

AN INVESTIGATION INTO TEACHERS' OPINIONS  
OF THE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOL  
CURRICULUM IN THE FORMER TRANSKEI REGION.

BY

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(i)

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work, unless it is specified to the contrary in the text. This dissertation has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Mlungisi K. Mvambo', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

J. Mlungisi K. Mvambo (Candidate)

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## INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to investigate teachers' opinions on technical and vocational education curriculum in the light of political changes and educational policies which are emerging in South Africa. This report starts with a discussion of the methodological considerations, followed by the theoretical framework.

The analysis and interpretation are presented as follows:

1. Profile of the sample,
2. Technical and vocational education and economic growth,
3. Technical and vocational education curriculum,
4. Teachers' opinions on curriculum transformation of technical and vocational education at secondary school level.

Each chapter is rounded off with concluding remarks.

The general conclusion and recommendations are given at the end of the report.

## CHAPTER ONE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 1. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

##### 1.1 AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The intention of this research is firstly to investigate the opinions of teachers who implement the technical and vocational education curriculum in the institutions in which they work. Secondly, attention is specifically focused on gaining information on the teachers' perceptions, as professionals, with respect to the contribution of the vocational education and training (VET) curriculum in assisting students to obtain employment and thereby contribute to the economic development in their locality.

The involvement of teachers in educational reform and innovation is believed to be crucial. Teacher attitudes count for a great deal more in educational transformation than do changes in content and method. The reconstruction of education and training requires a body of teachers, educators and trainers committed to Reconstruction and Development Programme goals and competent in carrying them

out (Lee, 1993; ANC, 1994 :67). This study is therefore prompted by the belief that the teachers' feelings towards technical and vocational curriculum in the former Transkei need to be investigated.

As from February 1990, with the unbanning of the resistance movements and the release of political prisoners in South Africa, there has been a growing focus on the school curriculum, including that of technical and vocational education. For example, the National Training Board (NTB) curriculum proposal was a culmination of a long and continuing process of negotiation and conflict. The variety of curriculum proposals is a reflection of the fact that South Africa is in a transitional stage.

The overarching question for this study is whether the teachers who offer technical and vocational education in the former Transkei region regard, the curriculum they offer at secondary school level, as one that will enhance the employment prospects of their learners in the new South Africa. A further question is, whether they regard the transformation of the education and training system as appropriate for the former Transkei community.

## 1.2 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The data for this study was obtained primarily from a structured questionnaire.

## 1.3 METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The following methods were employed in the study:

1.3.1 Literature review,

1.3.2 An opinion survey of a sample of teachers from technical schools in the region.

## 1.4 QUESTIONNAIRE (See APPENDIX )

The questionnaire used is divided into four main sections:

### 1.4.1 BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

This section includes the following: Gender, Post-level, Trade and teacher qualifications, Teaching experience, and Teacher Organisation membership.

### 1.4.2 TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

This section is made up of a broad question followed by subsequent questions which seek to gather information on the teachers' opinions of the technical and vocational curriculum in relation to economic development and the labour market.

#### 1.4.3 TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

This section is made up of a broad question and sub questions which probe the teachers' opinions in relation to the curriculum.

#### 1.4.4 TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION

This section of the questionnaire comprises a grid in which a range of proposals suggested for technical and vocational curriculum transformation were listed down vertically and the solicited responses horizontally. The respondents were asked to indicate their preference with an X.

### 1.5 DATA COLLECTION

Forty-two questionnaires were hand-delivered by the researcher to the principals of seven technical and vocational schools. The respondents chosen agreed to complete the questionnaire in about a week, after which they were collected by the researcher. A response rate of 86% was achieved because the principals in six out of seven schools motivated the respondents to complete the questionnaire.

## 1.6 THE SAMPLE

A random sample from six existing institutions were selected, so as to get a manageable and equal response from all these institutions.

The sample for the study was made up as follows:

1.6.1 Principals in each school, = (6)

1.6.2 One Head of Department in each school = (6)

1.6.3 Four subject teachers in each school = (24)

Total = 36

## 1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

An analysis of responses to all open-ended questions was performed. Responses were consolidated into categories and subcategories of those who had 'yes' and 'no' responses. In the case of closed questions, the responses were scaled according to percentages.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

It is very difficult to say anything about the former Transkei education and training system without giving a brief history of South Africa and apartheid education. What happened in South Africa had an impact on the former Transkei 'homeland'. The former Transkei was never economically independent, and to this day there is a constant migration of young people to towns in South Africa to sell their labour.

#### 2.2 EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African education system was well known for its racially segregated education departments, administration, curriculum and examining bodies. This problem was made worse because there was also the Department of Manpower in charge of all matters pertaining to manpower training, and there was little co-ordination between this department and the formal education departments (Kraak, 1991: 13; Christie, 1996: 414).

Under the apartheid government, the education of black people was administered by the Department of Bantu Education which was later called the Department of Education and Training. The agenda of Bantu Education since 1953 was to withhold access to technical skills from black people (O'Dowd, 1992: 6). The education for blacks was, as a result, deliberately skewed in the direction of academic and general subjects. It was only when pressurised by economic demands for more skilled people that government came up with the Department of Education and Training responsible for black education (Bot, 1990: 27). The de Lange Commission of Inquiry into Education recommended the provision of technical education in black schools. The government White Paper, issued in response to the de Lange Commission's recommendations, provided for a school curriculum with academic, general, and technical and vocational streams (Chisholm & Christie, 1983: 259; Hartshorne, 1984: 2; ERS, 1991; CUMSA, 1991).

### **2.3 TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN FORMER TRANSKEI**

The Technical and Vocational secondary schools in Transkei were intended to provide students with specialised skills so that they could get employment. The allocation of these few (seven) institutions was not adequately pre-planned in that they are not evenly distributed throughout the region.

Most of them were started unilaterally by the former Transkei Government. The intention was mainly to provide students with skills which are needed by the labour market in the then "white" South Africa.

Though these schools had been operating for more than a decade, their number had not increased. This led Ngubentombi to observe,

It must be deeply regretted that in Transkei where technical education is most urgently needed at the present time for the wholesome development of the country in all spheres of life people are obsessed with academic and theoretical education and with white-collar jobs for which this type of education prepares them. Technical education is generally rated below academic education, despised and thought to be suitable for the academically weak students who cannot benefit from formal academic schooling (1989: 62)

### **2.3.1 STAFFING**

The success of any curriculum development and transformation is highly contingent on the ability and commitment of teachers. It is not enough to say anything about the curriculum without commenting on the calibre of

those who actually implement the curriculum. Instructors in most of the courses offered in technical and vocational schools are not all trained as teachers; they had only been trained in special trades.

According to Rudd, "... each teacher brings to the group his own background knowledge, skills and ability to think. These qualities offer a great scope for studying curriculum problems.." (1975: 132). The implications of Rudd's assertion for this research is that instructors in the former Transkei, should have a wider scope for commenting about education and training transformation. Teachers as professionals should be involved in the transformation discourse that is related to their field of operation and local needs.

### **2.3.2 GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION**

The Department of Education in the former Transkei was provided with a Curriculum Planner and Subject Advisors in 1982 and 1984 respectively, to take care of guidance and supervision related to technical and vocational education. This move was inclined to be bureaucratic in that this was a "top down" approach. There were no teachers' centres where teachers could discuss their curriculum problems and solutions amongst themselves. They had to do what was told

to them by their superiors. Only a few Technical and Vocational education teachers have been exposed to in-service courses in the modern methods of teaching (Transkei Education Annual Reports 1982). The same applies to the latest debates on curriculum transformation in the New South Africa. In the Eastern Cape, working groups are still discussing the new direction.

#### 2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS.

1. Since the former Transkei is predominantly rural and is situated in an underdeveloped area of the Eastern Cape Province, it depends heavily on the greater South Africa financially.
2. Many school-leavers have found it difficult to be employed in the few industries and the civil service in this region. They are usually forced by circumstances to seek employment in big cities elsewhere.
3. Technical and Vocational education was unilaterally introduced by the former central administration with the intention of supplying the industries locally and in the more developed parts of South Africa with skilled labour.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN RELATION TO TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

The aim of this section is to discuss firstly the formal education and training system which is often criticised by employers in that it does not produce the kind of skills needed by the labour market. Secondly, the question of whether the education and training system improves the learners' employment prospects and invariably contributes to economic growth is explored. Thirdly and finally, the future of technical and vocational educational transformation proposals in the new South Africa is discussed.

##### 3.1.1 INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

Investment in education did not always bring about the kind of returns that were expected. Blaug says that,

The earlier optimism that the expansion of education would effectively equalize life chances in industrialized societies gave way to new pessimism about the possibilities of altering the distribution of education by educational means

(1985: 17).

The discourse on the transformation of education and training has been going on for decades with a series of misdirected educational reforms (Blaug, 1985: 19). Stronach says that these arguments "...are recurrent rather than progressive, and persistently divergent rather than convergent. It might be possible to think of the discourse as itself an epiphenomena of economic cycles" (1990: 163). It would therefore be interesting to find out what empirical evidence exist on the relationship between education, training and economic growth.

### **3.1.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ECONOMIC GROWTH:**

#### **EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE**

Universally, Stronach argues, vocationalism can be interpreted as a kind of contemporary magic, a form of reassurance as well as a 'rational' response to economic problems (1990: 155). Keep and Mayhew also claim that, despite the long-standing conviction that inadequacies in vocational education and training have hampered the United Kingdom's economic performance, evidence on the precise linkages is somewhat scanty (1990: 197). At the end of the 18th century, Britain had by far the best educated population in the world by the standards of the time. By

the mid-19th century, both the United States of America and Germany surpassed Britain, both in technical educational and economic performance. Japan introduced universal education in 1880 and paid exceptional attention to education for so poor a country, and the economic miracles came later. The remarkable development of education in South Korea in recent years has illustrated this point yet again (O'Dowd, 1990: 2).

Vocational education and training in England was founded on the presumption that there are existing linkages between education and economic performance. But, insufficient account was taken of the many other factors that intervene in the relationship between investment in education and training and the resultant returns; for example, structures of educational provision methods and style of work organisation, motivation, etc. (Keep & Mayhew, 1990: 198; Stronach, 1990: 156). The rise of technical education, for example, in Britain seems to have been brought about by the country's economic decline and the problem of unemployment (Blackman, 1992: 24; Keep & Meyhew, 1990: 194- 195).

