no skill for self-employment. It is only right for learners who intend to be ministers of religion. What was reflected by this 5,5% response was that there would be many educators for these subjects. In the light of the government's proposal that in colleges of education more emphasis should be mathematics and science, and art streams, this 5,5% of respondents would clearly be unemployed. The remaining 2,75% indicated their preference to be commerce teachers. This was also a low percentage for such crucial subjects in the economy of any country. This also reflected that very few schools would offer these subjects due to lack of educators for these subjects.

These statistics reflect a shortage of respondents who wished to be home economics, needlework, agricultural science and commerce teachers. This will also affect the introduction of these subjects in the high school curriculum of the Tabankulu district in particular and the North Eastern Region in general. There is hope that more science and mathematics teachers will be available although this number is insufficient. The statistics also reflect that no respondents wished

to specialise in art and craft. This might be due to the fact that no respondents studied these subjects at their high schools. This meant these subjects will still lack in the high schools in Tabankulu district and also in this North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape.

The figure reflects that a large percentage of respondents did not choose teaching as a career. Also there will be more teacher mathematics and science and humanities such as biblical studies. There is also a number of teachers for needlework and commerce whilst there will only be a few home economics and agricultural science. It would be better if there were few that intended to do biblical studies then those who wanted to do home economics, commerce and needlework. These subjects are in great demand today.

4.1.10 Curriculum and Agricultural Farming.

The requirements for university entrance for biological and agricultural sciences are mathematics and one of the following; physical science or biology or agricultural science depending on whether one follows the agricultural or biological trend.

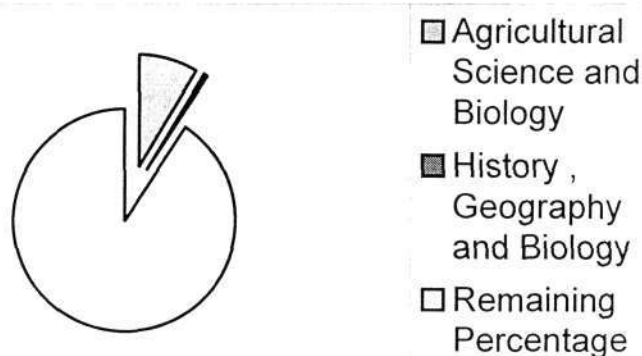


FIGURE 11 Respondents (agricultural farming) and their curriculum

Very few respondents of 9,25% wanted to specialise in agricultural sciences. Although 8,5% of the total number of respondents had agricultural science and biology in their curriculum, they had no mathematics. This resulted in the irrelevance of their curriculum. Three quarter percent of

the total number of respondents studied history and geography. It was clear that with these subjects they would not be able to achieve their goals. The curriculum of these respondents was completely irrelevant because it excluded the key recommended subjects - mathematics and agricultural science. This indicated that the curriculum of the respondents in the high schools of the sample varied. In some instances it had succeeded in catering for the needs of the learners whilst in most cases it had failed to cater for the interests of learners.

The diagram reflects that even though few respondents had agriculture their curriculum was irrelevant because it did not have mathematics. The few respondents had an incompletely irrelevant curriculum. The rest of the respondents never intended to be agricultural farmers,. This is a challenge to schools to allow learners to take agricultural science with mathematics.

4.1.11 Implications of the responses.

The survey indicates that the curriculum of schools needs to be reviewed rigorously because in most cases it failed to meet the career choices of the learners. In addition there is need to find out why the responses reflect subjects which do not correspond with the requirements of their chosen careers. In most cases the curriculum is irrelevant to the chosen careers of the respondents. If this is not addressed learners will face many problems when they leave high school and proceed to study for their chosen careers.

The research further reflects that in future many learners whose curriculum is irrelevant will face unemployment. The respondents who wanted to be educators but had no mathematics and sciences, commercial or arts and craft subjects would not be employed because the government wanted educators to be trained in the subjects already mentioned above. In some cases the curriculum is quite relevant. Subjects forming the basis of a particular course as required by the tertiary institutions are being studied. This is shown by careers such as social work, journalism, television presenting, scientists and a few in each career choice whose curriculum is relevant to the career requirements. In addition the research reflects that those who wanted to be TV presenters will have to work outside this North Eastern region of the Eastern Cape because there are no SABC stations

here.

The research also reflects that there were instances in which the curriculum was totally irrelevant because the subjects being offered at high school were not the required subjects for specific careers. Clerical work and police services are examples.

On the other hand, there were those careers which were partly satisfied in terms of a diversified curriculum. This was due to the fact that some of the required subjects were available whilst others were not. Fashion designing was one of such careers. Those who wanted to follow this career had only needlework but lacked mathematics and accountancy. Even the 8,25% of respondents offering needlework was very low when considering the significance of this subject in providing skills for both employment and self-employment.

The research did not look at language efficiency and correct symbols as one of the requirements for specific careers because the respondents were still going to write their senior certificate examination. This would be inapplicable to the respondents.

Table 4 Occupations available in the district: Extent

Occupation	Degree of availability in percentage			
	MOSTLY	RARELY	AVERAGE	NIL
TEACHING	61	39	50	--
NURSING	16	60	38	24
FARMING	22	33	27,5	45
HORTICULTURE	15	35	25	50
FASHION DESIGNING	12	35	23,5	53
TAILORING	12	21	16,5	67
DRESSMAKING	30	32	31	38
GRAPHIC DESIGNING	11	24	17,5	65
MOTOR MECHANICS	15	33	24	52
ENGINEERING	15	35	25	50
CHEMIST	--	37	18,5	63
ELECTRICAL WORK	44	29	36,5	27
CARPENTRY	16	37	26,5	47
PLUMBING	4	26	15	70
ARCHITECTURE	12	45	28,5	43
LAND SURVEYING	10	23	16,5	67
DOCTORS	13	29	21	58
BUILDERS	26	38	32	36
LAWYERS	6	33	19,5	61
SOCIAL WORK	13	35	24	52
POLICE	10	37	17	53
CRAFTWORK	9	28	18,5	63
ACCOUNTANT	9	34	21,5	57
ELECTRONICS	13	39	26	48
JOURNALISM	5	11	8	84

4.2 Perceptions of respondents about occupations in the district

Table 4 reflects the perceptions of the respondents about occupations available in the district with respect to the number existing and shortages. The perceptions of respondents are reflected in percentages. If a response claims that a profession is mostly found, the other two (not mostly found, not found) make up the remaining percentage. For example, in carpentry, 16% claim that carpentry is mostly found while 37% and 47% (84%) claim that it is not commonly found and not found. All three add up to 100%. Each of the three complements the other two. This is clearly reflected in the following discussion:

Sixty one percent of the respondents in respect of the teaching profession reflect that the educators are in abundance. Although 39% of respondents on one hand reflect a low number on educators at present on the other hand this percentage supports the fact that teaching is common in the district. The average percentage of their unanimity about availability of teachers in the district is 50% which in general shows no shocking shortages.

If the average percentage of mostly found and not commonly found occupations is below 50% this suggests that the occupation is in shortage. Table 4 reflects this shortage in all the occupations in this table except in nursing and electrical work. The average percentage of 38% and 36,5% shows that there is a shortage of these occupations. The 24% and 27% on the availability of these occupations reflected in Table 3 reflect that there is great shortage of vocational and technical occupations. This shows that schools still emphasise the importance of an academic curriculum at the expense of technical and vocational curriculum. Were it not so, there would have been more learners from high schools coming to specialise in these occupations.

The reflection given in Table 4 is that all those occupations with low average percentages in the Tabankulu district were showing their scarcity. The average percentage of respondents' perceptions about the availability of journalism, tailoring, plumbing, surveying, graphic designing and craftwork, ranged between 8% and 20%. This reflected that these occupations were scarce. This is supported by the high percentage of respondents who denied availability of these occupations

in the Tabankulu district which ranged between 63% and 84% as Table 4 reflected.

In conclusion, the most commonly found occupation has been teaching and the least commonly found has been journalism with average percentages of 50% and 8% respectively. Table 4 reflects that urgent attention should be given to the curriculum in high schools to make provision for a variety of occupations. This will prevent a large number of learners going for teaching which seems to be what all learners resort to if their curriculum does not qualify for their chosen occupations.

4.2.1 Respondents' reactions on needed occupations in the district

The respondents were required to give occupations which they felt should be introduced in the Tabankulu district. Table 5 shows these occupations.

The percentages next to each occupation showed how much or less respondents favoured such occupations and whether the occupations were in great demand or not. From the above table, it would appear that the higher the percentage (50% and above), the higher the need, and conversely, the lower the percentage (49% and less) the lower the need for that profession.

