

CHAPTER 2

ORIGIN AND CURRENT STATUS OF LEARNERSHIPS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to provide as a background, a description of the concept of learnerships, its origin and how it fits into the South African context of skills development. The term 'learnership' or 'learnerships' is a comprehensive description that groups together all the learnerships that are available/registered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Learnerships were preceded by the apprenticeship system intended for blue collar workers operating mainly in the trade/manufacturing sector. The first legislation regarding apprenticeships is the Apprenticeship Act of 1922 which was part of an attempt by the South African government to regulate its labour situation (Van Reenen, Visser, Arndt, Champion, Davidson, Downes, and Freestone, 1935: 11).

This chapter therefore starts off with an historic overview followed by a comparison between learnerships and apprenticeships. Central to a learnership is the concept and reality of work, which, like a number of other concepts related to this research, has been thoroughly researched and therefore contextualized for the purposes of this study.

The ever increasing role of technology has always been viewed from a number of angles, such as the decreased need for labour intensive processes because of the increased role of technology. It has also shifted the need to more highly qualified people to operate technologically advanced machinery.

In order to execute the work, however, humans or people are needed and consequently a section of this chapter has been devoted to illustrating the role of humans in the workforce – firstly as leaders, but also as workers. The reward of work, irrespective of standard, is measured – firstly as a performance criterion, but also as a means of determining reward (payment and or acknowledgement).

The last section of this chapter intends to be informative as well as illustrative regarding the essence of learnerships. Terms are qualified to give the reader an understanding of the role players and mechanisms for the successful operation of a learnership.

Particular care has been taken to underpin the importance of the design of a learnership which is backed by extensive legislation. Some attention is also given to the principles used to design a learnership which is linked (in chapter 3) to the ever important National Skills Development Strategy and Human Development Strategy that underpins learnerships (refer paragraph 3.3).

This chapter ends with a discussion of transformation to empowerment using the vehicle of learnerships.

2.2 HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF LEARNERSHIPS

Learnerships were preceded by apprenticeships. In 1640 in New England, Thomas Millard wrote about his experience as an apprentice which was reminiscent of the slave trade. Slaves belonged body and soul to their master (domestic apprenticeship) and were reliant on their masters for handouts of food, clothing and possibly money (Anonymous (n.d.) af).

The existence of slave trade is documented in ancient Egypt and Rome (Wiehahn, 1992:5). During this time, slaves were reliant on foremen who carried the responsibility of paying their wages (in cash) and supplying their food along with other contractual requirements such as paid leave (Wiehahn, 1992:4). The similarities between slaves and modern day apprentices are the responsibility of the employer to pay wages and adhere to the stipulations in the (apprenticeship) agreement (also known as an indenture). Nowadays, apprentices live independently and their responsibilities remain to do a good job and to care for themselves and their family.

The experiences of Thomas Millard originate from such an indenture (an agreement between the employer and the apprentice) in which the stipulations mentioned above were contained.

Literature indicates that the demand for skilled labour has been the primary motivator for many changes that have taken place in the labour arena. In terms of legislation in the South African context, "...the first serious attempt to regulate conditions of labour by statute" was made in 1918, with the passing of, inter alia, the Apprentices and Improvers Act, which regulated the conditions of employment such as hours of work, payment for overtime, employment of women and young persons (Van Reenen, Visser, Arndt, Champion, Davidson, Downes, Freestone, 1935: 11).

Regulation in terms of training of skilled labour, however, can be looked at in three forms, that is, the guild system, apprenticeships and learnerships. The guild system originated in the 12th century in England and moved on to Venice where it grew so rapidly that by the end of the 15th century, well over a hundred of them existed in industries such as shipbuilding, iron manufacturing, glass blowing, leather dressing and tooling, gem cutting and setting as well as textiles (Panagis, Marszalek and Mazanek, 1997:5)

The guild system has been highly criticized for its contradictory style – it purported to protect the economic interest of its members but its monopolistic style of governing resulted in a few individuals or the guild master benefiting at the expense of their members. It restricted the members who could operate in certain professions, limiting the supply of labour to the use of highly trained, expensive personnel, when other types might have been adequate, which resulted in the subsequent destruction of jobs (Woods, 2003:2). In contrast, the current skills strategy in South Africa advocates job creation especially by SMEs. Admission to a guild required an individual to learn the trade by serving as an apprentice to a guild master (Panagis, *et al.*, 9). The next step was to become a journeyman and eventually a master.