The English school system, for example, is heavily class-conditioned both historically and actually. It was so organized as to demand that decisions which were critical for vocational choice were made at the age of 11 or 12

years. At the secondary school stage children were not, except in the case of a small minority attending comprehensive school, allocated to various secondary courses within a common school (Watkins, 1990). This was a method used by the state to provide human resources that would be needed in the factories during the period of rapid industrialisation. It was also hoped, by the state, that the provision of technical education would save the declining economy (Blackman, 1992). In short, education and training, was transformed as a result of external economic factors outside the school system.

Industrialization and the use of technologically advanced methods of production are an indication of an economically developed country. Such a country is characterised by a higher quality of life and a fairer distribution of income among its citizens. Scientific development and the subsequent change of industrial techniques of production in West Germany, and other countries like the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America, brought about the need for new knowledge in the school curriculum. Hence science, technology and technical training were seen as part of liberal education.

What is worth noting is that in developed countries, education policies in relation to technical and vocational education are never the same. Like a pendulum, education policies swing from one side to the other depending on the political party that is in power. In England for example, vocational education was introduced in the 1960s with little success, but was relaunched in the early 1980s (Blackman, 1992: 221), when a new vocationalism emerged (Skilbeck et al, 1994: 5).

Governments of developing countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Zimbabwe, to mention only a few, also adopted the systems of education reform based on manpower development plans for the provision of skilled labour which it was hoped would bring about industrialisation and economic growth (Parnes, 1977: 114). All these states saw technical and vocational education as a means of solving the problem of lack of skills, unemployment, and a poor economy. That is why Chetty et al (1992: 126), said that vocationalism has come to be seen by governments as a panacea for the present problems in education and the economy. One cannot but agree that without economic growth, a better education cannot be provided. The relationship between the economy and education is therefore reciprocal.

### 3.1.3 CRITIQUE OF THE EDUCATION AND ECONOMY RELATIONSHIP

According to Blaug (1985), the very distinction between academic and vocational education in which the latter is supposed to be geared to the needs of the labour market, falsely suggest that much, if not most, education is economically irrelevant (1985: 19).

Investment in education is usually rated highly in many countries in the world, because it is believed that the economic status of a country is determined by the level of education of its people. White claims that, "...governments and other institutions, are so heavily implicated in the structuring and financing of education that in the end, efficient and equitable outcomes cannot be expected from the autonomous workings of individual choice" (1990: 4). In the 1970s, new economists of education warned that countries might easily overinvest in some forms of education which might not necessarily bring about economic growth (Woodhall, 1987; Donaldson, 1988). It is pointed out by Atkinson (1983: 66), that there is often a temptation to argue that, because an economy needs particular skills, it would be sufficient to provide vocational skills. There may be a conflict of objectives in determining the educational priorities in any country (Atkinson, 1983). But, educational economists like Blaug claim that there are

familiar findings that few workers ever make specific use of the knowledge and skills acquired at their schools (1985: 19).

Technical and Vocational education received a lot of attention in the 1970s (Blackman, 1992; King, 1990). Economists of education like Thurow (1977), Hinchliffe (1987), and Levin (1987) are of the opinion that the discourse on education and training reforms and transformation for economic equality will be ineffective unless they are accompanied by the restructuring of the labour market. The implications of this point of view are that the transformation of education and training is meaningless as long as economic and social institutions discriminate according to race, sex, intelligence or class (Kraak, 1991: 45; NEPI, 1992b: 167). According to Poulantzas, while technical education

"...does entail a particular role for the school, we must remember that it is not just an on-the-spot technical education, but the very process of qualification/ subjection as such, which goes on within the economic apparatus as well, since the enterprise is more than a simple production unit" (1973: 53).

But, Mace (1984) maintains that education cannot be an effective instrument for equalising the distribution of incomes. In particular, he emphasises the failure of economists to appreciate the correspondence between education and the capitalist system. The role of vocational education in the redistribution of income will therefore be limited by the skills needed in the work world. That is why it is suggested by Stronach that we must question the means/ends, cause/effect assumptions that relate the 'modern' education and training of the individual to broad moral and economic outcomes (1990: 115).

One of the major debates which rages in education is between those who wish education to be what is variously called vocational/practical/ useful, and those who want it to be of general 'forming' or liberal (O'Dowd, 1990). The contribution of education to economic growth is presumed to occur through its ability to increase the productivity of an existing labour force in various ways including both technical training and general education (Hicks, 1987: 101, Foster 1966: 100).

It is a conventional wisdom that education and better training are certainly a necessary but not a sufficient condition for economic growth (Keep & Mayhew, 1990: 198;

O'Dowd, 1990: 2). Education is the process of training and developing the knowledge, skills, mind character, etc., especially by formal schooling (Cohn & Geske, 1990: 2). Since the majority of such activities take place in institutions of learning, the emphasis in this research will be on the formal technical and vocational school system.

#### 3.1.4 THE PROBLEMS WITH VOCATIONALISATION OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL.

What are the problems and criticism against the provision of technical and vocational education at secondary school level? This question is intended to investigate the experiences and current perceptions in relation to the above. The problems to be pointed out include the following: the high costs, technical education explosion, and employers' demand for labour with general academic education.

The provision of technical and vocational education is very expensive when it is compared with general and academic education. In countries where technical and vocational education was expanded to every school level up to tertiary level, the secondary school leavers could not compete with those who had been through the tertiary level in finding

well paid employment (Mace, 1984: 41). The lower secondary school leaver was seen as belonging to a semi-skilled manpower category. The result was that, technical and vocational education became the 'cinderella' of the education system and did not bring about the desired economic growth and employment prospects (Chetty et al 1992 ; King, 1990: 90; Mace, 1984: 40). Furthermore, in most instances teachers for certain trades were not readily available and the institutions were not adequately resourced (McWilliam & Kwamena-Po, 1975).

Numerous problems have been associated with efforts to introduce more VET in developing countries. Most boys and girls, in developing countries, apparently prefer university level of education which is not oriented towards productive employment that is needed by the industries. Technical and vocational education was not popular with many students because they held few prospects for well paid employment (Mace, 1984: 50). Technical and vocational education was not enthusiastically accepted by students because it was the more literary and general form of education which led into kinds of employment which were available, mainly clerical and administrative (Dore, 1982: 102). The well-intentioned efforts to diversify the school curriculum and to produce skilled people for technical and craft occupations tended to wither away. Parents and

students saw vocationally biased courses as leading to dead-ends when compared with academic courses. Technical and vocational education also did not create jobs (Thompson, 1981).

According to Foster (1966), vocational school curricula are frequently ill designed to serve the needs of developing economies. He goes on to claim that schools are remarkably clumsy instruments for inducing prompt large-scale changes in underdeveloped areas (1966: 398). There was no measure of high school vocational or industrial training that was significantly related to employment or wages after graduation. The rhetoric and ideology of efficiency had influenced educators to link vocational programmes to the ability to move into the workforce and to be trained for the job more proficiently. However, research suggests that vocational training in high schools seem to bear no relationship to the jobs students eventually obtain (Watkins, 1990: 145). Pillay (1992: 8-9) contends that the lower the country's stage of development, the greater the contribution of education to economic growth and employment prospects.

The criticisms levelled against the traditional technical and vocational education offered at secondary schools include the following:

1. The introduction of technical and vocational education did not automatically solve the problem of unemployment universally. This meant that vocation schooling had low economic returns, in that its graduates were frequently less employable than academic graduates.

2. Employers in the private sector preferred young people with academic and general education. Most employers care less about what potential workers know than about how they will behave (Blaug, 1985: 19).

3. In the work place, skilled workers were often involved in tasks not directly relevant to their areas of specialization (Foster, 1966: 402).

4. Developing countries like Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan that transformed their economies from low-skill labour intensive technology to ones based on skill-intensive, high-tech industries because of their well defined and co-ordinated active labour and industrialisation policies (Pillay, 1992: 8).

5. A narrow emphasis is placed on technicism and vocationalism. The end result is that more people are provided with the same kind of education, albeit with a greater emphasis on vocational and technical training (Soobrayan, 1989: 6). The emphasis is on type rather than the level of capacity at secondary school level.

6. Evidence of linkages between vocational education and training, and economic growth is scanty in countries that

are experiencing economic crises, as was the case in Britain during the 1960s. Therefore, better training may not be a sufficient condition for economic success (Keep & Mayhew, 1990).

7. A technical element is valuable, and could be maintained to provide a mixed general school education for ages 14 to 18 years (White, 1990: 12). However, Blaug warns that economic growth and technical progress are capable of deskilling (1985: 27).

### 3.1.5 NEW VOCATIONALISM: EMERGING POLICIES IN RELATION TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The question which now arises, is this; what are the emerging policies in relation to technical and vocational education? This question is intended to explore the globalisation in the new vocationalism philosophy, on which a paradigm shift in education and training policies is founded. An attempt is made to explain several concepts including, Fordism and post-Fordism; gender equality; and integration of education and training in the transformation process.

In South Africa, after the unbanning of the political resistance organisations in February 1990, the African

National Congress (ANC) and its allies came up with new curriculum proposals towards an integrated education and training. The ANC/COSATU proposals for the transformation of the education curriculum do not seem to favour the provision of technical and vocational education in the formal schools. They were reacting to the proposals of the apartheid regime that would channel most black students along the old vocational route, and the emphasis on individual differences according to race, culture and ability in human beings as denoted in the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) proposals. This argument is reiterated by Nkomo and Mokate that:

The rejection of the educational system in South Africa by the oppressed represented a call for a structural transformation. The Apartheid system and the models like the human capital model fortify allegiance to particular structures and institutions that reduce human beings to objects which can be exploited at will (1990: 412).

The new mass-based education and training proposals in South Africa as represented by NEPI (1992a), ANC FRAMEWORK (1994), IPET (1994), and NTB (1992) tend to have a common feature which resulted in a kind of united front by the democratic organisations towards the transformation and reconstruction of the curriculum for the new South Africa.

They suggest that the best vocational preparation is in fact a sound general formal education for all students, and any needed specialization should be postponed for tertiary level. This idea was supported by a substantial literature on education and training; that there is a growing tendency for many employers to demand an attested standard of general education (O'Dowd, 1990: 3). Kraak puts it this way: "Vocational streaming within the formal schooling system has tended to be organised along very narrow, job specific lines providing poor quality education for predominantly working class children" (1991: 22). It is therefore suggested that technical and vocational education is better handled on the job or beyond secondary school level. It can also be added that owing to the knowledge explosion in the world technology more people might be chasing for less jobs universally (Olivier, 1988: 353).