The statistics therefore reflect that only teaching and journalism were perceived as less needed. The rest of these occupations were highly needed. The following were some of the reasons given as to why these jobs were needed in the district. There was a lack of some of these occupations in the Tabankulu district as well as the North Eastern Region. Yet there was need of these occupations because more jobs could be provided. Besides people could benefit from these occupations because they can be clients. Shortage of these occupations had also been cited as one of the reasons. Here shortage meant that although the occupations were found their percentage was less than half. Shortage of jobs in the district and communities was also given as a reason why these occupations were needed. It was the perception of these respondents that if these occupations could be provided, then the unemployment rate would be decreased.

Table 5 Occupations perceived by respondents as needed in the district.

Occupation	% of respondents in favour
1.Horticulture	50%
2.Fashion Designing	53%
3.Graphic Designing	65%
4.Teaching	05%
5.Chemist	63%
6.Plumbing	70%
7.Tailoring	67%
8.Motor Mechanic	52%
9.Engineering	50%
10.Medicine	58%
11.Legal Work	51%
12.Social Work	52%
13.Craft Work	63%
14.Accounting	50%
15.Journalism	08%
16.Dressmaking	62%

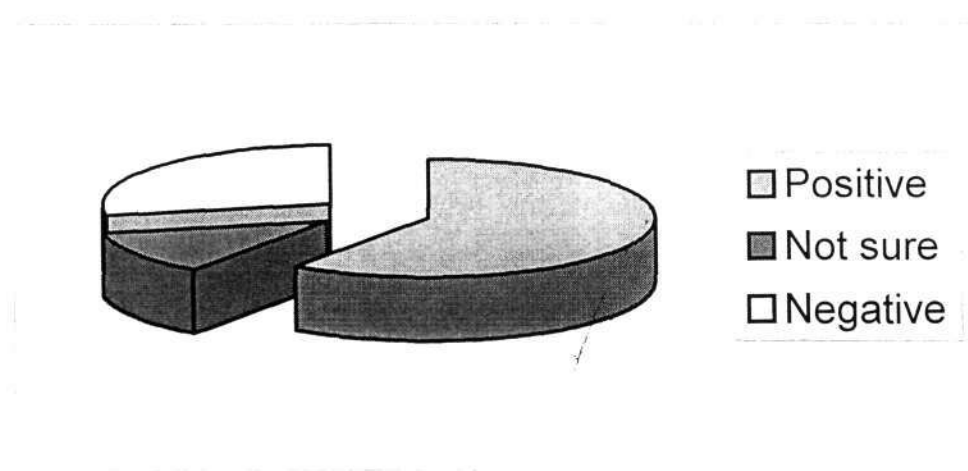
So these occupations were needed to create job opportunities. Some respondents felt that there was need for these jobs for the development of the district. It was also the perception of the respondents that these occupations would provide self-occupation and, therefore, learners would not depend on job-hunting. In other words, these occupations were needed for self-sustenance.

Some respondents perceived that the curriculum as suitable for their careers and this view came from the commercial stream respondents.

4.2.2. The role of schools in the provision of these occupations.

The respondents differed in their view with regard to the role to be played by schools in providing these occupations. Figure 12 reflects the responses of respondents about the role of schools in the provision of the occupations mentioned in Table 4.

Figure 12 Responses of respondents about the role of schools in providing occupations in Table 4.



The figure reflects that few respondents were positive that schools have a role to play in providing occupations needed in the district through their curriculum. Fewer respondents were not sure and the rest were negative. Therefore schools need to know that they have a role to play in restructuring the curriculum so that it can lead to many occupations which might be needed by learners.

Sixty percent of the respondents expressed the view that schools have a big role to play in ensuring that these occupations are provided. The following reasons were cited.

- There are trained educators in subjects related to some occupations. These educators can ensure that the relevant subjects are thoroughly taught.
- These educators can also help in the extension of the curriculum. In this way schools can open chances for pupils to make subject choices.

- The new government can pass laws that subjects related to these occupations be introduced in schools.
- Schools can be influential in curriculum designing.
- Some schools have equipment and can use these for the benefit of learners.
- Since schools are providers of all types of formal knowledge they can provide knowledge and skills which learners require for their chosen occupations.

The 12% which was not sure whether schools could provide these occupations gave the following reasons :-

- The education process is slow and there is no hope that the provision of these occupations can take place soon.
- Lack of funds may retard the whole process of restructuring the curriculum.
- Lack of classrooms would inhibit the extension of the curriculum because building of classrooms can take a long time due to lack of funds.
- There is a shortage of teachers to teach some of the specific subjects related to these occupations.
- Due to the reduction of the number of educator trainees in colleges training of such educators will exacerbate the position.
- Schools in rural areas are always neglected when provision of resources is made than urban schools.
- Since their schools are in rural areas they will be neglected.
- Lack of technical colleges and technikons in this part of the Eastern Cape is detrimental to the area as far as the provision of training is concerned.
- The adjacent ones are always selective and do not admit most of the students from this area.
- Crime rate has also been cited as a drawback because stealing and vandalism of classrooms and equipment may affect the resources adversely.

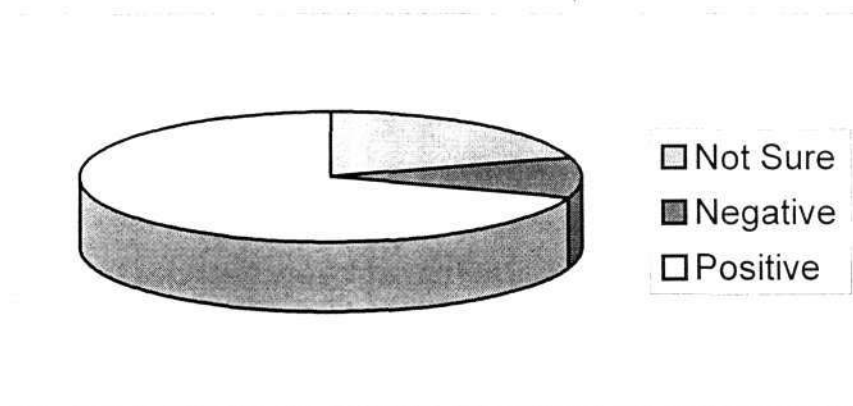
About 28% of the respondents, felt that schools do not have any role to play. The following reasons were cited :

- A prescriptive curriculum does not provide opportunities for the teaching of subjects related to these occupations.
- There are students who are not prepared to learn and who have no interest in other types of occupations except teaching and nursing.
- Non-payment of school fees may lead to failure of schools in providing a curriculum relevant to the proposed occupations because schools will not have money for buying requisite equipment.

4.2.3 The provision of the proposed occupations.

The respondents were also required to give their views as to whether these occupations can be easily practised in the district where this research was conducted. Figure 13 reflects the responses.

Figure 13 Responses of respondents about provision of the proposed occupations.



The figure reflects that many respondents were positive that the occupations could be easily practised in the district which implied for schools that their curriculum should be designed to meet these occupations. Few respondents were not sure and fewer were negative about provision of these occupations. This shows that the curriculum of schools fails to convince all learners of its significance for various occupations.

Those respondents who were not sure that the stipulated occupations could be practised in the

region accounted for 18,5% of the total number of respondents. They argued that the principal reason was a lack of funds which militated against employment of people. They felt that the government needed to become involved. It was also mentioned that the rural nature of the district might be problematic because some jobs like graphic designing might not be in much demand especially in villages. The size of the district also constituted a negative factor because only a few people might be absorbed in these occupations. Since the Tabankulu district is not well developed it might take time to have all these occupations ramify in the district. In the meanwhile those who have learnt or studied for these jobs might not be easily employed because little or no opportunities exist for them in the area.

Unavailability of equipment is an added problem because most of these jobs relied heavily on specialised equipment. The shortage of funds again could prove to be a stumbling block with regard to the provision of required material and human resources. Further absence of the requisite infrastructures for teachers required explicitly for the subjects related to these occupations was also cited as one of the reasons for the paucity of occupations cited. Few respondents who declared that these jobs could not be easily practiced in this district constituted 9% of the total. Some of the reasons given were similar to those already suggested in the foregoing paragraphs i.e ,scarcity of funds, need for equipment and so on. In addition, the shortage of schools was cited as a possible problem since the curriculum has to be extended in these high schools. The ignorance of people about the value or otherwise of these occupations and the mindset of people about the best occupations, could also be a contributing factor in retarding provision of these occupations in the district. However the remaining 72,5% of respondents felt highly positive that these jobs can be easily practiced in the district. The following reasons were given to support their perceptions:-

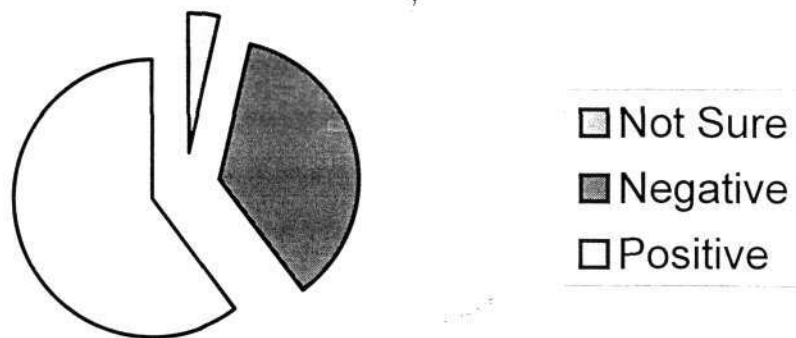
Self-employment will be enhanced. For example one who has done needlework can be a dressmaker and earn money through selling what one has produced out of one's hands. This can come handy in cases where employment is a problem. Some respondents felt that the subjects in the streams of their choice are relevant to their chosen careers. Some occupations, not found at all in this district, will be highly welcome for the development of the district, as well as become

the instrument for the provision of more jobs. Many people are not employed so these occupations might prove to be a boom to the community at large. Some people are gifted and if they are taught basic skills, these skills could be practiced and made available in the district. People would be able to display the skills. This would prove to be of value not only to themselves but also to the total community residing in the area.