At the end of the apprenticeship, a 'masterpiece' was presented for inspection by the guild's officers – similar to the requirements of the apprenticeship of today (a trade test) or in the case of a learnership, a summative assessment supported by a portfolio of evidence. While appearing to be fair and logical, apprentices who completed their training could start working for anyone who needed a helper but could only operate as an owner if sufficient funds had been saved. This points to the same problem small business is reported to have, that is access to finance/start-up capital.

Further criticism of the guild system came when the possibility of owning one's own business was stopped and individuals were then required to spend time as journeymen before ever hoping to become a master (Panagis *et al.*, 1997:8).

The cost of education forced many parents to guide their children (especially boys) to engage in an apprenticeship to assist in alleviating the financial burden. Access to employment and work reservation for certain races and genders also contributed to the inequality of education and employment.

The age profile of school leavers is documented in paragraph 103 of the Majority Report of the Relief and Grants-in-aid Commission of 1914 (Chapman, Evans, Wiener, Michau, Pim and Moffat, 1914: 34). In this report, recommendations focused on a child leaving school at 16 or 18 depending on the standard passed, after which appropriate training at industry schools, continuation classes, school farms or the Mines Training School were recommended. The problem of young school leavers continues, showing a rise in 1995 to 43% of those less than 18 years (Bird, 1998:2). In their effort to find employment, many of these youngsters returned empty handed. Du Toit (2003: 9) reports that nearly two-thirds of unemployed youths (65.55 or 3.6 million) do not have a grade 12 certificate.

An in-depth look into the education system became necessary and as a result a restructuring in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Malaysia and the UK took place. Its objective was to increase the quantity and quality of industry-based education and training (Pityana, 1997: 1). Funding for the revised education and training system was introduced by way of a levy system which is in existence in at least 35 countries around the world (Brazil, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Nigeria, Kenya, Hungary, Poland and France (*ibid*)).

The advantage of a levy scheme is that it "...provides a stable and protected source of funding for training in the context of a severe fiscal constraint, low levels of private sector training and a declining apprenticeship system" (*ibid*). Despite various sources reporting a decline (and subsequent revival and decline) in the apprenticeship system, the concept still continues (Lewis, (n.d):1; Gospel, 1995:35-42; Gospel, 1998:435-457). The South African government however, is working in the direction of

having only learnerships and intends phasing out the apprenticeship system in due course as was indicated by the Minister of Labour (Anonymous, (n.d) t).

2.3 APPRENTICESHIP VERSUS LEARNERSHIP

Both the terms apprentice and learner have similarity in their meanings. For the term apprentice, synonyms such as “...trainee, learner or beginner” are found while the term ‘learner’ reveals “...beginner, apprentice, student, pupil and novice” (Microsoft Thesaurus). While the concept of apprenticeship is being phased out in South Africa as indicated in paragraph 1.5, it did serve as a good basis on which to build a better system to educate and train (upskill) individuals on a broader basis to include youth and females from all race groups.

The Department of Labour lists the problems associated with apprenticeships which provide the opportunity of identifying solutions possible with the learnership concept. Table 2.1 gives a synopsis of the main points.

Table 2.1: Apprenticeship versus learnership

Apprenticeship	Learnership
Problems	Solutions
1. Not enough apprentices were trained, thus too few people with skills to grow the economy.	1. Objective is to train 80 000 learners by 2005.
2. A lot of people obtained ‘N’ qualifications at technical colleges but were unable to get work experience.	2. People will now obtain a National Qualification registered with the South African Quality Authority (SAQA).
3. Too few companies took on apprentices due to the tax incentive which resulted in less skilled workers doing the routine aspects of an artisan’s job, but being paid less.	3. Companies are incentivised through learnership grants, recovery of skills development levy, ad hoc grants, tax breaks, placement fees; learnership system/process trains and tests beyond routine aspects and payment; Labour law supports minimum requirements for employment.