Young, warns that, "It is my contention that if your educational reforms perpetuate the division between education and training, the separation of the academic from the vocational, and the separation of humanities from the technical and the technological, then you will not be able, any more than we have been able, to achieve a democratic education system" (Young, 1990: 5).

### 3.1.6 POST-FORDISM AND MODERNISATION

Advances in new technology, especially in developed countries, gave rise to the transformation of the social and economic world during the closing decades of the twentieth century (Brown et al, 1992; Brosio, 1990: 115). Global economic competition resulted in a willingness of industrialised societies to shift from Fordism, with its presupposition of lowly educated workers performing atomised, rigid and routinised tasks, to high-skill, flexible and collaborative post-Fordism, a restructured system, in line with the demands of the new technology that is being used in the world of work (Murray, 1990; Brown and Lauder, 1992: 4; Skilbeck et al, 1994: 28).

It is interesting to note that in the 1990s there has been a world-wide movement, especially in highly developed countries, to competency-based training and assessment in technical and vocational education (Brown et al, 1992; Chisholm, 1987; Loots, 1992: 18). According to Loots (1994: 4), in Germany and Sweden, competencies like thinking skills, problem solving, etc., including general knowledge and communication skills have been introduced into the curriculum of technical and vocational education.

The emerging education and training transformation proposals encourage competency based training and assessment, and the inclusion of general knowledge on technical and vocational curriculum (NEPI Framework, 1993: 14). This approach therefore reflects a shift from the specialisation and individualism of the Fordism period, with emerging patterns of closeness between general and vocational education (Christie, 1996: 409).

### **3.1.7 THE GENDER ISSUE**

The use of gender as a salient criterion in the provision of learning facilities occurs almost wholly amongst the directly technical and vocational subjects (Shaw, 1982: 365). Subjects that are frequently prescribed for boys include engineering, woodwork, metalwork, technical drawing , to mention only a few. A feature of the modern work organisation is the degree to which work occupations are segregated by sex (Levin 1987).

Wolpe (1994) criticises the ANC's Education Policy Framework, and how it handles the gender issue. She claims that in spite of the education and training discourse, girls will still find themselves doing subjects which will only lead them to the clothing industry. In the labour market, qualifications themselves did not guarantee future

For the majority of young people in Germany, 15 to 18 years, vocational schooling ("berufsfachschule") takes place after a compulsory full-time general education (Jones, 1991: 53). In Technical Secondary schools ("fachoberschule") the specialization curriculum includes general subjects like German, social studies, mathematics, and science. This means that three-fifths of work in these institutions covers general education (Jones, 1991: 53; Loots, 1992: 4). It is worth noting that, in the United Kingdom as well, the technical-vocational programmes include general education (Jones, 1991: 17).

In line with the present trend of post-Fordism and the integration of the technical and vocational education curriculum the United States of America in 1991 introduced the national education forum movement which came up with the idea of 'Tech prep' courses to address the needs of high school students. Loots asserts that the American students entered and left vocational education programmes with poor academic skills; few achieved the academic foundation needed in a fast changing technological society. Many able and teachable students find the 'classical baccalaureate' curriculum a waste of time and effort. They also find vocational education ineffective in preparing them for technically elite jobs (Loots, 1992: 7).

employment for women, especially that technical and vocational institutions catered for male students (Wolpe, 1994: 1). A specialised education and training school curriculum will result in girls being discriminated against as has happened in the past school system and, invariably, in the work place.

### **3.1.8 A PARADIGM SHIFT: HOW EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS CONCEPTUALISED**

O'Dowd (1990) points to comparisons made between education and manufacturing. These comparisons were strongly resisted by educationists and teachers who resented analogies between education and production, fearing that those who drew the analogies did not understand the true nature of education. They argued that education cannot be reduced to some sort of purely mechanical process.

Stronach (1990) claims that the discourse on the transformation of education and training has been going on for decades. It was often restructured according to the prevailing economic demands (1990: 155). The new shift in education and training policies implies that education will not necessarily be intended for economic growth.

The preparation for schooling in the 21st century will require dramatic changes in programmes and attitude (Sharpes, 1994: 74-77). The problems of the economy will not be reduced to the problems of education and training. This implies that the formal education and training school system will no longer be used as the scapegoat for economic problems like the lack of technical expertise or entrepreneurs in the economy. (Stronach, 1990: 159).

King (1990) is of opinion that training systems or training institutions that continue to operate as if they could service something as separate as the formal economy are in danger of being anachronisms. The emerging education policies are moving in the direction of expecting the private sector to take care of their training needs, as well as the costs involved.

The idea of a general school education implies that a great deal of training will have to be done outside the school through the use of auxiliary institutions, with special vocational institutes being created in particular cases where their endeavours can be closely meshed with on-the-job training (Foster, 1966 : 422).

The transformation of education and training, will bring about a shift of interest for young people from specific vocational courses to an interest in the fundamentals of

mathematics, basic science and communication which are applicable to a number of occupations, which do not require specific expertise for their performance, but nevertheless demand an attested standard of general education. Brosio puts it aptly: "The discourse of this form was marked by terms like educational excellence; higher education standards; hard work; back to basics emphasis on science, mathematics and technology; ability to compete internationally; teacher competency" (1990: 115).

It is interesting to note that the learning outcomes proposed by the National Education and Training Forum have been adopted from the National Training Board (NETF, 1994: 6; Langa, 1993). It is further proposed in the same NETF document that the skills required in technical and vocational education should include communication, numeracy and mathematics, problem-solving, organisational information, physical, and social skills. These learning skills, are not to be obtained in a vacuum, but through engagement with a variety of experiences and contextualised activities (NETF, 1994: 6; IPET, 1994: 137). The contextualisation and integration of knowledge notions are in line with the post-Fordism. This approach will diminish the traditional differentiation between manual and intellectual abilities as it was often the case in schools.

It is also very clear that there is a shift from 'low-participation, low-skill' VET approach in the technical and vocational schools to the 'high-participation, high-skill' approach as espoused by the ANC/COSATU alliance. This shift is intended to satisfy the development and equity requirements (Langa, 1993; Kraak, 1993). It is believed that this move will bring about an equal competition for all races in the labour market. There is therefore a plea for technological education in the total educative experience, an integrated approach to education and training (Van Wyk, 1987).

In the new South Africa, the tradition of an academically oriented schooling system is one which the country needs urgently to change so that pupils are able to be economically productive. There is a suspicion by many black students that technical education, which is geared towards employment, is designed specifically to exclude them from positions of power and influence, which requires an academic preparation and was previously reserved for whites (Ashely, 1989: 66). The ANC wants an education that will transcend the divisions between theory and practice, between mental and manual labour, between intellectuals and ordinary people (Ashley, 1989: 47). In fact, the paradigm shift advocates a philosophy of education that would serve to integrate vocational and cultural education and to

depolarize existing divisions.

### 3.1.9 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS

The key points that can be deduced from the above overview of the technical and vocational education curriculum are as follows:

1. The school system is often blamed for the rising incidence of youth unemployment especially in the industrialised world. Governments introduced technical and vocational education to solve this problem.
2. Deducing from available literature, the linkages between education and training and economic development are not very obvious. At the same time, it is common wisdom that education is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for economic growth and employment prospects.
3. Most countries, are moving towards an integrated approach towards education and training in the school system. Greater emphasis is placed on all-round competence. There is a growing emphasis on a multi-skilled worker, competence-based training and retrainability.
4. There is a shift towards despecializing education and training in the school system. This also implies a shift from low-participation, low-skill approach that

is a characteristic of training centres for the age group 16 - 19 years, to a high-participation, high-skill approach in the secondary school levels.

5. There is a move away from sex, social and intellectual discrimination, which might have an impact on education and training, and the future of the learner.
6. Specialized technical and vocational education in the formal school system is very expensive. The benefits derived from this system are low in comparison to the expenditure thereto. It is proposed that it be postponed and reserved mainly for tertiary level and on-the-job training. It is not advisable for the school system to train people for jobs which do not exist or might never exist.
7. It has been realised that no amount of deliberate educational planning can keep pace with industrial and technological developments.
8. The most economical and cost-effective type of education for the formal secondary school level is believed to be a general academic education that is going to be relevant to any job, both in rural and urban areas.
9. Another advantage of a general academic education is that it allows for the mobility of the student when choosing a future career.

## 3.2 CONCEPTUALISING EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

### 3.2.1 THE PROCESS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

It seems as if technical and vocational schools in South Africa are going to be restructured and are no longer going to have a narrow and specialised curriculum at secondary school level, just as Barrow argues that:

To train people for trades and thereby to stamp them for a particular future occupation is a risky undertaking as it is far better left to the years of apprenticeship (Barrow, 1983: 60).

All societies, no matter how advanced they think they are, face the problem of modernisation. With technical progress going so fast, modernisation is not something which is done once and for all, it is something which has to happen all the time (O'Dowd, 1990).

Brown et al (1992), argue that, it is commonly assumed by national governments that the structure of education and training can be transformed instantly in order to produce skills, select the necessary talent and promote the appropriate attitudes that are required by the modern industrial societies. They go on to point out that, the "...shift from Fordism to post-Fordism is obviously

presented in ideal-typical terms and as a consequence it tends to highlight change rather than continuity" (Brown et al 1992: 3).

The demand for greater flexibility and inter- changeability of occupational shifts leads to 'despecialized' vocational education (Brown and Lauder, 1992: 5). Moreover as people change their jobs they will need a high level of general education which will enable them to be rapidly trainable in new skills that are required by modernisation in the world of work (Skilbeck et al, 1994: 7).

Transformation must be based on sound principles. One should not lose sight of the fact that the ANC and NEPI curriculum proposals, in line with the emerging policies, say very little about specific subject domains and/ or formal school curriculum in relation to education and training (Christie, 1996: 412). The main suggestions relate to shifts towards general education. MacGregor, (1994: 18), argues that, generally, curricula have not radically changed in content but do display a greater integration between subjects, are more flexible and grant teachers greater power to make choices.

Transformation requires management. Education and training systems are above all human and social institutions, with

all their capabilities and limitations. For a policy to have a chance of success, sufficient people must be persuaded that it is right, necessary and implementable. An education and training curriculum policy will come to grief in practice if it does not win the support of two essential constituencies: Those who are expected to benefit from it and those who are expected to implement it (ANC, 1994b). In fact, one will agree with the claim that attention in the democratic movement has shifted to the vital necessity of the skilling of people to participate in the management of education, the economy and the political systems (Wolpe et al, 1991: 15).