4.2.4. Chosen occupations and employability.

The respondents had also to give their opinions on whether provision of these occupations would alleviate the rife unemployment in this district in particular. Figure 14 reflects their responses.

Figure 14 Chosen occupations and employability



The diagram reflects that respondents had different views on whether their chosen occupations would ensure that they are employed. Most respondents were confident that they would get employment few were negative and fewer were not sure. What is amazing is that this majority of respondents which was sure about employment, had largely an irrelevant curriculum.

Those who were not sure if unemployment could be eased amounted to 3,5% of the total respondents. They deemed the lack of funds and the inability of the government to provide such

funds as a critical factor. The position was also aggravated by the fact that even those who are employed are currently faced with retrenchment because of the constraints of the economy.

Also 36,25% of respondents felt that the unemployment problem would not be solved by the provision of these jobs. They also commented that the primary factor was an economic one. The inadequacy of the curriculum content for the chosen occupations was another factor. The

issue of retrenchment which was in the pipeline was a veritable sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of the people in the Tabankulu district. The respondents were quite clear of what the future held for them and this indicated their maturity level.

Some 60,25% agreed that unemployment would be eased because besides being employed by others many people could also be self-employed. Employment opportunities would be expanded and opened through the provision of these occupations. Opportunities for people to get the type of work that they were interested in could be increased. Some people like doctors could also provide employment for other people by employing them as assistants.

4.2.5 Occupations chosen for self-employment.

The respondents were also asked to give occupations that they could engage in for self-employment in case they were not employed. Cited of the occupations were construction, carpentry, motor mechanics, computer work, dressmaking, photography and farming.

Those who chose farming felt that they would apply the knowledge they had gained from their study of agricultural science. This would include the cultivation of crops and selling them. The dressmakers would have benefited from needlework. They could apply their skills in sewing clothes and selling them at a profit.

The motor mechanic would open garages after applying for financial assistance from other institutions. The carpenter would also look for financial assistance to buy material. They would

use the school knowledge acquired if motor mechanics and carpentry are introduced in the curriculum. Even those who chose to be building contractors or artisans had the same view but felt that their mathematics would help them in connection with measurements. There were those who also felt that they could engage in photography as a means of self-employment. Those who wanted to work with computers felt that they would do private typing for schools and other people who needed that facility. They would use the knowledge they gained from studying computer science at school.

4.3 Summary.

The respondents revealed that there is definitely a lack of many occupations which could alleviate the high unemployment rate in the Tabankulu District if they are provided. The perceptions they evinced on the occupations varied but on the whole it became clear that there was a dire need for these occupations and those that prepared one for self - employment. The perception they had was that marketing, land surveying, and farming were needed so as to improve the district and since this is a rural district farming of all types should be encouraged. This is true and since this is an undeveloped area there is need to provide jobs within the district.

The low average percentages on some occupations like graphic designing and tailoring show that these were either frowned upon by the communities or were not clearly known by the communities. Therefore, there is need for career guidance for learners, and making communities aware of the importance of these occupations.

4.4 Respondents perceptions about a relevant curriculum

4.4.1 Curriculum Relevance

Different perceptions were reflected by the respondents to the questionnaire. Table 6 shows the perceptions of the respondents about curriculum relevance.

Table 6 reflects the perceptions of respondents as regards relevance of curriculum to various aspects like needs, interests, tertiary education and the world of work.

TABLE 6 RESPONSES TO CURRICULUM RELEVANCE.

A relevant curriculum	1	2	3
meets the needs of learners	95%	--	5%
meets the needs of parents	40%	29%	31%
meets the community needs	54%	20%	26%
meets government's needs	55%	24%	21%
meets learners' interests	68%	24%	8%
meets the world of work demands	84%	10%	6%
offers opportunities to:			
study at a university	87%	13%	--
study at a technikon	78%	16%	6%
get self-employment	93%	7%	--

1 = strongly agree 2 = neutral 3 = strongly disagree

4.4.2 Curriculum relevance and needs.

The respondents were required to give their perceptions on the relevance of their curriculum to needs of learners, parents, communities, and the government. As regards meeting the needs the respondents fully supported the fact that the curriculum should meet the needs of learners. This was shown by the 95% of respondents who strongly supported this view. In support of their view they stated that at this stage learners knew what they needed for their future and no one could make better choices for them. This reveals the confidence the respondents had in themselves. Only 5% of the respondents were not confident about themselves and felt that the curriculum should meet the needs of other stakeholders like parents. This indicated a sign of immaturity on their side. At the

same time this reflected that these respondents needed parent involvement in curriculum matters affecting the learners.

The researcher fully supports those respondents who were confident in themselves. In most high schools learners make career choices. She does not accept the idea of undermining the learners' ability to choose what they need. On the other hand those respondents who felt that the curriculum should meet needs of other stakeholders were correct because they were aware of the need for parental involvement. It is also interesting to note that the majority of respondents showed signs of independence.

As far as meeting the needs of parents 40% of the respondents supported strongly the idea of a curriculum that met the needs of parents. This was even reflected by those who were strong about the curriculum that met their needs. They recognised the significance of a curriculum that met their parents' needs. This implied that the respondents felt the curriculum should meet the needs of both learners and their parents. Those who were opposed to a curriculum that met their parents' needs totaled 31%. They argued that it would be impossible in cases where parents were illiterate. Although this might be true in some instances it might prove wrong. There are some parents whose needs might be acceptable even to learners despite their illiteracy.

Only 29% of the respondents were neutral. One of the reasons for their neutrality was that they were not sure whether parents would make the right choices for them. What is reflected here is that both parents and learners have to discuss their needs so as to know what it party needs. Then the curriculum would have to meet their joint needs.

There were 54% of respondents who felt that the curriculum should meet the needs of their communities. These respondents wished to see their communities being developed. However, 26% of the respondents strongly disagreed that a relevant curriculum should meet the needs of communities. This reflected that the respondents were not prepared to work in their communities. Perhaps this might be caused by the fact that employment opportunities were scarce and did not intend to work in these communities. Some 20% of the respondents expressed

their concern that a curriculum that met the needs of communities might be in conflict with the respondents' needs. On the other hand, they wanted to see progress in their communities.

It was interesting to realise that the majority of respondents were not egocentric and wished to work in their areas. The perception of 55% of the respondents that a relevant curriculum should meet the needs of the government shows that the government has a very significant role to play in curriculum matters. As respondents stated one of the needs of the government was skilled human resource. The respondents felt that with a curriculum that met the needs of the government they would learn what is relevant for employment opportunities. On the other hand, the opposing view of the 21% of the respondents to a curriculum that met the needs of the government reflected their lack of confidence in the government in addressing their needs. They stated that the government's needs might not be what stakeholders such as learners, parents and communities need at all times.

Therefore, this might be to the detriment of these stakeholders where the government intended to impose its needs on people. The neutrality of the 24% of the respondents reflected their opposition to the governments' needs being rated as best at the expense of learners' needs. On the other hand, they conceded that the government as the provider of funding, would promote a curriculum related to its needs. Thus the respondents had to support the view that a curriculum would be relevant if it met the needs of the government.

It was interesting to note that the respondents approved of a curriculum that met the governments' needs if it did not have ulterior motives but only provision of employment.

4.4.3 Curriculum relevance and interests of learners.

The respondents were also required to give their views on the relevance of the curriculum to the interests of learners. The perception that a relevant curriculum should meet the interests of the learners is reflected as being fully supported by the majority of respondents. This is reflected by the 68% response of the respondents. They contended that with such a curriculum learners could put more effort into studying the curriculum. They would be very responsible by ensuring that they pass

at school and would be better motivated. Very few respondents constituting 12% of the total respondents opposed a curriculum that met the interests of learners. They stated that in some instances learners' interests might be contrary to what should be learnt in schools. This might affect those who have positive goals and interests. The rest of the respondents constituting 24% were neutral. On one hand they felt that the curriculum was relevant if it met the interests of learners but on the other hand they felt that in some instances learners' interests might not be education related.