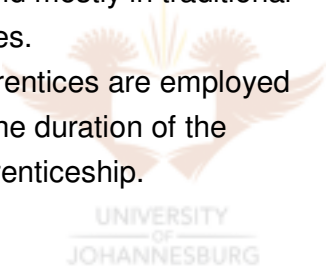
4. The qualified artisans (technicians) did the more skilled parts of the job.	4. A qualified learner is capable of performing the range of competencies determined in the learnership.
5. Skills 5.1 Focus only on technical skills. 5.2 Acquire a particular skill e.g. plumbing.	5. Skills 5.1 Train more than technical skills – also trains general and specific skills 5.2 The skills programs route (linked to SAQA standards used as building blocks leading to a full qualification) or the learnership route can be followed (full qualification on completion).
6. Focus on specific sector of the economy.	6. Focuses on all parts of the economy.
7. Apprenticeships were popular in an era where a 'job for life' culture prevailed AND progress was linked to age or time with company.	7. Focuses on mobility to 'refresh' or update learning irrespective of age or time with company.
Advantages	
1. Apprentices became skilled workers.	1. Goes beyond skills only – entails personal growth, creative thinking, and heightened awareness in terms of role in the organisation, economy and community. This results in a “...creative and innovative workforce, because of the attainment of the compulsory critical skills and attitudes required by every qualification” (Anonymous (n.d.) g).
2. Skilled workers have a better chance than other workers to own successful businesses when they are retrenched.	2. Qualified workers have more encouragement and support from government and business to start and maintain own businesses.
3. It helps when it is difficult to find a job in the formal sector.	3. Finding a job 3.1 It prepares an individual to create a job and create jobs for other people 3.2 Addresses needs of informal sector.

4. Did training first and then looked for a job. Skills were not particularly in demand.	4. It is based on the needs of the economy – Skills Development Act no 97 of 1998 demands led approach: look at what work is taking place and then train.
System differences	
1. Controlled by 33 industry training boards.	1. Controlled by 25 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). In his speech, Mr S Morotoba, Executive Manager: SETA Coordination noted that "...although some SETAs took over the assets of former Industrial Training Boards, including experience of training in those sectors, the SETAs were wholly new organizations." (Anonymous (n.d.) u).
2. The individual spends 100 weeks under guidance of a skilled, qualified artisan.	2. The individual is self paced and measured by successful completion of required unit standards.
3. Theory 3.1 One or two periods at technical college to learn theory.	3. Theory 3.1 Can take place at any accredited training institution/ provider. 3.2 Makes up 30% of learnership. 3.3 Covers more levels and can move to professional and other qualifications.
4. The individual obtains a National Technical Certificate for the theory.	4. Theory and practical component make up a unit standard.
5. Assessment comes in the form of a trade test at end (at Central Organisation of Trade Testing – COTT).	5. There is a continuous assessment of theory and practical. Progress is determined by successful completion of the previous assessment.
System consistencies	
1. Learners spend time working under the guidance of a skilled worker – theory and practical.	
2. Portability (transferability) – qualification is recognized in different sectors of the economy and in different countries; it allows learner to move from one provider to another.	

Source: Department of Labour, (n.d.) c: 11, 26, 27, 49.

The Services SETA described in paragraph 1.1 came up with a very clear, easy to understand comparison between learnerships and apprenticeships. This is detailed in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Comparison between a learnership and apprenticeship

	Apprenticeship	Learnership
Relevance to occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It tends to be restricted to blue collar trades. ▪ Many trades are relevant in a wide variety of sectors, e.g. electricians and machine operators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is appropriate in any occupation in all economic sectors in which work-based learning paths are viable. ▪ While being specific to an occupation, it also develops employability across a wide spectrum of work.
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Found mostly in traditional trades. ▪ Apprentices are employed for the duration of the apprenticeship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is relevant to learners in most occupational fields. ▪ Individuals can be employed, unemployed or pre-employed at the time of entering the learnership. ▪ 'Pre-employed' refers to "...school leavers and youth who have not worked before". 'Unemployed' refers to "...those who have served in the labour market before but are not presently employed". Or they are "...people who have the capacity to work but cannot find employment". (Anonymous, (n.d.) f)
NQF level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The qualification is not higher than the trade level, i.e. the equivalent of NQF level 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The qualifications that learnerships lead to can span across all eight NQF levels.