The transformation of education and training is an on-going process. It takes time for the school system to change since it tends to be conservative. Therefore the criticism with ANC/COSATU proposals is that the South African economy is assumed to be part of a global post-Fordism without closer examination of the local conditions (Christie, 1996: 413). Christie puts it aptly when she says:

Certainly, post-Fordist trends do not apply in the South African peripheries, and it is questionable whether forms of work organisation in the 'core' are post-Fordist either (1996: 413).

What this means is that, transformation requires time. What is interesting about the transformation proposals is that they need to be researched, and cannot be completed overnight. It is a process which is involved, and all the stake-holders including teachers need to take part. Such an effort should be collaborated, requiring the skills and insight of all the sectors of the community, and this takes time (Jansen, 1990: 336). In principle, the integrated approach towards education and training, proposed by the ANC/ COSATU alliance makes a lot of sense as it seems to be the trend globally. But, it would be a mistake to view global influences simply as impositions on local contexts, since this would overlook the agency of local actors as well as the different forms that adaptation to local contexts brings (Christie, 1996: 409)

### **3.2.2 TEACHERS AND THE CURRICULUM IN SOUTH AFRICA**

What is the position of teachers generally, in the development of the school curriculum? This question is intended to point out that teachers are often ignored in the process of educational change. A limited level of training was concentrated in these 'homelands' where most of the secondary schools were located. Some of these secondary schools were converted to Technical and Vocational schools, in order that the former Transkei youth

contested. He goes on to say that it is influenced by contesting ideologies and that it should include more socio- historically based perspectives on the curriculum process (Buckland, 1982: 167). When the curriculum is broadly defined, it refers to the teaching and learning activities and experiences which are provided by the school (NEPI Curriculum, 1991: 1; IPET, May 1994: 136).

At the same time, the structural function of the school curriculum, throughout the world, has a hidden agenda. It tends to reflect interests which are embedded in the systems, codes and routines that characterize daily classroom life (King and van der Berg 1991:4). This claim is supported by Bowles and Gintis (1977), that generally education functions to ideologically socialize people and reproduce the existing social relations of production. They go on to say that, in a capitalist society, "... the state is involved in reproducing technically and ideological qualified agents who can be slotted into suitable places in a fluid and hierarchical division of labour" (Bowles and Gintis, 1977). Poulantzas (1973) pointed out that, the state apparatus including the school, through their role in reproducing ideologico-political relations, enter into the reproduction of the positions which define social classes. The curriculum is seen as one of the ideological state apparatus whose function is to maintain the established

a fluid and hierarchical division of labour" (Bowles and Gintis, 1977). Poulantzas (1973) pointed out that, the state apparatus including the school, through their role in reproducing ideologico-political relations, enter into the reproduction of the positions which define social classes. The curriculum is seen as one of the ideological state apparatus whose function is to maintain the established order, and the placement of individuals in the occupational structure in the country's work situation.

In the South African situation, including the former Transkei, the new programme of curriculum transformation serves a dual purpose. On the one hand, it is aimed at equity as a basic human right. On the other hand, there is a clear human resources programme to service economic development (Taylor ed., 1993: 3; Nasson, 1990: 53). For example, the present ANC (African National Congress) government in South Africa aims at the production of human resources and the distribution of physical resources for economic development, whereas, during the period of the previous government, educational changes were aimed at keeping the countries resources in the hands of a few in South Africa. Hyslop puts it thus:

School expansion has been partly the result of a drastic turn in state education policy since the 1970s. During that time there has been an attempt

to restructure the schooling system so as to provide more blacks with semi-skilled, technical, clerical and junior managerial employment. This technocratic approach has been reflected in the considerable expansion of secondary and technical education (1987: 79).

The question as to who should design and develop the school curriculum, including technical and vocational education curriculum, has been debated by scholars for decades. Centralised control is the most common pattern of educational provision to be found throughout the world, and the former Transkei was no exception . The degree and nature of that control varies and is changing (Loots, 1992). The recent perspectives on education and training system and its transformation is that it should occur at local level including the schools (Pennisi, 1991). This means that teachers should play an important role in its development if resistance against transformation is to be avoided.

### **3.2.3 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE**

In the old school system, teachers were not involved in the education transformation discourse. Some of the reasons for this are as follows:

1. What happens at school is influenced by the teachers. They feel threatened whenever their authority is at stake in relation to school and class control. But Chisholm (1987) also points out that outdated syllabi continue to be taught and teachers are still locked into an authoritarian system where they have little autonomy through their unions or through schools.
2. Teachers and the school system classified pupils according to background, sex and ability. Those students who seem to perform better were made to do academic subjects and those who were less gifted found themselves in the technical and vocational streams (NEPI, 1992a).
3. At secondary school level, teachers regarded themselves as subject specialists. They tended to be conservative controllers of the subject matter.
4. A proper career guidance was often not given to students by teachers (Nel, 1987: 2).
5. Schools in general tended to be monolithic institutions which were not easily susceptible to manipulation, and teachers were also affected by their school traditions (Foster, 1966 :422).

Christie points out, for instance, that what is implicit but not elaborated in the drawing of the 1995 Education White Paper, is the virtual absence of the formal education sector in the conceptualisation of an integrated approach,

through which teachers can develop a voice in education and training matters. These centres could also become forums where teachers and others discuss and debate methodologies, evaluation and assessment (Mpahlele, 1993: 14). All this means therefore that enough research, consultation and in-service courses should be done before new policies that affect education and training could be effectively implemented.

It is worthwhile to solicit and analyze teachers' opinions towards the present paradigm shift in relation to education and training, and whether they are aware of the implications of such a shift. In the light of points raised above, the teachers' attitude towards technical and vocational education will be analyzed in the fourth chapter.

and consequently the degree of policy work that would be needed to involve this sector (1996: 411). This White Paper is based mainly on ideas initiated and organised by capital and labour. The result was that the formal education sector concentrated mainly on schooling issues such as access, ownership and governance, and very little about the new integrated education and training curriculum (Christie, 1996: 412).

The role of teachers in educational change cannot be underestimated. In a very real sense, the quality of an education system depends primarily upon the teachers in the classrooms (Ashely, 1990: 26). Teachers are often criticized from all sides, often for inadequacies for which they are not to blame. They are often not treated by departments as professionals, but as instruments of policy. It is not surprising that the morale of many teachers is low (Hartshone, 1992: 5; Donaldson, 1992: 7).

One cannot but agree with Mpahlele (1993:14), that the transformation debate essentially takes place outside the teaching profession. Although the subject associations which may be well placed to make curriculum proposals on education and training, may have been silent on this issue, yet it is the teachers who will make or break the success of a new system, since it is they who have to implement it. Another strategy involves establishing teacher centres

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

The sample of the study was made up of thirty six (36) Technical and Vocational school teachers, from six technical and vocational institutions in the former Transkei region. The respondents included principals, heads of departments, and subject teachers. The researcher selected a random stratified sample in order to get a representative sample of teachers in these institutions.

##### 4.1.1 GENDER

As expected, the teachers in the institutions who completed the questionnaires were predominantly male out of whom thirty one (31) were chosen and make up eighty-six percent (86%) of the sample. Only five female teachers completed the questionnaire, which make up fourteen percent (14%) of the total sample. This phenomenon reinforces the point made in the conceptual framework, that Technical and Vocational institutions usually cater for males, (Wolpe, 1994).

#### 4.1.2 POST-LEVEL

Sixty nine percent (69%) of the respondents were assistant teachers, 14% heads of department, and school principals 17% .

#### 4.1.3 TRADE QUALIFICATION

The trade qualification (N6) which had the highest frequency, was bricklaying (31%), whilst the electrical trade had the lowest percentage 3%. This could suggest that the bricklaying trade seemed to be the most popular trade.

#### 4.1.4 TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Sixty-One percent (61%) of the respondents had not been trained as teachers and had no teaching qualifications. These instructors had only specialised in their respective trades. This phenomenon suggests that the majority of the instructors have not been exposed to the methods of teaching which are appropriate to their respective trades. This could also imply that, the majority of teachers need to learn methods appropriate for the secondary school level.

#### 4.1.5 TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents had five or less than five years teaching experience, whilst only fourteen percent (14%) had more than fifteen years experience. The high percentage of teachers who had five and less than five years experience denotes that teachers for technical and vocational education are predominantly young. It may also suggest that there is a high turnover of teachers in these institutions.

Because of the lack of legitimacy of the education system and professional respect for many of the incumbents, the activities of inspectors and subject advisors had been suspended in many parts of the country. This suggests that most of the teachers in these institutions were not exposed to much guidance as the system of supervision and guidance had collapsed and no alternative put in its place (ANC, 1994b: 53).

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#### 4.1.6 TEACHER ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP

Sixty-one respondents indicated that they belonged to a teacher organisation. Teacher organisations have historically been concerned largely with the improvement of working conditions, and curriculum issues have continued to be marginalised. It is of particular significance in this research that the teacher organisations seem to support the idea of curriculum transformation.

(TABLE 1)

## BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF SAMPLE

Gender	Male	31	= 86% =
	Female	5	14%
Post Level	Assistant Teachers	25	= 69%
	Heads of Departments	5	= 14%
	Principals	6	= 17%
Trade	Bricklaying	11	= 31%
Qualifications (N6)	Technical Drawing	8	= 22%
	Metalwork	7	= 19%
	Woodwork	5	= 14%
	Mechanical	2	= 6%
	Plumbing	2	= 6%
	Electrical	1	= 3%
Teacher's Qualifications	None	22	= 61%
	Higher National Dip.	7	= 19%
	Sec. Teachers' Dip.	7	= 19%
Teaching Experience	0 - 5 Years	16	= 44%
	6 - 10 Years	9	= 25%
	11 - 15 Years	6	= 17%
	16 - 20 and over	5	= 14%
Teacher Organisation Membership	Yes response	22	= 61%
	No response	14	= 39%

## 4.2 TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY

(TABLE 2)

Q - 1 What is the aim of Technical and Vocational education?