A curriculum that meets the learners' interests is best because learners can be fully involved in it and can be motivated to learn and get the best results. Schools can benefit from this because they can have good products which schools can be proud of and school dropouts can decline. It is also true that there might be some learners whose interest contradict with education and these are usually problem learners. This might be due to the fact that the curriculum does not interest them and then they decide to divert their interest to the wrong direction. This needs to be addressed so as to avoid these learners being problematic in their schools.

4.4.4 Curriculum relevance and demands of the workplace.

The 84% respondents who perceived a relevant curriculum as the one that meets the demands of the workplace reflected a concern from many learners about a relationship between the school curriculum and what is needed by the world of work. In addition this big percentage of respondents reveals a big concern about unemployability experienced by school leavers. The latter are not easily absorbed by the market place and have difficulty even with self-employment. The low percentage of respondents, 6%, with an opposite view to that of the 84% reflected that these respondents had a different concern. They stated that a relevant curriculum is not the one that focuses on the demands of the marketplace but that it should meet the talents and abilities of learners.

It would appear that the 10% of respondents who were neutral accepted both views as long as these would ensure any form of employment.

4.4.5 Curriculum and tertiary education.

The respondents were also required to give their perception on the relationship between the curriculum and tertiary education. The majority of respondents ranging between 78% and 87% felt strongly that for a curriculum to be relevant it should offer opportunities for studying at either a technikon or a university. Thirteen percent and 16% of the respondents were neutral. To them whether the curriculum offered the opportunities for further studying at tertiary institution or not it made no difference because they had no intentions of going to a technikon or university. They wanted to go for nursing or train as police. The reason for the 6% of respondents opposing the view that a relevant curriculum is the one that offers opportunities for tertiary education was that this group had an intention of looking for work.

It was interesting to note that the respondents were eager to go for tertiary education. In addition it was reflected by the responses of the respondents that very few felt that the curriculum should prepare learners for tertiary education. This is not strange because there are learners whose parents cannot afford to pay for the learners' fees. Learners need to find employment. This means therefore that the curriculum should also cater for such cases.

4.4.6 Curriculum and self-employment.

It became clear that the idea that a relevant curriculum is the one that offers opportunities for self-employment was highly welcomed. This was reflected by the majority of the respondents constituting 93% as table 6 reflects.

It became clear from the responses of the respondents that whether they obtained tertiary education or not they wished to be self-employed in future. This would mean that very few respondents would like to be employed for the rest of their lives. This showed that they had something that displeased them regarding being employed by somebody else or by institutions.

4.4.7 Perceptions of respondents about their current curriculum.

Table 7 showing respondents' perceptions about relevance of their current curriculum.

Current curriculum :	1	2	3
-can help in getting a job	97,5%	--	2.5%
-can provide employment skills	75,5%	--	24,5%
-can provide knowledge useful for self-employment	74.5%	--	25,5%
-offers opportunities:			
to study at a technikon	44%	45%	11%
to study at a university	83%	14,5%	2,5%
-meets the respondent's needs	83%	16%	1%
-meets community needs	97,5%	2.5%	--
-meets the respondent's interests	91,5%	8,5%	--
-respondents' curriculum is relevant	91,5%	2,5%	6%
1=Strongly agree 2=Neutral 3=Strongly disagree			

4.4.7.1 Current curriculum and getting a job.

An overwhelming majority of respondents constituting 97,5% revealed their positiveness about relevance of their current curriculum to their need of getting a job, whilst 2,5% of the respondents opposed that view. They felt that the curriculum was irrelevant to some learners as far as getting a job. These respondents were from the humanities streams. The curriculum, therefore, did not cater for all the learners' needs.

It was noted that although the respondents thought their current curriculum was relevant to getting a

job there were cases where this was not so because their current curriculum failed to meet the requirements for chosen careers. Examples of such were careers such as fashion designing, farming, graphic designing and others which had been cited earlier on. The respondents did not study mathematics which was a requirement for these careers in most tertiary institutions.

It was noted that the 2,5% of respondents who perceived the current curriculum of their streams as irrelevant was a small number as compared to a large number of respondents per career as has already been discussed in this chapter who had an irrelevant curriculum. Their curriculum needs to be attended to irrespective of their small number.

4.4.7.2 Current curriculum and employment skills.

The feeling of 75,5% of the respondents was that their current curriculum provided them with skills that they needed for self-employment. Some subjects of their streams provided them with these skills. They gave the following examples:

- * experimentation skill provided by physical science
- * counting skills provided by mathematics and accountancy
- * surveying provided by geography and mathematics
- * designing, dressmaking and tailoring provided by needlework, home economics and mathematics.
- * agricultural and pastoral farming skills provided by agricultural science

The rest of the respondents had a perception that the curriculum did not provide them with any skills because the combination of subjects was not relevant to their chosen streams and that what they learnt in subjects like biology, history, biblical studies did not provide them with employment or self-employment. They even stated the uselessness of these subjects. Mention was made of Xhosa as a useless subject because respondents could not use it for self-employment. This showed lack of information on subjects useful for self-employment.

4.4.7.3 Current curriculum and knowledge useful for self-employment.

It was interesting to note that the majority of respondents recommended their curriculum regarding its provision of useful knowledge for self-employment. For example languages provided them with communication skills and the ability to express themselves very well. These skills were viewed as very important especially in self-employment such as business where one has to communicate with people of different races and languages. Other skills mentioned, which learners got from their current curriculum were:

- * preparation of different kinds of meals as provided by home economics
- * soil cultivation, poultry farming, and cattle farming as provided by agricultural science.
- * cutting and sewing garments of different kinds as provided by needlework.

Not all went well with all the respondents as is reflected by the concern of 25,5%. They felt that their curriculum did not provide such knowledge that would empower them for self-employment. These subjects offered were mathematics, biblical studies, accounting and history. They felt that no skills for self-employment were provided by these subjects. It was clear that they were not aware that with accounting one could be a book-keeper which is one form of self-employment.

It is true that subjects like biblical studies and history are only useful in careers where one would work for an institution or as a politician in the case of history. There is nothing that one can do with these as a form of self-employment. Mathematics can be useful in self-employment where one studies this with subjects like needlework etc. This combination can come handy in occupations like dressmaking, fashion designing and tailoring.

4.4.7.4 Current curriculum and opportunities for tertiary education.

It was the feeling of 44% of the respondents that their curriculum offered them opportunities to study at a technikon. This came mostly from those who did mathematics and science as well as commercial subjects. This percentage reflected few respondents who could go to a technikon because of the relevance of their curriculum. They felt that the careers they had chosen were

offered in technikons and their subjects were appropriate for these careers. On the other hand 11% of the respondents expressed their concern of the irrelevance of subjects like biblical studies and history for careers offered in technikons. Although this percentage is small it can cause a great damage in increasing the number of learners who may encounter unemployment problems in future. Those who were not sure were in majority, 45% and revealed that the curriculum of these learners had serious problems. The respondents were not sure whether their curriculum offered them opportunities to go to a technikon. Some of the subjects required in technikons for their careers were not part of their curriculum while others were. Therefore they were not sure.

It was interesting to note that a majority of respondents constituting 83% could fulfill their dreams. They felt that their curriculum offered them chances to go to a university because their subjects suited their chosen careers. Only 2,5% had an opposite view because other subjects required for their career choices were not part of their curriculum. Among the respondents 14,5% were not sure whether they would go to a university or not. There were subjects that they did not study and yet these were required for their chosen careers.

It became clear that the majority of respondents would not be debarred by the curriculum in going to tertiary institutions but something else. Very few respondents would be in trouble with their curriculum.

4.4.7.5 Current curriculum and learners' needs.

A very small number comprising 1% of the respondents felt that the curriculum did not meet their needs. One reason stated was that the curriculum did not provide subjects needed for their careers. This was mainly from those who wanted to be traffic inspectors, clerical work and fashion designing.

Those who chose traffic inspection as their career were 0,25% and 0,5% chose clerical work. This meant that only 0,25% of the respondents who had chosen fashion designing were clear about the irrelevance of their curriculum.

It is true that their curriculum did not meet the requirements of their chosen careers. This would be clear when one compares requirement subjects for tertiary institutions and the current curriculum of the respondents. Sixteen percent of respondents were not sure as to whether the curriculum met their needs or not. They stated amongst other things that the content of the curriculum did not provide them with enough knowledge required for use in self-employment. The majority of respondents, constituting 83%, however, were positive that the curriculum met their needs.

Therefore the curriculum of the respondents seemed to have considered learners' needs in the high schools of the sample. This is reflected by the majority of learners who recommended their curriculum. Those who were not sure had to because their curriculum did not give them the right direction.

4.4.7.6 Current curriculum and community needs.

Ninety seven and a half percent of the respondents felt strongly that their current curriculum met the needs of their communities. The communities needed doctors, social workers, and so on (see Table 3).Some communities feel that their children could get jobs after leaving school. They also need that their children could be able to further their education in tertiary institutions. The respondents also cited that there is an acute shortage of nurses, teachers and doctors in their communities. The communities are in dire need of the occupations mentioned in Table 3 and the curriculum of some of respondents does not address these needs.