Age of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually entry-level employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No age restriction on learners entering learnerships.
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duration is determined by the minimum of 120 credits of the qualification, and normally is completed in a year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three to four years.
Contract with learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A formal learnership agreement is signed by the learner, Lead Employer and Lead Training Provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract is signed between the apprentice and a single employer for the duration of the apprenticeship.
Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is designed to meet legally specified criteria for NQF- alignment, e.g. it is portable and serves as a building block for further learning. It is SAQA-registered and nationally recognised by employers and training institutions. It builds occupation-specific skills and develops generic (critical cross-field) competencies, which are relevant in all work contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The certificate issued is trade –specific, making portability difficult. Qualifications enjoy wide national and international recognition in respect of the specific trade. The qualification is not necessarily recognised by training institutions as a stepping-stone towards further learning.
Credit for outcomes achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners are awarded credits for the outcomes successfully achieved, even if they do not complete the learnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal recognition for learning outcomes achieved if apprentices don't complete the apprenticeship.
Curriculum and learning programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are jointly planned by relevant stakeholders. The interrelationship between and integration of workplace and institutional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The integration and interrelationship between institutional and workplace learning is not formally

	learning is formally structured into the learning programme.	structured. The link between the two learning components does not always happen.
Institutional learning component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is delivered by a wide spectrum of training institutions. ▪ Is contextualised to the specific needs of the occupation for which the learnership is designed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is delivered by colleges. ▪ Is customised to the needs of the specific trade.
Work-based learning component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The learner gains a broad spectrum of work experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The learner's work-based experience is restricted to the work context of a single employer.
Purpose of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotes access to employment, as well as further education and training opportunities in the field of the learnership, as well as in other fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is aimed at developing trade-specific skills and consolidating the worker's ability in that trade.
Role of the learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primarily that of a learner for the duration of the learnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary role is that of an apprentice, who is in employment.
Approval/ registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be approved by the appropriate SETA, which submits it for registration to the Department of Labour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is approved under the Manpower Training Act of 1981.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The final judgment of competence by workplace and training providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The learners' competence is assessed through trade tests conducted by institutions accredited under the Manpower Training Act, such as COTT (Central Organisation of Trade Testing – COTT).

Employment after concluding the learning programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment is not guaranteed, but the learnership also prepares the learners for employability outside full-time employment with an employer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment is not guaranteed, although employers take on apprentices with a view to keeping them as permanent employees after successful completion of the apprenticeship.
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Source: Anonymous, (n.d.) t.

It is clear from the abovementioned paragraphs that both the apprenticeship and the learnership are tools that prepare people for the workplace. It assumes that trained individuals are better equipped to perform in the workplace. The following paragraphs focus on various aspects related to the concept of work and the workforce.

2.4 THE CONCEPT OF WORK

The concept of work in the context of the Human Resource Development Strategy (HRD) for South Africa is contained in the vision of the South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki. The purpose of this strategy is to come up with a plan that will ensure that people are equipped for full participation in society which will enable them to either find or create work and ultimately benefit fairly from it (Department of Labour, (n.d.) d: 5).

In this same document, 'work' is considered more than the definition we find in the Thesaurus (labour, employment, job, vocation or occupation). Other meanings found in the same source indicate a mix of verbs and nouns which clearly distinguishes between a work, work and employment. Terms mentioned are effort, toil, act, succeed, composition and operate. The HRD strategy defines work as "...the full range of activities that underpin human dignity by achieving self-sufficiency, freedom from hunger and poverty, self-expression and full citizenship" (ibid).

The definition of Du Toit (2003: 1, 2) confirms that work goes beyond the aspect of sustainability of the individual's life and identifies three dimensions of work:

- Firstly as an economic function where one simply earns a wage and only the minimum is done to sustain the individual and his/her family/dependants to fulfill primary needs.
- Secondly as a social dimension focusing on where and how individuals live, their social status as well as their participation in their community and organizations.
- Thirdly, the personal/psychological dimension which is not only an essential source of identity but one which provides a feeling of self worth and self esteem.