RESPONSES	TOTAL	%
1. To equip youth with technical skills to get employment	21/36	58
2. To help people to gain skills in order to make a living	7/36	19
3. To give student specialised practical knowledge	6/36	17
4. Educate society in the field of science and technology.	1/36	3
5. To provide a career directed education	1/36	3

The perceptions of the aim of Technical and vocational education for employment (58%), and as a means for making a living (19%), had the highest frequencies. Few respondents saw the aim of Technical and vocational education as being to give students specialised practical knowledge (17%), to educate society in the field of science and technology (3%), or to provide a career directed education (3%).

Most teachers therefore, saw technical and vocational

education as an important vehicle for employment and making a living, whilst a few saw the aim broadly as an end in itself, as knowledge, career and field of science and technology. One can deduce therefore that fifty eight percent of teachers viewed Technical and vocational education as it is traditionally seen, in England (Blackman, 1992) and in developing countries in Africa, as a solution to the problem of unemployment (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975).

The second response, of gaining skills in order to make a living (19%) is also closely related to the idea of getting employment, though 'make a living' could include self employment. It is interesting to find out that the respondents seemed to come up with well thought out responses. For example, 17% of the respondents were of the opinion that, technical and vocational education would provide students with a specialised practical knowledge that is needed in a developing country like the former Transkei. Three percent (3%) thought about the development of society that would be provided with science and technology. The last 3% saw this type of education as a provision of a career directed education.

(TABLE 3)

Q 1.1 What should be the main aim of VET curriculum?

CONSOLIDATED RESPONSES	TOTAL	%
1. Equip students with education appropriate to their needs	14/36	39
2. To help students with skills so that they can be self employed	11/36	30.5
3. Should provide students with technical and management skills.	05/36	14
4. Help students acquire skills in technology and science.	04/36	11
5. should include provision of entrepreneurial skills	02/36	5.5

Question Q 1.1 is intended to probe the teachers' personal opinions in relation to this type of education. It is interesting to note that, on the one hand, the opinions of a high percentage of respondents were about skills appropriate to needs (39%). It is interesting to note also that eleven out of thirty six respondents (30.5%) did recognise that technical and vocational education should provide learners with skills for self employment. On the other hand there were fewer responses in relation to technical and management skills(14%), skills in technology and science (11%), and entrepreneurial skills (5.5%). The confusion is that teachers were more concerned about

relevance of the technical and vocational curriculum to the needs of the local people in developing areas, instead of the first world countries' technology.

The teachers opinions as to what should be the main aim of vocational education curriculum, highlight important concerns like, relevance, appropriate skills, self employment, and entrepreneurship. This could be an indication that they wish that these concerns were considered in the development of the curriculum in question to improve the standard of Technical and Vocational education. Such responses could also be interpreted to suggest that technical and vocational curriculum should be appropriate to ones' needs, (Item 1- in table 3 above). This means that technical and vocational education should be susceptible to the latest trends experienced in the rest of South Africa. It can also be deduced from 11% , in item 4 and 5.5% in item 5 above of the teachers' responses that they seemed to see the limitations of the present technical and vocational curriculum, that VET curriculum should include management and entrepreneurial skills. Teachers responses from this question stressed the importance of self reliance, as suggested by concepts like, self-employment, management skills, and entrepreneurial skill. This implies that teachers would like their students to be provided with extra skills in order to be able to

survive without depending on being employed.

(TABLE 4)

Q 1.2 Do you believe that VET contributes to economic growth?

| YES 33 = 92% | NO 3 = 8% | DON'T KNOW 0 = 0% |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED AND CONSOLIDATE	%
YES	1. the economy of the country is mainly run and controlled by technology.	33
	2. Industries, Mining and Agriculture are maintained by the knowledge from VET.	23
	3. Countries with technical skills have helped their countries to grow.	20
	4. Technically skilled people get well paid.	16
NO	1. Technical and Vocational education is introduced too late.	6
	2. Qualified technicians may not find jobs in some small towns.	2
DON'T KNOW		0

Most of the respondents, (92%), had strong confidence that technical and vocational education contributes to economic growth. They claimed that technology used in industries, mining and agriculture is founded on technical knowledge.

Those who did not agree (8%) said that if introduced late, in the child's education, it might not contribute to economic growth. The implication here is that teachers would support the introduction of technical education at school, for the economy of the country to grow.

It is interesting to note that 33% of the respondents were still confident that it is through technical and vocational knowledge that the economy of the advanced countries has grown. This modernist view is based on the logic that, technical skills, and human resources development, will result to an automatic growth of the formal economy. This view has been challenged by the economists of education, who argue instead in favour of general primary education.

In item 2, 23% of the respondents cited mining, industry and agriculture as examples of economic activities which are maintained and run by the knowledge gained from technical and vocational education. It is interesting to note that these industries in real life, are manned by both skilled and unskilled labour. The semi-skilled and unskilled labour are usually in the majority.

Item 3, with 20% of responses, is similar to item 2 above in that the respondents hold the outdated view which

encourages divisions and separate streams in the school curriculum and encourages technical and vocational education for under achievers in the school system.

In item 4, 16% of the respondents claimed that people who have technical skills get well paid. This claim presupposes that jobs will be readily available. The problem with this assertion is that in some instances, in developing economies, there is no demand for certain skills. On the opposing side there were 8% responses; 6% did not believe that this type of education should be introduced early in one's life to make an impact on economic development. The interpretation is that 8% of the respondents believed that the reason some countries have little economic growth is because they introduce technical and vocational education too late at school. It was only 2% of the respondents who felt that technical and vocational qualifications could be of little assistance in an economy that has not grown. One can therefore draw a conclusion, from the responses above, that the majority of teachers subscribe to the traditional notion that Vocational Education and Training contributes to economic growth.

(TABLE 5)

Q 1.3 Do you believe Students with technical subjects stand a better chance of gaining employment compared to those who do academic subjects?

| YES 36 = 100% | NO 0 = 0% | DON'T KNOW 0 = 0% |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. Employment in mining and other industries is easily available in these field.	58
	2. They are exposed to skills that are needed in industries.	25
	3. They also have better chances of creating employment opportunities.	17
NO		0
Don't know		0

Hundred percent of respondents (100%) felt that students with technical and vocational subjects stand a better chance of gaining employment compared to those who do academic subjects, as their skills are needed in industries.

Though teachers might have been talking from their own experiences (which may be real or perceived), but according to Dore (1982), students who had done academic subjects

like Mathematics and Science stand a better chance of getting employed because they are considered to be intelligent and therefore can be trained. At the same time, these students have a wider scope because they have not been trained in one trade which might not be needed at the time they are looking for employment (McWilliam & Kwamena - Poh, 1975).

The respondents' claim, however, tended to differ from the assertion that, due to the rapid developments of technology in the industrial world, most of the students who have qualified in technical and vocational institution need to be trained afresh (Dore, 1982). But it is interesting to note that the majority, in items 1 (58%) and 2 (25%) above, of the respondents were of the opinion that employment is easily available for students with technical and vocational subjects, and that their skills are needed. This assertion seems to be disputed by economists of education like Foster (1966), Mace (1984), Keep et al (1990). They argue that technical and vocational education, at school level, in the developing countries was not enthusiastically accepted by many students because, as they existed, held few prospects for well paid employment. Only 17% of the respondents were of the opinion that their students could get employment in their local areas. Of these some cited trades

like building and motor mechanics.

(TABLE 6)

Q 1.4 Is the Technical and Vocational education curriculum of your institution appropriate for the region?

YES 20 = 55% | NO 13 = 36% | DON'T KNOW 3 = 8% |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. Subjects and skills offered are needed in our region.	25
	2. More schools and houses are built, and more people buy and use cars.	19
	3. There are a number of ex-students who start their small businesses successfully.	11
NO	1. This curriculum is for the whole South Africa, not specifically my region.	22
	2. Many students are forced to look for employment in towns in other regions.	14
DON'T KNOW		8

It is interesting to note that the responses to the question, 'Is Technical and Vocational education curriculum

of your institution appropriate to the region?', is divided. Most respondents felt that the technical and vocational curriculum in their institutions is relevant (55%). They also said that the curriculum is relevant in relation to trades like motor mechanic, metal works, bricklaying and electricity. A substantial minority who disagreed (36%) were of the opinion that the curriculum is not supposed to be relevant to a particular region, one must be able to seek employment anywhere.

Most respondents seemed to agree with Raju (1973: 103) that vocational training at the craft level, e.g. electricians, carpentry, to mention only a few, are essential for developing areas like the former Transkei. Few respondents, (22%) who felt that the technical and vocational curriculum is not relevant to the Transkei conditions, claimed that the training the youth get from these institutions should be usable in the rest of South Africa. What they said was in line with the 14% of respondents who pointed out that some of the students from these institutions usually look for employment in other provinces.

(TABLE 7)

Q 1.5 Do you believe that the Technical and vocational curriculum should impart entrepreneurial skills?

| YES 34 = 94% | NO 0 = 0% | DON'T KNOW 2 =6% |

RESPONSE	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. So that the qualified students can market the product of their skills.	31
	2. So that they can run their own businesses.	22
	3. So that they can manage their businesses and take risks.	19
	4. So that they can control their own financial accounts.	
	5. So as to export their local products to neighbouring provinces.	17
		6
NO		0
DON'T KNOW		0

The majority of the respondents (98%), answered in the affirmative. They expressed the opinion that the curriculum for technical and vocational education should also impart entrepreneurial skills. The reason advanced by 31% of the

respondents was that the qualified students could market these skills. Such a response implies that teachers saw their students as prospective employers. It can therefore be argued that teachers' are shifting from a traditional view of a separate technical and vocational education curriculum to an approach, which supports an integrated curriculum that prepares one for managerial and entrepreneurial competencies. In item 2, 22% was of the view that entrepreneurial skills would help their students to be able to manage their own businesses.

The reasons advanced by the respondents in the rest of the items on the question about entrepreneurial skills, are in keeping with the latest mass based curriculum debates. There were no negative responses to this question. This is an indication that teachers would like some of their students who could not graduates to be able to make a living on their own without being employed by somebody else.

(TABLE 8)

## 4.3. TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Q 2. Are you in favour of the specialised Technical and Vocational curriculum at the secondary school level?

| YES 17 = 47% | NO 15 = 42% | DON'T KNOW 4 = 11% |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. This will enable the student to work locally if he does not graduate.	22
	2. This would enable students to be trained whilst learning and be absorbed by job market.	17
	3. Where there are not enough skilled people, a specialised technical and vocational curriculum is necessary.	8
NO	1 Trainees must be exposed to a number of fields and later choose which course to follow.	25
	2. Communication skills to follow instructions.	17
DON'T KNOW		11

The respondents were strong on the employment facilitating role of technical and vocational education. The 47% in favour of the opinion claimed that a specialised curriculum

was to the advantage of students who drop out from school without completing. Their concern was that, there was not enough skilled people in developing countries, and the only place where training was available, in these countries was at school. Those against a specialised curriculum (42%), felt that students must be exposed to a number of subjects, so that they can be able to change course if they wished to do so later in life, thereby widening the rate of mobility between technical and academic streams. They also felt that students should be taught communication skills.