Two and a half percent of the respondents felt that their current curriculum did not meet the needs of communities. In some streams, the relevant subjects for a career are not offered. For example mathematics which is required for fashion designing, farming, etc is not offered. Therefore the curriculum does not meet the needs of communities.

4.4.7.7 Current curriculum and learners' interests.

It became clear that the majority of respondents constituting 91,5% highly appreciated that their

curriculum met their interests. This implied that the curriculum was democratic because it catered for the interests of learners. The other 8,5% were not sure because the subjects they had interest in were not part of their curriculum. On the other hand, because a few subjects related to their interests were offered, they felt that the curriculum met their interests. For example, the learners who studied needlework had an interest also in mathematics but such a combination was not offered in their schools. Such a curriculum was detrimental to the future of learners.

4.4.7.8 Current curriculum and relevance.

In this context relevance shall refer to a curriculum that meets the needs and interests of stakeholders such as learners, parents, the government, communities as well as the demands of the world of work.

The perception of 91,5% of respondents that their current curriculum was relevant gave a good picture of the high school curriculum of the Tabankulu district. Yet when one looks at the curriculum of learners in relation to the requirements of their chosen careers, a less percentage is reflected. This shows that some respondents were confused and did not know whether their curriculum was relevant or not. This response was mostly from those whose curriculum fitted well with the requirements of their chosen occupations or careers. These were mostly from the mathematics and science streams or learning areas and very few others. Those few had subjects like home economics, needlework and agricultural science.

About 6% of the respondents, from the humanities streams, felt that their curriculum was irrelevant because of the subjects they did which could not help them with self-employment. The uncertainty of 2,5% of respondents about the relevance of their current curriculum indicated that schools did not treat all learners equally. These included those who wanted to be fashion designers. They felt that the curriculum was relevant because of needlework but at the same time it was irrelevant because there was no mathematics which is a compulsory subject for fashion designing.

4.5 Summary

Even though, the current curriculum of respondents generally appears to be useful however by addressing specifically the needs and interests of learners, as well as those of the communities, it could become positively relevant. Consequently it needs to be restructured to some extent. The curriculum primarily should meet the interests of all learners. The views of those who feel that the curriculum does not satisfy their needs should be taken into account and something should be done to address their concerns.

4.6.Respondents' recommendations.

Respondents were provided with some recommendations and to indicate which of these do they agree with or not. Table 8 illustrates the responses of respondents to these recommendations.

Table 8 Respondents' reactions to recommendations concerning the curriculum.

Statement	Response %	
	1	2
Parent involvement in curriculum planning.	68	32
Curriculum should cater for student needs.	73	27
Curriculum should be diversified.	57	43
The diversified curriculum will solve unemployment problem.	17	83
Curriculum should cater for changes in the world.	60	40
Curriculum should be non-sexist.	42	58
Curriculum should meet interests of learners.	70	30
Career guidance should be conducted in schools	68	32
Curriculum should be designed to provide jobs in the district.	73	27
Learners should be actively involved in curriculum planning.	64	36
Curriculum should develop the learner holistically.	68	32
Learners' abilities should be catered for.	80	20
Curriculum should provide skills.	63	37
Curriculum should be designed to provide self-employment.	82	18

1=Strongly agree ;2=Strongly disagree

In analysing the responses the following considerations are pertinent:

4.6.1 Parent involvement.

Table 8 reflects that the majority of the respondents constituting 68% highly recommended the involvement of parents in curriculum planning. They stated that their parents knew what is good for their children. These respondents also revealed that they were quite aware of the collective role of learners, parents and educators in educational issues amongst which curriculum is one. The few respondents who opposed parent involvement felt that they were the ones to benefit from the curriculum and resented parent involvement. One of the reasons for their objection was the illiteracy of their parents.

The researcher feels that this should not be the main issue but that parents need to be empowered on their involvement and that learners need to be workshoped on parent involvement. Table 8 illustrates that student involvement in curriculum is highly appreciated by the majority of respondents who recommended it. As with parents it is the democratic right of learners to be involved in what they learn. Their argument was that the learners would not blame anyone else for the ills of a curriculum in which they were involved. The rest of the respondents who opposed student involvement cited their ignorance about relevant subjects as their reason. They revealed lack of confidence in themselves.

The researcher feels that there is need to workshop learners so that they know the extent of their involvement in curriculum matters. Generally parent and student involvement were recommended. The researcher supports this because she feels that learners' performance would be enhanced and learners would be motivated to learn when they realise their parents' concern about their education. In addition their involvement would ensure commitment in their work.

To those who doubted parent involvement in curriculum matters because of illiteracy the researcher feels that it would be proper if the learners' parents could be empowered through workshops on what should be learnt by learners at school. These parents need to be brought on board. There is no way that parents could not be involved in what learners learn at school. Parents are responsible for payment of fees and therefore have a right to have a say in what they are paying for and what affects

the future of their children. More and above it is the democratic right of parents to have a say in the education of their children. Even the White Paper on Education (1996) emphasises the role of parents in the education of their children. Those who opposed parent involvement were infringing on the rights of parents. In the researchers' opinion these respondents also needed awareness on the significance of parent involvement in their education.

4.6.2. Curriculum and learners' needs, Interests and abilities.

As Table 8 reflects 73% of the respondents supported strongly that the curriculum should cater for the needs of learners. A curriculum that fails to do so is inadequate. The respondents stated that their needs were foremost and therefore these needs should be catered for. Amongst the needs they mentioned were the careers they intended to follow in future, getting jobs, and furthering education at tertiary level. The opposed view of 27% of the respondents reflected their inability to decide what they need. They expected to be decided for.

The researcher supports that the curriculum should meet the need of learners because they are the ones who will benefit from the curriculum in future. What can be done is to evaluate the needs of the learners and be advised where these needs seem to conflict with educational objectives.

Table 8 also reflects that a large number of the respondents, 80%, recommended a curriculum that met the abilities of learners. In support of their recommendations they cited compulsory subjects that were beyond their comprehension. For example a respondent from the science streams might feel that physical science would be beyond his/her comprehension. He/she would then prefer home economics which could be easily understand. Table 8 shows that few respondents constituting 20% opposed a curriculum that considered learners' abilities. They stated that they were comfortable with their curriculum.

It is the opinion of the researcher that a curriculum that is designed to meet the abilities of learners will result in enthusiastic labour force. This will help the government in getting committed employees.

4.6.3 Curriculum diversification.

It was the perception of 57% of the respondents that the curriculum should be diversified by offering different learning areas. They wanted additional subjects that would go hand in hand with their intended curriculum as well as the jobs they felt could help them with self-employment. These would help them earn a living through self-employment even if they cannot get jobs. Forty three percent of the respondents felt that there was no need to diversify the curriculum. They felt satisfied with their current curriculum and had no problems with it because this curriculum addressed their needs and interests and it prepared them to take employment after leaving school.

The researcher appreciates that there were some learners whose curriculum was relevant to their needs and interests. She feels that the curriculum of the 57% also needed to be diversified so as to make it comfortable even to these respondents.

As regards curriculum diversification and employment very few respondents who constituted 17% viewed a diversified curriculum as a solution to unemployment problems mentioning various reasons. If one cannot get employment one will be able to go for self-employment because of the subject/s which one will have taken. In other words, a diversified curriculum opens chances for self-occupation. They gave examples of subjects such as needlework which could provide them with self-employment because one could be a dressmaker or a tailor and sell garments.

Table 8 also reflects a high percentage of the respondents, 83%, whose perception was that a diversified curriculum cannot be a solution to unemployment. They stated that the government does not have finance to fund the jobs. This is true in the light of the current economic situation in South Africa. Even with self-employment there is need for a capital. Since people come from poor backgrounds, they cannot afford the amount needed to start a business. But the government is not the only source of funds. Even NGO's can be approached in this regard.

It was clear from this research that a large number of respondents felt that diversification will not be a solution to unemployment. The researcher agrees with these respondents that there are other

obstacles to employment. This is evident in careers like teaching where there are educators for various subjects and learning areas but these educators are not employed.

4.6.4 Curriculum and changes in the world.

The table further reflects that a majority of the respondents, 66%, approved a curriculum that catered for the changes in the world. This shows how highly democratic these respondents were. They felt that it was good for the learners to participate in this changing world. Those who had a predilection for fashion designing and farming and so on did so because these are in demand in the world today and can also be useful for self-employment. This can have some contribution in easing unemployment. This majority response also reflected their dissatisfaction with the present curriculum. A very low percentage of the respondents, 19%, had a perception that there is no need for the curriculum to cater for the changing world. They were satisfied with their curriculum and were confident that they would get employment after leaving school.