In-depth research around work and the importance of work has been done by the well-known author Karl Marx whose definition of work centered on human existence as its most important characteristic which gives the opportunity for self-fulfillment (ibid).

Work as such has always had two components to it – the practical side and the theoretical side. Huge emphasis was placed on the practical side following World War I, II and III in which nations had to literally rebuild themselves following the immense destruction. Labour intensive jobs and practices ensured that the population could feed itself and countries could start rebuilding their economies. This practical aspect forms the biggest part of a learnership today – 70%, while the theoretical side makes up the remaining 30%.

The Services SETA refers to the composition of a learnership in terms of structured learning and structured work experience intended to complement each other in an integrated structure. “It is critical that within each, theory and practice are combined – so that there are practical applications within the structured learning, and theoretical reflections within work experience” (Anonymous, (n.d.) e).

In the first minority report which formed part of the Relief and Grants-in-Aid Commission Report of 1916, Aiken, van Alphen, Evans, Jeppe, Napier, Theron, and

Webber (1916: 66) mention labourers gaining practical experience. A further distinction is made between the more intelligent workers being able to assume more responsibility with a possibility of ownership while the less intelligent workers will have gained adequate exposure only to become 'useful assistants'.

Humans, referred to as 'resources' or 'capital or assets', form an essential element in the work chain. The increasing role of technology has changed the emphasis on the availability (supply), the skills level and the demand for particular skills.

2.5 HUMANS AND AUTOMATION

Early production facilities represented a high incidence of manual labour including the support functions such as administration, recording of transactions, stocktaking and accounting to name a few. The ratio changed when the machines that were operated by individuals changed to highly technical equipment. This change caused a number of humans to be 'replaced' initially but then required a highly trained individual who could 'oversee' the functionality and maintenance of such a machine.

Different views are held with regard to the role of the human in relation to technology. Some authors maintain that even in a highly technological environment, human interaction is still necessary (Anonymous, (n.d.) c). Bainbridge (1983:1) confirms that there is a positive correlation between the level of advancement of technology and the contribution of the human operator.

Postrell (2004), on the other hand, suggests increased employment where automation is more difficult such as plumbers, drivers, hairdressers, manicurists, and personal shoppers. At the same time, technology has been unable to replace humans completely. Interestingly enough, most of the industries in which the first apprenticeships were trained, had a major component of manual labour which was indicative of the level of development in South Africa. These apprenticeships (promulgated on 1 January 1923 in the Apprenticeship Act of 1922) included "...bootmaking, building, clothing, carriage building, electrical engineering, food (baking, butchery and milling), furniture, leather-working, mechanical engineering, printing, motor, hairdressing and dental mechanics". (Van Reenen, *et al.*, 1935: 142).

Today, numerous learnerships have been registered with the Department of Labour in South Africa and continue to be registered as the need arises. The choices extend beyond manufacturing to include qualifications in other industries as well. Examples are learnerships in management, customer service, finances and administration to name a few. Both tangible and intangible (service) aspects of 'production' must face the role of technology and human involvement.

Up to now, this chapter has mainly dealt with the 'technical' aspects relating to the origin of learnerships. Work is discussed as a concept of activities and functions performed to achieve economic (self-sufficiency) and psychological (self-expression) objectives. It is the latter objectives that suggest that the individual constantly operates within a frame of reference of values, attitudes and resultant interaction between individuals and that it is these elements that determine his/her functionality within an environment. This next section continues to explore this angle of work (attitude, perception and commitment) and looks at the relationship between people's perception and work values in terms of a learnership.

2.6 HUMANS' PERCEPTION AND VALUES

Wiehahn (2000: 36) lists some perceptions/views on the virtues of work in Table 2.3 where a number of positive statements are made. These authors add far more value and it is this attitude that one would hope to see in every learner that is afforded the opportunity to improve his/her situation and to have pride in one's work.