Deducing from the teachers responses, to this question, it is quite clear that most of them have the modern view of the education and training system as they claimed that specialised skills are very necessary, in a developing area like the former Transkei. Some said if a student could not complete her/his studies ( see Item 1), the skills she/he had acquired at this level would help to make a living. The criticism of this argument is that since technical and vocational education is specialised and rigid, the chances of mobility, for a student, to other streams is limited. Such students may be able to use their skills elsewhere in the world of work.

(TABLE 9)

Q 2.1 Is a technical and vocational curriculum necessary at the secondary school level, particularly in Transkei?

| YES 24 = 66% | NO 12 = 34% | DON'T KNOW = 0% |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. To enable the school to produce skills that are lacking in former Transkei.	25
	2. With few industries, such an education will enable people start small businesses.	17
	3. Transkeians will be able to sell their labour outside the region.	14
NO	1. These vocational schools not adequately resourced.	6
	2. Local people think these schools are for less gifted	3
	3. Teachers for some courses are not readily available.	3
DON'T KNOW		0

Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents were of the opinion that the technical and vocational curriculum at secondary school level is necessary in Transkei, so as to increase

the number of skilled people in this area. It was also felt that this would provide Transkeians with opportunities to sell their labour outside the area, and open small businesses if they do not want to leave. Those who were against (34%) complained that these institutions are not adequately resourced, teachers are not readily available and that the local people think that this stream is intended for the less gifted students. Sometimes some parents request that children who are mentally retarded be admitted to these institutions.

The fact that 66% of the respondents felt that the technical and vocational curriculum is still necessary at the secondary school level in the former Transkei is an indication firstly that the majority of teachers subscribed to the traditional view of the curriculum. Secondly it could mean that they were not yet exposed to the latest transformation discourse. The reasons advanced against the VET curriculum in the former Transkei seem to be in keeping with some of new ideas in the literature. The transformation of the curriculum aims at accommodating students cost effectively, with the minimum resources available, since technical and vocational education is known to be very expensive at secondary school level (Raju, 1973).

(TABLE 10)

Q 2.2 Do you believe that the present Technical and Vocational curriculum at your institution adequately prepares students for the world of work?

| YES 14 = 38% | NO 22 = 62% | DON'T KNOW 0 = 0% |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. Students acquire skills they can use.	25
	2. They get skills to work elsewhere in South Africa where they are needed.	14
NO	1. Training facilities must be made available.	28
	2. Teachers need to be exposed to new developments regarding their trades of specialisation.	19
	3. No link between schools and private sector.	14
DON'T KNOW		0

Most of the respondents (62%) were of the opinion that the curriculum in their institutions did not prepare their students adequately for the world of work, in that there is no link between their institutions and the private sector.

The respondents felt that training facilities must be upgraded, and teachers need to be exposed to refresher courses. Key problems were identified, namely the lack of resources, and the need for in-service training. The rest of the respondents (38%) believed that their curriculum prepares students for the world of work because of the skills they get, which they are able to use any where in the world. It seems therefore, that the technical and vocational institutions in former Transkei area still need to be properly equipped.

28% of the respondents seemed to be aware that the technical and vocational institutions in the former Transkei did not do justice to the curriculum because of a lack of equipment. They seemed to be aware that they need to be exposed to in-service courses (19%) so that they could be in step with the new developments in the industrial world. They also pointed out that the recruitment of students for jobs in the greater South Africa was diminishing.

(TABLE 11)

Q 2.3 Are you exposed to in-service training courses for Technical and Vocational education curriculum, and the current trends towards the restructuring of the curriculum?

| YES 6 = 17% | NO 30 = 83% | DON'T KNOW = 0 % |

RESPONSES	CLASSIFIED & CONSOLIDATED	%
YES	1. Leant the latest technology used in the private sector.	14
	2. Good, it exposed the to new trends in technical & vocational education.	3
NO	1. Would like to see how computers are used e.g. in technical drawing.	31
	2. Teachers should be exposed to latest trends in technological subjects.	26
	3. Discussion needed related to technical and vocational subjects.	17
	4. Brainstorming and collective solutions needed, related to technical subjects.	9
DON'T KNOW		0

Eighty-three percent (83%) of the respondents said that

they had not been exposed to in-service courses for Technical and Vocational education curriculum restructuring. They felt that such courses were necessary, since computers are now used for technical drawing and that they need to get an opportunity to share ideas and discuss their experiences with other teachers in their areas of specialisation. Only 17% of teachers had a chance of being involved in discussions towards curriculum reconstruction and they felt that the courses they attended were good.

It is interesting to note that the respondents were aware of the developments in technology and the need for computer "know-how" in the field of technical and vocational education, and that most of the teachers in the former Transkei had not been exposed to the necessary in-service courses.

TABLE 12

## 4.4 TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION OF VET.

COMPILED RESPONSES Strongly Disagree- SD; Disagree- D; Undecided -U; Agree - A; Strongly agree SA

	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Technical and vocational education curriculum needs transformation	0	0	26	30	42
			%	%	%
2. There are limited opportunities for mobility between streams	0	0	16	35	47
			%	%	%
3. Girls are not admitted to technical and vocational schools	23	61	14	0	0
	%	%	%		
4. Technical and vocational education at school level is not cost effective	0	0	23	30	45
			%	%	%
5. Less gifted pupils go for technical and vocational education	19	23	7	23	26
	%	%	%	%	%
6 Students with N3 qualification do readily get employment.	12	19	14	42	12
	%	%	%	%	%
7. Teachers for technical and vocational education are in short supply	0	0	15	36	50
			%	%	%
8. On the job training is the best solution for employment	38	26	0	19	19
	%	%		%	%
9. Only Colleges should offer technical and vocational education	40	35	0	9	14
	%	%		%	%
10. Technical and vocational skills must not be taught at school level	45	35	0	10	10
	%	%		%	%

In item 1, 30% of respondents agreed and 42% strongly agreed that Technical and vocational curriculum needs to be transformed, whilst 26% were uncertain, and there were none who disagreed. This is a significant indication that there are issues teachers are not happy with-in the existing curriculum. In the light of the fact that the former Transkei has become part of the greater South Africa after the 1994 general elections, and that a new government has been ushered in, such responses should be expected, especially as a reaction to the traditional policies of the previous government.

The respondents' feeling that the curriculum needs to be transformed, was indicated by the responses to item 2, that 47% of the respondents who strongly agreed, and 35% agreed that there are limited opportunities for student mobility between streams in the school curriculum, they shared concerns expressed in the policy debate. Only 16% were undecided and none disagreed or strongly disagreed. It is interesting to find that the responses of the majority of the teachers were similar to the one of the reasons advanced by the mass-based organisations for the transformation of the technical and vocational curriculum.

Under item 3, it was found that 23% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 61% disagreed that girls are not admitted to technical and vocational schools. This reminds one that there is nothing, in the rules, which prevents girls from being admitted to these institutions. But, in reality, most of the students in these institutions are male. The respondents overwhelming disagreement with item 3 denotes their strong feeling that girls should be given equal opportunities in technical and vocational schools.

Under item 4, 45% of the respondents strongly agreed and 30% agreed, that technical and vocational education is not cost effective. There was an overwhelming agreement (total of 75%), among the respondents about the high costs of Technical and vocational education. Twenty-three percent (23%) said they were not decided, and there was no one who disagreed. Most of their responses suggest that they are very much aware that technical and vocational education is expensive, not affordable and therefore needs to be subsidised by the state, (Raju, 1973: 103; Brown & Launder, 1992: 5).

It is interesting to note that under item 5, where it is said that 'less gifted pupils go for technical and vocational education', the responses ranged from 19% who

strongly disagreed, and 23% who disagreed to 23% who agreed and 26% who strongly agreed. Seven percent (7%) respondents were undecided. The interpretation of these responses is that teachers were either divided as to whether technical and vocational education is for the less gifted students, or they may have viewed the question differently. Some might still hold the traditional belief, that this type of education is for the less gifted, whilst others did not. The new vocationalism in the ANC/COSATU curriculum proposals is believed, firstly, to be encouraging a convergence between the high status mental activities and the largely manual activity for the low achievers. This means that all pupils should be treated the same way irrespective of their intellectual abilities.

In relation to item 6, 'Students with N3 qualifications do readily get employment', teachers responses were inclined to be spread across: 12% strongly disagreed, 19% disagreed, 14% was undecided, 42% agreed, and 12% strongly agreed. Though there are more teachers, 42%, who agreed and who were of the opinion that students who have technical and vocational training readily get employed, there seemed to be a problem in some cases as indicated by those responses which disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Perhaps what causes the responses in the paragraph above to be spread from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' might be caused by the tendency that, firstly, in developing countries, where there are very few industries, jobs are not readily available. Secondly, as it has been indicated in this research above, that students who have done academic subjects readily get jobs, since they are considered to be capable and therefore trainable (Dore, 1982; Mace, 1984).

In item 7, a great majority of the responses strongly agree (50%), and agree (36%), whilst there were no respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Only 15% of the respondents were undecided. The short supply of qualified teachers for technical and vocational subjects implies therefore that, in spite of the high costs associated with this type of education the state has to go out of its way to train teachers specifically for this curriculum stream, so as to increase the supply of suitably qualified teachers.

In item 8, the majority of respondents disagree that 'on-the-job training is the best solution for employment'. 38% strongly disagreed, and 26% disagreed which make a total of 64% against 19% who agreed and another 19% who strongly agreed that on-the-job training is the best solution for

employment. What can be interpreted from these responses is that the majority of teachers were of the opinion that formal technical and vocational education curriculum is a prerequisite for one to be able to get employment. It can therefore be deduced that the view of the majority of teachers is that they still want students who are interested in technical and vocational education to be taught in the specialised institutions.