The researcher feels that the curriculum should be dynamic. Therefore there is need for the curriculum to cater for the changes that are taking place in the world today. According to the White Paper (1996) some changes were expected to be effected regarding the curriculum and sexism, learners' interests and skills.

One of the changes proposed by the White Paper of 1996 was that the curriculum should be non-sexist. This was opposed by a majority of respondents comprising 58%. These respondents favoured a sexist curriculum where some subjects would be done by males and others by females. That discrimination still existed in their minds and this shows the job that needs to be done to these respondents as far as making them aware that both sexes have the ability in some subjects that they were not allowed to take before. Males may do better or have interests and abilities in subjects that are thought to be for females and vice versa.

Both male and female respondents comprising 42% approved of a non-sexist curriculum. Both

sexes stated that there should be no discrimination with respect to jobs for a particular sex. This indicated that they were democratic.

This was reflected by females who wanted to be farmers, and engineers on one hand and males who wanted to be dressmakers and nurses on the other hand. In the past farming and engineering were generally regarded as jobs for males whilst dressmaking and nursing were relegated as jobs for females.

The researcher feels that it is possible for all sexes to perform duties which they were deprived of in the past because what counts is ability and not gender. The Department of Education (1995) proposed that the curriculum should meet the interests of learners. In support of this contention 70% of the respondents felt that their current curriculum did not address their interests but addressed the interests of the school. Schools wanted subjects that could be easily passed. Yet schools should diversify the learning areas so that the learners' interests could be satisfied. Table 8 reflects a minority of the respondents who opposed such a curriculum. They perceived that schools knew best what the needs of the learners were.

It is the view of the researcher that this cannot be used as a yardstick in designing a curriculum in schools. What could be done is the assessment of learners' interests and helping them where they prove to be wrong.

Regarding curriculum and career guidance the table reflects a high recommendation for career guidance to be conducted in schools to help pupils with career choices. The large number, 68%, reflects that either this was not offered in high schools or that they had realised the advantage of such a service in their schools. A mere 32% of the respondents felt that there was no need for this guidance to be offered in schools because if the curriculum did not change it would be useless to provide such guidance.

The researcher feels that career guidance is crucial and there is great need for this to be conducted in schools. This will curb the influx of learners into streams that will not meet their career choices. Schools will also be able to provide learning areas that will brighten the future of learners and the blame will be shifted from schools if learners cannot specialise in the curriculum of their choice. In the researcher's opinion, the responses of all the respondents had various implications. For schools the responses implied introduction of career guidance. In addition, schools will have to extend their curriculum to meet learners' interests. The researcher is aware that employment of educators for guidance might be a hindrance due to financial problems facing the government. Some means will have to be devised.

As regards curriculum and jobs Table 8 reflects a concern of the majority of respondents, 68%, about a shortage of jobs in the districts. This proves that some changes need to be done in this regard. The respondents felt that unemployment could be eased if opportunities for jobs could be opened up in the district. The occupations cited by respondents for district provision were medicine, nursing, police services, engineering, social work and dressmaking contrary to the view above. Very few respondents constituting 32% opposed that view. They stated that if the curriculum is designed to provide jobs in the district the curriculum will be rural based and will not be enable the respondents to take employment in urban areas. This reflects that some respondents did not want to work in their districts and preferred to transfer to localities outside their district.

4.6.5 Curriculum and learner involvement.

Table 8 reflects that the majority of the respondents, namely 64%, recommended strongly active involvement of learners in designing of high school curriculum. They supported this view stating that this was their democratic right. They argued that they would not blame anyone else for the ills of a curriculum in which they were involved in developing. The few respondents constituting 36% opposed learners' active involvement when curriculum is designed citing their ignorance on relevant subjects to their career choices.

The researcher contends that learners should play a big role in designing their curriculum. They

are directly involved and it concerns them. If learners are given this opportunity in multiracial and private schools, why should we deprive learners in African schools to do so.

4.6.6 Curriculum and holistic development.

The recommendation of development of a learner holistically by a majority of respondents numbering 68% reflects that the curriculum in high schools needs to be attended to. The researcher views this as an advantage to those learners who are ungifted academically. There is a tendency with some educationists to undermine amongst others, physical, spiritual and aesthetical development of learners. It should be realised that the development of learners in other aspects other than the intellectual aspects is very significant. There might be learners whose talents are in the aspects that have been mentioned above. When learners are developed in these aspects they might be sportsmen, artists etc. and can provide themselves with self-employment. The few respondents who opposed holistic development of learners specifically feared amongst other things indoctrination by the government.

The researcher understands the fear that these respondents have since they have experienced indoctrination in subjects like religious instruction. Their fear should not be taken for granted. In addition the moral development should not be based on western ideas but African ideas as well.

4.6.7 Curriculum and skills.

It was the feeling of the majority of the respondents, 63%, that the curriculum should provide skills. This percentage comprised those respondents who wanted to be dressmakers, fashion designers, electricians and journalists. The researcher also thinks that this should not be confined to the types of occupations mentioned above. Table 8 shows that a few respondents, 37%, disagreed. What dawns is that these respondents studied subjects that gave them less chances for employment skills.

4.6.8 Curriculum and self-employment.

Table 8 reflects that a large number of respondents, 82%, recommended that a curriculum should be designed for self-employment by offering subjects that can meet this demand. This view came mainly from those who chose occupations like tailoring, dressmaking and farming. Some did not favour a curriculum designed for self-employment. Most of the respondents in this category had chosen occupations such as nursing, medicine and legal work. It is presumed that their view was based on the fact that they firstly should work for an employer.

The researcher also supports the recommendation of the majority of respondents because employment is very difficult nowadays. One therefore needs to be wise and make provision for the possibility of unemployment. There is need to include a subject that provides skills for self-employment in each stream or learning area.

4.7. Summary.

The respondents wanted a democratically designed curriculum that involved parents and learners. They felt that in this way the curriculum could meet their interests and needs. They also recommended a skill-based curriculum as well as a curriculum that could cater for the abilities of the respondents. The respondents revealed that they were aware of changes taking place in the world. They also wanted a curriculum that would offer a variety of subjects. This is an indication that the curriculum of some respondents had flaws. They felt that career guidance should be offered in schools so as to guide the learners in the choice of subjects for their careers and to know other careers offered. It became clear also that the curriculum should be non-sexist. There should be no subjects for males or females. The curriculum should be democratic and dynamic. It should cater for the changes in the world.

4.8 The respondents' recommended curriculum.

The respondents were asked to give their views on how they felt about the structure of the

curriculum. It was expected that besides designing their curriculum, they should highlight the skill or skills that they got from their current curriculum. They were also expected to state which of the subjects that they were studying could be regarded as irrelevant to them and to give reasons for such a conclusion. The discussion that follows reflects the perceptions of the respondents about a relevant curriculum.

4.8.1 Languages.

Table 9 Languages recommended by respondents.

SUBJECT	%
African Language and English	53.25
African Language and Afrikaans	9.5
Afrikaans and English	39.25
African Language (Xhosa)	40.0
English	45.0
Afrikaans	15.0

From the table given above, it will be noted that most respondents, 53,25%, wanted to have an African language and English in their curriculum. On the other hand more respondents, 39,25% chose a combination of Afrikaans and English whilst very few respondents opted for an African language and Afrikaans. The implication here is that respondents recommend that three combination streams in languages should be offered in schools. The table also reflects that respondents suggest that if only one language should be taken by a learner a choice should also be given from three languages i.e. English, an African language and Afrikaans. The percentages reflect that most learners prefer English, more prefer an African language whilst few preferred Afrikaans. This is reflected by 40%, 45% and 15% respectively. It has dawned that there is need for introduction of Afrikaans in African schools.

A majority of the respondents felt that all language combinations can provide learners with self-employment. They could be writers, interpreters and could also do private teaching to those who do not know these languages. There were also some respondents who opposed what has been suggested above. What amazes is that they had chosen these language combinations.

Few respondents felt that only one language could provide them with a job. For example an African language would be useful for an educator as a subject that he can teach at school. It could also be used in getting jobs such as television presenting or radio announcing. Other learners could make a living by being writers.

Some few the respondents felt that two languages could help provide them with jobs. They felt that both are useful. The foreign language would help them in looking for a job in those places where the foreign language is spoken and used as a mother tongue. With regard to the African language they would use it in employment like teaching those that do not know the language.

4.8.2 Other recommended school subjects

That 82,5% of the respondents wanted physical science to be part of their curriculum reflects the significance of this subject among learners. This subject is relevant through its content for medicine, nursing or engineering. Some respondents cited its usefulness for geologists and doctors. Also the table reflects that a large number of respondents, 51,25% needed mathematics to be included in their curriculum. *Inter alia* they mentioned that this subject was needed where calculations are to be made. Therefore this is needed for those interested in becoming medical practitioners, engineers, geologists, accountants, nurses or even educators. The latter would be expected to teach this subject at school.

Table 10 Subjects which respondents felt should be included in the curriculum.