Table 2.3: The Virtues of Work

Author	Quote
Cicero	There is nothing that brings so much happiness and pleasure than work well done.
Roosevelt	The best gift of life is the opportunity to work.
Tolstoi	The fortune of man is to be alive and be able to work.
Dickens	Work is the only formula for a nation's victory and survival.
Schwab	Work is the best investment that a nation can make.

Source: Wiehahn (2000:36).

The concept of the value of work has been widely researched confirming the actions of individuals in the workplace. Elizur (1996: 1) examined the relationship between work values and commitment and found that certain associations do exist with the strongest relationships between cognitive work values and commitment, (e.g. independence, job interest and use of abilities) including remuneration.

The concept of values has been extended from work/job values (also known as Corporate Functioning) to include personal and emotional values within an environment (refer paragraph 6.1.2) and, for this research, the entrepreneurial environment (refer paragraph 5.3).

2.6.1 Job Values

Inherent in the concept of the value of work are the values required for the job itself. In the entrepreneurial environment the job values (also referred to as organizational values or entrepreneurial values) are depicted in Figure 5.2. The method and process of determining the job values for an entrepreneur are discussed in detail in paragraph 5.10.

2.6.2 Personal Values

The concept of personal values is defined by Whitehouse (2002) as “...the holistic importance of personal likes and dislikes and personal beliefs between what is right or wrong” which makes up the preferences known as Personal Values within a specific environment.

Our values are the things we all fundamentally need to move towards, in an understanding of the congruent or personal wholeness in the unity of self, which comes from the sense that we are fulfilling our very values, by our present behaviour within a defined environment.

Our values govern our entire lifestyle. They also determine how we would respond to any given experience at any given time. When one understands one's true values, one will understand why individuals do certain things, and why people do not enjoy the same things.

This understanding and knowledge of personal values according to importance, combined with clearly defined environmental values is called *Value Intelligence* ©. “You are therefore controlled by your personal values which control your attitudes within self.” (Whitehouse, 2002).

Your personal values or Value Intelligence is also a registered trademark in the Functional Intelligence Assessment Tool. The individual is constantly in one or more environments on a daily basis of which the work environment takes up the majority of time. The other equally important environment is the home environment. The functionality of the individual in both these environments is critically important hence the quantification of the “...intensity of the effects of those personal values on an individual within that environment” (ibid.).

This quantification is called a Functional Intelligence Personal Profile which is a detailed individual report of each of the elements discussed in this section (refer Annexure K). This profile is defined by Whitehouse (2002) as “...a tool for the exact identification and quantification of core criteria effecting human functionality within a specific environment”. Should there be a conflict between the individual’s personal values and the job values then there is dysfunctionality and the individual becomes frustrated, stressed, angry and even depressed.

A person’s value system (classifying what is right or wrong, good or bad, likes and dislikes) not only governs their entire life but it also determines their reaction to any given experience. “Once an individual understands their personal values and their values are fulfilled through their behaviour and environment, they will lead a content lifestyle.” (ibid.). Should the respondents in the research phase prove to have their values aligned with that of an entrepreneur, there will be a number of potentially very successful New Venture Creation Learners that should be tracked/monitored between a year to five years after completion of the learnership to confirm their suitability as entrepreneurs.

The proposed tracking/monitoring process does not negate the validity or reliability of the research tool used, but rather confirms its findings. It also concludes an assessment as a completed case study with its initial motivated statements supported by quantifiable results in real life.

Being in the right environment with aligned personal values is conducive to a pleasant work environment that has its own virtues and has a positive impact on the individual as quoted in Table 2.3 earlier.

Guiding our decisions and behaviour are our perceptions and in its purest form, the word 'perception' is defined as "...the process, act, or faculty of perceiving" (Anonymous, (n.d.) ag). Paragraph 2.6.3 below describes how one's perceptions influence our Internal Interaction System (IIS) and our General Behavioral System (GBS).

2.6.3 Perceptions

The IIS (describing your inner feeling and perception of what you believe about yourself) is the quantification of the candidate's Internal Interaction System, in other words, the true inner picture or inner perception the candidate has of him/herself (refer Annexure K).