In item 9, the majority of respondents strongly disagreed (45%), and (35%) disagree that technical education be offered only at tertiary level. When added they make a total of 75%, which indicates that teachers still feel that technical and vocational secondary school curriculum should continue to exist. Only 9% agreed, and 14% strongly agreed that only colleges should offer technical and vocational education. This view suggests that successful students from these institutions will proceed to the college level. These opinions show that teachers continue to subscribe to the traditional ideas about the curriculum. In line with item 9, with regard to item 10, 45% of the respondents strongly disagreed, and 35% disagreed with the view that, 'technical and vocational skills must not be taught at school level'. Only 10% agreed, and another 10% strongly disagreed.

#### 4.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the findings which have been analysed and interpreted, the teachers' opinions of technical and vocational school curriculum in the former Transkei can be summarised as follows:

1. All the teachers who responded to the questionnaire had the view that technical and vocational school curriculum was intended to equip the youth with skills which would satisfy their needs, specifically in order to get employment. They believed that their students stand a better chance of getting employment compared to those who do general and academic subjects.
2. The majority of the respondents were of the opinion that technical and vocational education was necessary in a developing area like the former Transkei, as it would bring about economic development.
3. They also believed that technical and vocational education should continue to be offered at secondary school level since such skills were still needed in former Transkei area.
4. The majority of the teachers were of the opinion that the courses offered in the available technical and

vocational schools in this area were appropriate and relevant to the needs of the region.

5. A great majority believed that technical and vocational education should include imparting entrepreneurial skills, so that some of their graduates could start their own businesses if they so desire.
6. The majority of teachers strongly disagreed with the assertion that technical and vocational schools discriminate against girls. They however admitted that there are subjects which are preferred by girls and those which are predominantly done by male students.
7. The majority of teachers agreed that technical and vocational education is very expensive, not adequately resource, and that teachers for some subjects are in short supply and therefore not readily available.
8. Teachers, however agreed that education and training needs to be transformed in order to be in step with the technological developments, the demands of the industrial world, and the new South Africa.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa, including the former Transkei area, under the rule of the new ANC government is going through a transitional period with the intention of redressing the economic and educational imbalances of the past Nationalist regime. The mass-based liberation organisations, in preparation for the new government, took giant strides and forwarded proposals towards an integrated education and training school system which will bring about equality in the rest of South Africa.

A question may well be asked as to what are the opinions of Technical and Vocational education teachers in relation to the proposed shift from a diversified to an integrated education and training system. This chapter is therefore intended to draw conclusions from the teachers responses within the theoretical framework given in the second chapter.

## 5.2 CONCLUSIONS: POINTS WORTH PONDERING.

These conclusions will attempt to answer the overarching question for this study, whether teachers who offer technical and vocational education in the former Transkei region regard the courses they offer, at secondary school level, as enhancing the learners' employment prospects in the work world.

### 5.2.1 Respondents Profile

#### 5.2.1.1 Gender

As expected, the majority of the respondents in this study were male teachers, who agreed that the technical and vocational institutions have fewer female teachers and students. But they were of the opinion that, in principle, these institutions no longer discriminate against females. But, in reality it is known, for example, that there are subjects which are still predominantly done by male students like brick-laying and tailoring whilst dress-making is done exclusively by female students. Though technical and vocational education was discriminating against women, teachers felt and were convinced that it was now no longer the case.

#### 5.2.1.2 Teaching Experience

The majority of the respondents were still young, they had less than ten years teaching experience, and some of them had not been trained as teachers. Perhaps, that is the reason why their responses tended to stress on the content of their course specialisations, at the expense of methodology. They therefore tended to be more enthusiastic about the acquisition of technical skills than the education and training transformation discourse.

At the same time, the fact that the majority was still young might be an advantage during the period of transition in South Africa. It is interesting to note that most (61%) of the respondents seemed to feel that there is a need for the transformation of education and training. They were also keen to know the new trends related to the transformation.

#### 5.2.1.3 Teacher Organisations

It was also discovered that most of the respondents (61%), were members of a teachers' organisation. This phenomenon is of particular significance in this study because it is pointed out that it is in these forums where teachers share ideas about educational transformation. It is where they could discuss and debate methodologies, evaluation and assessment procedures as Mpahlele (1993) has indicated.

The opinions of technical and vocational education teachers tend to range from those who predominantly feel that there was still a need for diversified school curriculum streams, to those who are in favour of an integrated education and training. The interpretation is that respondents agreed on the principle of transformation in line with the new South Africa. But they tended to differ when it comes to technicalities or specifics. What this tendency suggests is that the transformation debate still needs to be extensively discussed with the teachers including those who are in remote areas, through the teacher organisations. Because of the large area to be covered, more time is necessary in order to have all the members of the organisation on board the transformation programme. In fact, the transformation of education and training means very little, without the transformation of the teachers and their attitudes (Sharpes 1994). That is what teacher organisation is all about.

## **5.2.2 Education and Economic Growth**

### **5.2.2.1 Employment Prospects**

Technical and vocational education was predominantly seen, by the respondents, as a means for the development of human resources and ultimately the economic growth of the country. The majority of teachers (64%) believed that the

aim of technical and vocational education is to equip the youth with technical skills to get employment. They were of the opinion that people with technical and vocational skills are still very few in the former Transkei area. This view is similar to the one held by the governments in developing countries (Foster, 1966). Those who had been to these technical and vocational schools were believed, by the respondents, to have better employment prospects in the greater South Africa. Those who obtained employment would be able to provide financial support for their families back home in the rural areas. The implications for this study is that the teachers in these technical and vocational institutions see their schools as playing a vital role in the economic development of the former Transkei area. Since the area in question is now incorporated in the rest of South Africa their students would be able to increase their earnings.

South Africa's economy, including the former Transkei has been in crisis for the past two decades and is faced with acute unemployment problems (NEPI, 1992b: 168; Olivier, 1988: 352). What one must not lose sight of is that the provision of skills to the youth in technical and vocational institutions will not create jobs in the rural former Transkei area. They will go to big towns elsewhere in South Africa where there is the same problem of

unemployment.

#### 5.2.2.2 Skills to make a Living.

Though respondents' ideas of 'skills to make a living' were inclined to be undefined and general, most teachers felt that the technical and vocational education provides students with skills to make a living. It is interesting to note that some teachers did not see 'making a living' as necessarily meaning that one will be employed. Making a living seemed to be seen as also possible through self employment or entrepreneurship (Loots, 1992: 34). Some teachers pointed out that most students who have specialised in trades which are connected with building industry, in the former Transkei area, are able to make a living on their own.

However, if teachers are to train students for self employment, it would be worthwhile that they impart competencies for life skill development (NEPI, 1992b: 173) in the technical and vocational curriculum; most of the respondents in this research seem to be aware of this need. Therefore, teachers were of the opinion that there is a need for the transformation of education and training.

#### 5.2.2.3 Relevance and Practical Knowledge.

The ideas of 'relevance' and 'practical knowledge' were not clearly stated. It was, however, interesting to note that some teachers (22%) were of the opinion that technical and vocational education will provide students with a specialised practical knowledge that is needed in a developing area like the former Transkei. According to some of the teachers, a special kind of practical knowledge can still be readily obtained from these institutions for the application by the local people. This gives the impression that it is believed by some teachers that specialised practical skills acquired at these schools will bring about economic growth. Though the former Transkei is predominantly rural, one wonders whether specialised skills are in fact quite relevant for an area which is inclined towards a subsistence type of economy. However, the majority of teachers were of the opinion that there is a part to be played by the technical and vocational school system in providing specialised skills which would be needed in this area in the future.

#### 5.2.2.4 Science and Technology

On-the-job training in industries is not readily available in areas like the former Transkei. The schools in this area are seen as the only means of exposing students to the skills that are required by the age of science and

technology. Some teachers, therefore, were of the opinion that an appropriate kind of science and technology can still be obtained from the local technical and vocational schools in the former Transkei area.

In addition to the need for an appropriate technology for local use, some teachers even pointed out that recently, computerisation has taken over in industries and the business world in the economically developed countries. The majority of teachers therefore believed that technical and vocational education would provide people with specialised skills, in line with latest technological developments, which would invariably bring about economic growth in the rural former Transkei area.

#### 5.2.2.5 Career Directed Education

Technical and vocational education was seen as an example of Career Directed education, whereby students are given a chance to choose a career direction which they would like to follow (Nel, 1987: 2; Jooste, 1993: 23). This means that some teachers in these institutions saw themselves as assisting their students with the skills they would need for their career paths in the future world of work.

### 5.2.3 Technical and Vocational Education Curriculum and the World of Work

#### 5.2.3.1 Diversity vs Integration

The findings in this study indicate that teachers were divided in relation to a specialized technical and vocational curriculum at secondary school level. Those who were in favour, were of the opinion that people who had specialised skills would always be needed, and that their skills would also be handy even if they happen to leave school early or drop out before they complete schooling. Those who were against a specialized education and training were of the opinion that an integrated education made one more versatile when one has to choose a career.

It seems therefore, that the transformation debate in favour of an integrated as against a diversified education and training system needs to be tackled cautiously and presented clearly to teachers. Otherwise, the differences of perceptions, between some teachers' opinions and the government education and training proposals, is likely to result in some form of resistance on the part of those teachers who are not fully on board.

### 5.2.3.2 High-level vs Low-level Training.

Whilst the developed countries are living in the age of electronics and toying with the ideas of post-Fordism, the developing areas like the former Transkei are still grappling with the problems of modernisation. One might conclude that, the former Transkei area does also need high-level training.

The concern about low-level education and training at the secondary school level as against the proposed high-level skills for academic secondary level (NEPI, 1992) seemed to be a critical issue for the majority of the respondents. But, there could to be a subtle variance between the teachers' opinions and the latest government education and training proposals in relation to the need for technical and vocational schools at secondary level. On one hand, the teachers' responses suggested that they were still in favour of technical and vocational education at secondary school level, though its curriculum needs to be improved considerably. This feeling could be the result of the lack of technical skills in an area like the former Transkei which is definitely developing. At the same time, graduates from these technical and vocational institutions, were going to need to be prepared to earn their own keep (Olivier, 1988). Some teachers therefore, would like the low level training to be upgraded to high level training.

On the other hand, some teacher's opinions were inclined to be in line with the recent proposals, that technical and vocational curriculum at secondary school level will lead to a low-level training. After completing, it was argued, these students would need further training if they are to compete in the labour market. It was also pointed out in Chapter three that industries tended to employ students who had a background of academic subjects namely mathematics and science, who were thought to learn faster with on-the-job training.