SUBJECT	RESPONDENTS	%
Physical Science	330	82,5
Mathematics	205	51,25
Needlework	120	36,5
Biology	112	29,0
Agricultural Science	98	24,5
Geography	98	24,5
Typing	40	12,0
History	40	12,0
Health Education	40	12,0

The table above also reflects few respondents recommending needlework to be included in their curriculum. This is required by dressmakers, fashion designers as well as a specialisation subjects for educators.

It appeared from the recommendation of the few respondents, 28%, that biology was not popular. One of the reasons is the significance of this subject in medical sciences. In addition, the recommendations of these few respondents reveal their perception that there is no need for schools to impose this subject on all learners. Only a few need to study this subject. This might not be alright. There is need for this subject because a lot is learnt out of this subject and this is crucial in our lives. It is interesting to note that there were some respondents although very few, 24,5% who realised the significance of the inclusion of agricultural science in their curriculum. They realised that this subject provides knowledge useful for any form of farming. The writer appreciates the

perception of these few because agriculture is the basis of our economy. The writer hopes that the development of agriculture will help in providing employment related to farming.

Another small number of respondents, 24,5%, wanted geography to be included in their curriculum. This is required in occupations like land surveying, geology and piloting. The implication of the responses of these respondents is that not all learners should study geography in schools. This might mean that only those interested in this subject should study it. The writer is confident that learners who wish to follow careers which need geography will have their interests met. Hopefully, these respondents were amongst those who recommended mathematics in their curriculum. A very low percentage of respondents recommended the inclusion of typing in their curriculum. This is a key subject for clerks or typists. The same number of respondents felt that their curriculum should include history as well as health education. They felt that history is important for politicians as well as political analysts. Health education on the other hand was felt as important for social work and nursing because there are lessons given to people on this subject. Economics, accounting, and business economics were regarded as very important by the respondents for those who liked commercially related occupations or jobs.

The writer feels that the low percentages of respondents ranging from 10% and less reflect that the perception of respondents is that these subjects should be studied. But these should be done by those few learners who wish to follow careers where these subjects will be a requirement. This would mean that the curriculum caters for learners interests.

Regarding provision of skills, the table reflects that respondents recommended that some subjects of their curriculum provided them with skills. Physical science helped learners in providing them with skills related to electrical work, needlework provided skills for fashion designing and correct pattern cutting. History provided skills in analysing facts and situations.

These respondents viewed the languages as very important. Languages provided reading and writing skills. These are needed for occupations such as writers and broadcasters. Agricultural science provided skills in farming. No other skills were mentioned. This reflects that there is need for career

guidance where learners shall gain more on skills provided by each subject.

The feeling of those who did biology was that this subject provides useful knowledge related to our health. They cited lessons on vitamins which show the significance of these in our lives. Languages have provided respondents with communication skills as well as writing skills. Mathematics and accounting have provided them with problem-solving skills whilst history has provided them with independent thinking skills. It was also the view of many respondents that none of the subjects in their curriculum offered them skills. But they stated that all of the subjects are useful.

A few respondents, 47,5%, opposed the view that subjects like agricultural science, Xhosa, Afrikaans and history provided any skills. With agricultural science they criticised it as being theoretical only. They wanted to gain practical skills. The writer supports these respondents in their view. There are many learners who study agricultural science in schools. But because this is theory only, it does not motivate them to practice this. This is due to the fact that when schools do not provide the practical part of it, they mean to learners that practice is not important. Hence learners are not motivated to practice agriculture. The respondents had the perception that Xhosa, was not useful to learn because no skill could be gained from a home language. It is not a requirement in getting a job. The reflection is that the respondents are undermining their mother-tongue. This is a common problem with the Africans (Nkabinde, 1997).

Afrikaans was perceived as insignificant by some of the respondents stating that it is neither an international language nor a medium of instruction in this district. The respondents appeared to be egocentric because they did not consider those who might go and work outside their region where this language is needed as a means of communication.

With reference to biology, some respondents felt that the knowledge they gain in this subject does not help them in using it for self-employment. This might be true with self-employment but not with other forms of employment such as nursing, health inspection and social work.

History was perceived as useless by the respondents because it is only concerned with stories of past events. One cannot make use of such stories. It does not offer any other employment except that of teaching it in schools. The respondents seemed to be ignorant of the fact that history is important for those who are busy shaping this country like politicians. They need to know more about the past for example about areas like South African economy and that of other countries. Therefore this subject is important for such people who are improving the economy of South Africa.

4.9 Summary.

The recommendations made by the respondents above, reflect that something should be done in restructuring the curriculum to suit the students' abilities, interests and needs.

It has been clear that Afrikaans should be included in the curriculum because there are learners and occupations that need it. Afrikaans is important in legal work. It is surprising why subjects like book-keeping, accounting and business economics were not mentioned by the respondents. Yet they had mentioned occupations like accountant and clerical work which need these subjects.

It has been revealed in this empirical investigation that subjects useful for self-employment should be part of the curriculum. With regard to subjects like biology, history, and Xhosa, it became clear that the content should be made relevant to the demands of the world of work.

In the next chapter conclusions gained from the literature survey and the empirical investigation are presented. Recommendations relevant to the curriculum in the Tabankulu district, the North Eastern Region as well as the Eastern Cape are also suggested.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

A diversified curriculum offers learners a wide choice of subjects. The Australian curriculum, which offers eight learning areas, is a typical example of such curriculum (CDC, 1980). The advantage of such a curriculum is that it caters for learners' needs, talents and interests.

The senior secondary school curriculum differs in the degree of its diversity from country to country. In some countries although the curriculum offers many learning areas, some learning areas are not offered. The United States of America and Colombia have given vocational and academic curriculum the same status but have excluded commercial considerations in the curriculum. Caribbean countries lay great emphasis on a vocational curriculum.

This reflects that the curriculum in some countries is partially diversified. The disadvantage here is that such a curriculum deprives learners choosing subjects from specific learning areas of their interest.

Prior to the 1980's, African schools in South Africa tended to be more academic and most emphatic on humanities. Such a curriculum could not offer useful skills needed by the workplace. Very few schools offered commercial and technical subjects in their curriculum.

In the 1980's and early 1990's, the curriculum in South Africa started to be diversified. This means that different subjects and different learning areas were offered. This was effected with the introduction of subjects in natural sciences, human, technical, commercial, home economics, arts and crafts and agricultural sciences. This change was incomplete because not all learning areas were offered. Very few schools offered these and even in those schools that offered learning areas mentioned above, learners were not actively involved in deciding what learning areas to have in the curriculum.

The empirical investigation in the Tabankulu District was highly revealing in the problems that confronted learners with their present curriculum. Some specific aspects on curriculum e.g. relevance of the curriculum to needs, interests and abilities of learners and relevance of the curriculum to demands of the workplace, etc were researched and responses were sought from the learners. This research was confined specifically to Grade 11 learners. The writer felt that learners in Grade 11 can assess the curriculum better than those in the lower grades. The Grade 12 learners were not chosen for various reasons. One of these was the fact that the research was conducted at a very critical time of the year when they were preparing for their examinations. So the writer decided to exclude them. The results of this survey provided useful focus for future study on curriculum diversification, not only for Tabankulu but for all learners in this North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape as well as for other provinces of South Africa. The purpose of this research is to improve the curriculum in senior secondary schools and to make it relevant to the needs, interests and talents of learners and to prepare learners for future livelihood.

This study reflected that in this most disadvantaged part of the Eastern Cape the curriculum in senior secondary schools is dominated by the linguistic learning area, more emphasis on human and social studies learning area ; little on mathematics, physical and natural sciences ; less on commercial streams and least on technical and vocational streams, and none at all in the arts. The study further illustrated that the curriculum of the respondents was in most cases irrelevant for their chosen careers. The subjects required for specific occupations were not part of the respondents' curriculum. Fashion designing

is one such example of a career.

The choice made by the respondents on careers underscored the fact that most of them still believed in seeking employment. This was the conclusion of the majority of respondents choosing careers where one depended on being employed by the industry, business and commerce or the government. Such careers included nursing, teaching, social work, legal work and so on.

This study also examined the shortage of occupations that provided skills for self-employment, for example, fashion designing, tailoring, dressmaking, graphic designing, craftwork and motor mechanics. The respondents seemed to lack knowledge on the significance of these occupations and other occupations.

It was also deduced from this study that schools had a big role to play in the provision of these jobs by restructuring the curriculum and diversifying it. This was possible if schools could avoid the prescriptive approach when planning the curriculum. Diversification of curriculum should be based on talents, abilities, needs and interests of learners.

There was great confidence among respondents that the provision of various jobs as outlined could help in fighting the problem of rife unemployment. This was deemed feasible if funds could be made available and the curriculum was diversified.