The General Behavioral System (GBS) gives sight of peoples' feelings and emotions. In other words it is how the candidate portrays him/herself – what one can see. This system is used when talking, interviewing or watching the candidate's behavior. Through comparisons, one can determine if the candidate is an extrovert or an introvert. The IIS and GBS are independent of each other and affect a person's functioning independently. The significant difference between the IIS and GBS systems is that most people seem to understand the GBS because it is the biggest diversion from the reality of truth (Whitehouse, 2002).

A practical example of the IIS and GBS systems would be:

Question: "How are you?"

Answer: "Fine, thank you." (Most likely)

In reality, this person is not fine (IIS) but he/she looks at face value (GBS) as if he/she is fine. Change the self perception by understanding that what your self perception is, is only a perception and not the reality.

Reference to the concept of work has thus far been of a singular nature – work and the worker, work and perceptions and worker and objectives. More often than not, single owner/ - employee businesses are seldom found. Two people however are known as a team/partnership while more than two move towards a more complex structure (hierarchy) comprising different people in terms of race, gender and abilities. This next section explores the composition and hierarchical structure of the workforce in terms of the role of its leaders as leaders and their approach towards staff which is similar to an employer/learner relationship.

People's perception and values of work therefore also apply to the way in which a learnership is approached and handled. Research highlighted a number of aspects that determine the value of work in a person's life such as race, gender, manual or non-manual labourer, qualification, education and income level (Anonymous, (n.d.) x).

Perception is therefore a critical element based on the six (separate) constructs used in the FIAT (refer Annexure K) which are the ones that people function from (areas):

- Positive Functioning - Indicates Inner Interactive System (Self Perception) - IIS
- Negative Functioning - Indicates General Behaviour System (Self-Portrayal System) - GBS
- Self Perceptions
- Relationships
- Personal Values
- Emotional Values

These areas and their defined (Thesaurus) meanings are described below.

2.6.3.1 The Positive Functioning areas

- Achievement (IIS and GBS) is accomplishment, success, realization.
- Satisfaction (IIS and GBS) is contentment, fulfillment and approval.
- Expectations (IIS and GBS) are the outlook (positive orientation), potential, hope and opportunity of the individual towards his/her future involving

emotional experience and cognitive appraisal of one's life from an optimistic point of view.

2.6.3.2 The Negative Functioning areas

- Frustration (IIS and GBS) is aggravation, irritation, disturbance, annoyance, disappointment, dissatisfaction.
- Stress (IIS and GBS) is pressure, strain, anxiety, tension.
- Helplessness (IIS and GBS) is defenselessness, exposure, vulnerability.

2.6.3.3 The Self Perception areas

- Inner Insecurity - state of not being secure; experiencing fear or anxiety
- Guilt Feelings – conscious of guilt; state of having done wrong
- Lack of Self Worth – lack of quality which renders a thing valuable; perception of the individual that he/she is unimportant and does not mean anything to others; is not special and does not deserve to be handled with respect.

Your emotions (your reaction to a situation) are directly related to your environment (Whitehouse, 2002).

2.6.3.4 The Emotional Functioning areas

- Dependency (addiction, reliance)
- Disturbing Thoughts
- Memory Loss
- Paranoia (fear, suspicion, mistrust, people talking behind your back)
- Anxiety (nervousness, concern, apprehension)
- Senselessness of Existence

2.6.3.5 The Relationship areas

- Colleagues
- Partner
- General

2.6.3.6 The Corporate Functioning areas

- Job Satisfaction
- Job Security
- Equality
- Effectiveness of Supervisor.
- Supervisor's Leadership Ability (Staff Perception)
- Supervisor's Communication Skills (Staff Perception)
- Supervisor's Communication Skills

Some of the abovementioned areas were grouped together in logical groups for purposes of analysis and reporting (refer Annexure K, Figure A1.12). In staying with human behavior, paragraph 2.7 below is an overview of the origin of Functional Intelligence that forms the basis of the research tool used.

2.7 FUNCTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Functional Intelligence is the occupation in which ecometrics is used to quantify the criteria of human behaviour in a given environment (Whitehouse, 2002). The building blocks of the Functional Intelligence Assessment Tool have been ecology and ecometrics. The first is the study of the behaviour and functioning of organisms in their environment while the latter is where the measurement of human functioning in the environment is quantified (Whitehouse, 2002).