#### 5.2.3.3 VET Curriculum and In-service.

According to the teachers' responses, technical and vocational curriculum as it is at present is inadequate. Though it was inadequate, the majority of teachers still subscribed to the idea that technical and vocational education provided students with specialised trades that would always be needed in the labour market. However, they were of the opinion that the technical and vocational curriculum should include management and entrepreneurial skills.

Teachers were also of the opinion that they need to be exposed to in-service courses which would assist them to upgrade their knowledge and teaching skills so that they would be able to provide their students with high level

training in their institutions. This implies that teachers saw technical and vocational education at secondary school level as still being necessary until it has been gradually displaced by an alternative viable system.

#### **5.2.4 Teachers Opinions on Education and Training**

##### **Transformation**

##### **5.2.4.1 Need for Transformation.**

Teachers did not seem to be all in synchrony with the new view on vocational education and training. When the political organisations were unbanned in February 1990, a number of mass based organisations, e.g. ANC and NEPI, in the country came up with proposals for education and training transformation. One must not lose sight of the fact that these proposals had good intentions, but the fact remained that there was little teacher involvement when they were being developed.

Since an education and training transformation is supposed to be a continuous process, the good intentions of the mass based organisation must ultimately reach the grassroots level, and teachers should be made to understand why and how education and training has to be transformed. It has already been pointed out that changes and development in the political arena and in the industrial world outside the

school system tend to be too fast for the school system. Pressures to transform the school curriculum, including vocational education do not originate only from politicians and industries but also from parents, and the rest of the stake-holders, e.g. teacher organisations . More often than not, in developed and developing countries, teachers who actually handle the school activities, are usually left out in the process of education and training transformation. Some individual teachers are not yet familiar with the details in the recent transformation debates in respect of technical and vocational education.

#### 5.2.4.2. Flexibility in Education and Training.

Since a large majority of teachers strongly agreed that students have limited opportunities for mobility between education streams, one could conclude that the majority is aware of the disadvantages of 'canalization', and are in favour of an integrated curriculum at secondary school level. The few who are undecided, could, like all humans, be entertaining fears about losing their jobs as teachers for technical and vocational subjects at the same level.

#### 5.2.4.3 High Costs OF VET

As the majority of respondents agreed that technical and vocational education is not cost effective, this gave the impression that most were of the opinion that these costs

at secondary school are worthwhile, because of the benefits accruing to the former Transkei area. Some agreed that technical and vocational education is very expensive. The issue of costs brings in the idea of cost-benefit analysis, whether it was worthwhile to run the existing technical and vocational schools especially since their students did not readily find employment in the labour market (See, Pennisi, 1991: 143; Blaug, 1985: 19).

#### 5.2.4.4 VET for Less Gifted Students.

Though teachers had different views as to whether technical and vocational education was intended for less gifted and mentally retarded students, one finds that the majority did not want to accept this assertion. One can therefore conclude that teachers were against an education and training system which divides students according to their intellectual abilities. Technical and vocational education was seen as an option for those who would like to pursue a technically oriented career.

#### 5.2.4.5 Availability of VET Teachers.

The majority of teachers agreed that there was a shortage of suitably qualified teachers for technical and vocational subjects. However, they did not seem to associate this reason with the need for the transformation of the secondary education and training system.

#### 5.2.4.6 On-the-job Training.

The responses of the majority of teachers towards 'on-the-job' training as an alternative to technical and vocational education at the secondary school level was negative. Though they were of the opinion that there is a need for the transformation of education and training, they felt that the institutions in which they teach still had a part to play in the provision of the required technical and vocational skills. It is interesting to note that employers in the private sector tend to prefer employing students who had done mathematics and science and give them on-the-job training specifically for the job they will be doing. The respondents to this question did not seem to be aware that their students might be having problems getting jobs for which they had been trained.

#### 5.2.4.7 School vs College VET.

Teachers, at the grassroots level, still saw the need for the technical and vocational education curriculum at the secondary school phase. Most teachers were not aware of the recent mass-based education and training proposals for the new South Africa, especially in relation to technical and vocational education. They therefore saw these schools, with a technical and vocational curriculum stream, as a passage to technical education at tertiary level.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Human agency is often overlooked in both the old and new proposals for education and training transformation. Teachers are human beings whose feelings have to be taken into consideration. They must not be made to feel insecure during the transformation process otherwise they will put up some resistance. Teachers who offer technical and vocational subjects at secondary school level could have fears of finding themselves redundant during the process of transformation. In the light of the conclusions stated above, it is therefore recommended as follows:

5.3.1 Teachers as professionals, and the whole community for that matter should not be sidelined; they must be exposed to the broad debates on the technical and vocational education curriculum so that they could develop an insight into the transformation process. Since this is a mammoth task, it could be done through the mass media and the electronic media. A special newspaper column could be arranged to take care of all education matters. Radio and television programmes could be of assistance on this matter.

5.3.2 Teachers, especially those who handle technical and vocational education curriculum, should be exposed to competency based teaching and learning methods, and how to handle an integrated curriculum. This is a long and slow process, teachers need in-service courses, and must be represented in the on-going discussion forums, until they are convinced as to what is expected of them without fearing the loss of their jobs.

5.3.3 The transformation of vocational education and training should to be negotiated with the teachers concerned at the teacher organisation forums. They could collectively discuss the transformation programme, integration of the education and training, classroom practice, and their working conditions. Education and training should go hand in hand to avoid an output of students that are either under-educated or under-skilled in their preparation for the economic world.

5.3.4 The National Department of Education must take the initiative to see to it that education and training systems in South Africa are co-ordinated to ensure that course objectives correspond with the current needs of commerce and industry. In fact education and training transformation needs to be negotiated between the state, and the private sector or prospective employers.

5.3.5 A progressive transformation must be encouraged, in the spirit of the current Reconstruction and Development Programme that has been introduced by the new ANC regime. It should not be taken as an event, but an on going process. A progressive transformation of education and training, which involves many people, tends to be very complex and highly dynamic and therefore needs to be managed in order to produce the desired effect.

5.3.6 Teachers should also be encouraged to voice their own opinions. They need to come up with suggestions as to how the technical and vocational education curriculum can be integrated and effectively implemented, otherwise the curriculum transformation process could end up being a disaster. It is frustrating both to the student and the teacher to carry on with a curriculum that is not worthwhile.

5.3.7 If an integrated curriculum is going to be implemented in the future, career guidance for all learners needs to be pursued within an integrated education and training system. Teachers must still give guidance to their learners as to what subjects they should do in order to follow a particular career. At the same time, subjects like Mathematics or General Science, should be made available to all students at school level, so that students

could, on their own, chose courses for their tertiary education.

5.3.8 As education and training practitioners, teachers do not only need to be transformed before they actually assist in the transformation of the curriculum, they also need to be retrained. They need to learn afresh that a greater emphasis is placed on all-round competence and retrainability, that is preparing a multi-skilled workforce.

5.3.9 Since more emphasis is being placed on entrepreneurship training in the emerging policy discourse, teachers should be exposed to in-service courses so that all teachers can be in step with the new development trends without any fear of being retrenched, rationalised or losing a job.

5.3.10 The discrimination against females at school as well as in the labour market must be avoided at all costs, in fact female entrepreneurs also need to be cultivated for our future economic system. The culture of teaching and learning must be cultivated with the idea that a general academic education at secondary school level in the final analysis is the best vocational preparation for the youth.

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ANNEXURE

QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL PARTICULARS

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

GENDER, MALE/ FEMALE : \_\_\_\_\_

POST LEVEL/ POSITION : \_\_\_\_\_

IN WHICH INSTITUTION ARE YOU EMPLOYED? : \_\_\_\_\_

WHICH SUBJECTS/ COURSES DO YOU TEACH? : \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT ARE YOUR ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS? : \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION? : \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN YEARS : \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF TEACHER ORGANISATION? : \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION 1

## TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY

1. What is the aim of Technical and Vocational education?

\_\_\_\_\_

1.1 What should be the main aim of Technical and Vocational education curriculum? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1.2 Do you believe that Technical and Vocational education contributes to economic development?

\_\_\_\_\_

[ YES | NO | DON'T KNOW ]

If your answer is Yes, how? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, give reasons for your answer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1.3 Do you believe that students taking Technical and Vocational education stand a better chance of gaining employment compared to those who do academic subjects?

\_\_\_\_\_

[ YES | NO | DON'T KNOW ]

If Yes, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1.4 Is Technical and Vocational education curriculum of your institution appropriate for the region?

\_\_\_\_\_

[        YES        |        NO        |        DON'T KNOW        ]

If Yes, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1.5 Do you believe that Technical and Vocational curriculum should impart entrepreneurial and management skills?

\_\_\_\_\_

[        YES        |        NO        |        DON'T KNOW        ]

If Yes, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 2

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

2. Are you in favour of a specialised Technical and Vocational Curriculum, at the secondary school level?

\_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ DON'T KNOW \_\_\_\_\_ ]

If Yes, give reason for your answer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, give reason for your answer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.1 Is a Technical and Vocational curriculum necessary at the secondary school level particularly in Transkei?

\_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ DON'T KNOW \_\_\_\_\_ ]

If Yes, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, give reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.2 Do you believe that the present Technical and Vocational curriculum at your institution adequately prepares students for the world of work?

\_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ DON'T KNOW \_\_\_\_\_ ]

If Yes, give reason for your answer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, what changes do you suggest that will result to students being prepared for the world of work? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.3 Are you exposed to in-service training courses for Technical and Vocational education curriculum, and the current trends towards the restructuring of the curriculum?

\_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ DON'T KNOW \_\_\_\_\_ ]

If Yes, what is your opinion of the course? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If No, in your opinion, what kind of a course do you need?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 3. TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION, OF  
TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL.

(Strongly Disagree-SD; Disagree- D; Undecided- U; Agree- A;  
Strongly Agree- SA, tick where appropriate)

	SD	D	U	A	SA
3.1 Technical and Vocational education curriculum needs transformation					
3.2 There are limited opportunities for mobility between streams					
3.3 Girls are not admitted to technical and vocational schools					
3.4 Technical and Vocational education at school is not cost effective					
3.5 Less gifted pupils go for technical and vocational education					
3.6 Students with N3 qualifications do readily get employment					
3.7 Teachers for technical and vocational are in short supply					
3.8 On the job training is the best solution for employment					
3.9 Only Colleges should offer technical and vocational education					
3.10 Technical and Vocational skills must not be taught at the school level					