This study also revealed that a curriculum relevant to needs and interests of learners as well as demands of the world of work was regarded as the one that met mostly the needs and interests of learners, parents and communities and to a lesser extent the government. In addition, the curriculum was regarded as relevant if it met the demands of the world of work and offered opportunities for the amelioration of the standard of living of the community as well as facilitating self-employment and furthering studies at tertiary institutions. Furthermore, the study provided different views on the relevance of the curriculum of the respondents. In most cases, the curriculum had been reflected as

irrelevant. Only a few, mostly from the science and mathematics streams, felt that their curriculum was relevant. This was also confirmed by the fact that the matriculation subjects of the mathematics string were the requirements of universities for the careers they had chosen.

5.2 Recommendations:

Recommendations emanating from this research will be based on information and responses derived from the empirical investigation. This empirical investigation was conducted through the questionnaire administered to learners in the senior secondary schools of one of the most disadvantaged rural districts in the Eastern Cape, namely, Tabankulu.

5.2.1 General recommendations:

Only those recommendations that might be useful for the schools in the Eastern Cape and specifically for the schools in the most rural, neglected and disadvantaged areas would be given. A choice from the multitude of recommendations will be further made of only those that would help to establish a feasible and viable model for schools in this extremely rural region.

5.2.1.1 Policy issues:

For the Eastern Cape schools, the education department should design the curriculum with the following points in mind:

- The school policy at provincial level should consider the provision of many learning areas for learners to choose from.
- The school policy should consider the active involvement of learners, parents and industry in deciding what skills each of these needs.

- The school policy should clarify whether a learner should study all the learning areas or to make choices from them.
- In each district 40% of schools should do similar subjects from each learning area. The other 60% of schools should do other subjects of each learning area not done by the other 40%. This is to ensure that a learner goes to an institution where the subjects of her/his choice are done. This will help learners in studying subjects which are relevant to their career choices. The district will be able to provide the type of curriculum relevant to the needs of learners, parents, the communities and the government. In addition, the schools, through their curriculum will be able to provide learners with skills needed by the world of work.
- It is recommended that the new vocationalism should be introduced in schools because it emphasises the relevance of education to the demands of the workplace. Dekker and Lemmer (1993) suggest that skills training should be included in the formal education programmes. A variety of skills should be emphasised. One type of skill should not be given preference at the expense of other skills. Not all learners need the same type of skill. If that would happen, this would mean that at the end, some learners would face unemployment and retrenchment. The writer feels that all skills should be treated equally because they are crucial in different occupations or careers for different individuals.
- The school curriculum should provide skills needed by the changing world or workplace. An example of such skills are vocational and technical skills, although they are not the only ones.
- Curriculum diversification should be considered when the curriculum is designed. Learners have different abilities, needs and interests and with a diversified curriculum, these can be met. In addition, curriculum diversification would mean that through skills provided, different occupations would be accessible to learners. This will prevent more learners going for teaching and nursing because they have no alternative.

5.2.1.2 Future research

Case studies conducted in this North Eastern Region of the Eastern Cape, involving the nature of curriculum its design and diversification for schools on a wide scale are lacking. It is recommended that extensive research be conducted in the Eastern Cape as a whole. Each of the recommendation mentioned above could form part of areas of research relevant to curriculum diversification. In addition, empirical investigation seeking the perception of learners in the Eastern Cape as a whole in respect of curriculum design and diversification is necessary. A comprehensive design for curriculum diversification involving perceptions of all parties concerned such as learners, parents, educators, commerce, business and industry is urgently required. This would involve such aspects as curriculum relevance, finance and so on, which could make for the flexibility in curriculum diversification.

5.2.1.3 Finance

The question of finance for curriculum diversification is one of the most critical issues in education. The government should allocate a budget specifically for the implementation of curriculum diversification. Educators must be trained in a wide range of courses that they will teach. In addition, the budget will address the payment of educators and provision of resources needed for better education.

At present, the problem of the economic position of the Eastern Cape Education Department is acute. The dreams of the community will not be realised without the smooth introduction of a diversified type of curriculum. This could be possible if the findings of this research are viewed seriously by curriculum developers.

5.2.2 Specific recommendations.

In this section, specific recommendations which were reflected by the responses to the questionnaire sent to senior secondary schools in the Tabankulu district under the Eastern Cape Education Department, are outlined. The responses have already been discussed in detail in Chapter Four. Although the sample comprised only Grade 11 learners in the said district the recommendations are applicable to all learners in all schools with the same curriculum offered in the Tabankulu district. The recommendations are as follows :

- Curriculum diversification should be introduced in schools to address the needs of communities and parents in general and of learners specifically.
- There should be parent involvement in curriculum planning for the benefit of their children. It is recommended that the School Governing Bodies (S G B's), as representatives of their communities, should be involved when curriculum is planned. The aim is to avoid cases where principals design the curriculum to suit their needs and interests with the exclusion of the interests and needs of other stakeholders such as parents and learners.
- The curriculum should cater for the needs, interests and abilities of learners. It is recommended, therefore, that at Grade 10 (Std. 8) an entrance interview should be undergone by each applicant, so as to know what each learner requires and to cater for these needs in the curriculum.
- It is recommended that, as far as possible, parents should assist their children in choosing subjects.
- It is recommended that schools should not prescribe subjects to be done in each learning area. A learners should indicate the subjects that they wish to take academic subjects should be linked to working life.
- It is also recommended that if school A cannot offer all the subjects of each learning area, the other subjects that could be offered in each learning area should be offered in school B, etc. in the same circuit of the district.
- In Service Education and Training (INSET) should be provided for service to prepare them for a diversified curriculum. If this is not done, the introduction of curriculum

diversification will be delayed. This would mean that this programme would have to wait for many years to be implemented. Career guidance should be offered in schools as a non-examination subject. Interviews to Grade 10 entrants should be conducted to allow them to take subjects on learning areas that are relevant to their career choices.

- Curriculum should consider the rural, urban and semi-urban areas so as to address relevant issues and to develop these areas.
- The curriculum should develop the individual holistically. The curriculum should therefore cater for as many aspects as possible. This can be achieved if the learners take a subject from each learning area.
- Each learner should be encouraged to take a subject with a skill that can provide him/her with self-employment, in an event where employment is impossible.
- Equity between academic, technical, vocational, commercial and humanities' curriculum should be maintained. As much as possible schools should provide the diversified curriculum.
- Life-skills or any skills that one needs which can help one in surviving should be part and parcel of the curriculum in these schools . But these skills should not be over-emphasised at the expense of other skills like academic skills. Therefore, a syllabus for life-skills should be provide for schools.
- Schools should offer a variety of languages as well as the common African language in that particular region. The purpose is to give learners a wide choice. If not all schools can offer the common languages, some of the schools in the district should, so that learners who have an interest in these languages can go and learn in the schools that offer them.
- The present school curriculum should be restructured and should meet the criteria by which a relevant curriculum is judged.
- Surveys should be conducted on a regular basis so as to consider the curriculum needs of learners, their interests and abilities. It will be to the advantage of schools and learners.

5.2.3 Conclusions

This research has reflected that the curriculum of the respondents in the high schools of the North Eastern Region and the Tabankulu district specifically is not relevant to the world of work. Vocational and technical skills that are in great demand in the world of work are not provided to learners because the curriculum does not offer these. These are not the only skills needed but also arts and craft skills.

As regards the needs interests and abilities of learners, the curriculum in the high schools of this district is largely irrelevant. It only meets the needs and the interest of a few i.e. the commercial and academic learning areas or streams. These streams constitute approximately 30% of the sample. It is clear therefore that 70% of the respondents had a curriculum that did not meet its needs.

The research also reflects that the curriculum of these schools did not meet the needs of the parents and that of the state. The state needs to prepare the young for the future as well as to get skills that also provide self-employment. This has failed because a large number of respondents has a curriculum that does not provide such skills.

The research has also revealed the perceptions of learners about a relevant curriculum. In the general, the learners perceived a relevant curriculum as the one that meets the needs of all stakeholders including learners, and a curriculum that meets the interests and the abilities of learners. In addition, a relevant curriculum should open chances for tertiary education or taking employment. Lastly a relevant curriculum should provide self-employment. This embraces everything that is thought of as essential for any relevant curriculum. The writer perceives this as good and it will ensure that learners learn what they want and that this curriculum pleases all stakeholders involved.

The respondents have also suggested the changes that need to be made in their curriculum. They mentioned, inter alia, introduction of subjects that provided them with

the skills they needed that would meet their career choices and that would also ensure that learners are marketable .

5.2.4 Limitation

This study might have not answered the critical questions satisfactorily because of its exclusion of the learners who have already left school. Public hearings on relevance of high school curriculum could have helped the questionnaire more in getting data from the respondents. The study has not researched the perceptions of industry, commerce and parents. This could have helped the study more.

5.3 Epilogue

Curriculum diversification depends on the demands of the world of work and on furthering education at tertiary level. It is an issue for everybody who is concerned with education.

The ultimate outcome of curriculum diversification must enhance the education of learners, specifically curriculum.

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