Research in the fields of ecology and ecometrics was originated in 1960 by its founder member van Zyl. In its 45 year history a number of other leaders in this field contributed greatly to the development thereof (Faul, Horne, Hudson and many others (ibid.)).

In determining the Functional Intelligence of individuals – in this case, the potential entrepreneurs training on the New Venture Creation Learnership – one would be able to firstly determine if they would be able to fulfill their inner potential. Should this be the case, these individuals would be very efficient and effective in the entrepreneurial environment (ibid.).

The Functional Intelligence Assessment Tool is unique in the sense that it scientifically measures the influence of the environment on the individual and the individual's response to that environment (ibid.). The outcome determines whether an individual is suited for that environment. Alternatively phrased, an individual can be matched to a particular environment which is conducive to reaching his/her inner potential (ibid.).

While psychological analysis can test various skills/proficiencies, it can never test the functionality of the congruent, holistic man within a specific environment. The core criterion in measuring any human functioning is environment. By excluding the environment in any quantification or measurement of human functioning, the information becomes non-effective (ibid.).

The impact and effect of the functionality of individuals become a reality when one moves to a team/group/workforce situation. The next few paragraphs will attempt to discuss a number of factors that have an impact on the composition and hierarchical structure of the workforce.

2.8 COMPOSITION AND HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE OF THE WORKFORCE

The most appropriate definition of a workforce, being a collective term, is found to be a collective term for employees, volunteers, trainees, and other persons under the direct control of a covered entity, whether or not they are paid by the covered entity (Anonymous, (n.d.) ae).

2.8.1 Composition

The multi-cultural demographic composition of the South African population is referred to as the 'Rainbow Nation' – a term coined around about the 1994 elections and subsequent changes in government. According to the Department of Labour ((n.d.) i), the composition of the workforce during 1970 -1995 was dominated by white males while blacks were employed in the unskilled occupations. This situation has indeed remained unchanged as indicated by Van Reenen (*et al.*, 1935: 12) when a comparison was made between Europeans (whites) and Non-Europeans (Blacks, Indians, Coloureds) for the period 1904 to 1931.

This was due partially to the fact that whites tried to minimize any 'threat' from any source. An example of this is cited in the report by Botha, Calder, Fichardt, Bosman, Slabbert, Smuts, Van den Berg and Windsor, (1951: 163 paragraphs 1122 & 1123) in which the white people expressed the fear of being overwhelmed by the people of other races. Their particular concern was equal opportunities to acquire skills which lessened their chances of being gainfully employed. Acquiring skills was therefore reserved mainly for whites until the elections in 1994.

Since the 1995 elections, however, huge inroads have been made to show a more representative workforce by means of the Human Development Strategy and Skills Development Strategy. The latest Labour Force Survey of March 2004 shows that employment in the formal sector for Africans at 64.6% was the lowest compared to the Coloureds (85.6%), Indian/Asian, (93.8%) and Whites (94.4%) (Anonymous, (n.d.) l).

In terms of the functionality of the individual, Cultural Prejudice is the (personal) value that is compared to the job/organizational/corporate value (refer Annexure L; Figures A2.5 and A2.6). In terms of gender, the formal sector accounted for the largest share of total employment among both men (80, 4%) and women (63, 7%) of which 18.6% is made up of men in the informal sector and 17.5% of women. Overall, 8, 5% of the employed population are domestic workers of which 18.6% is unemployed women. This is much bigger than the 0.6% employed men (Anonymous (n.d.) l). In terms of age, as a demographic factor, it is of central importance in the skills development strategy with a preference existing to train younger people (refer Table 3.1; paragraphs 6.3.2; 4.3.6.2 and 5.6.5).

The workforce makes up a country's population which, as the source of labour, does change over time. Modern medicine ensures increased life expectancy which in turn has an impact on the supply of labour particularly when people choose to work longer. The biggest impact on a change in population for South Africa is the incidence of HIV/AIDS which numerous reports and research reports have documented. One such research report is the Human Development Report which looks at the challenge of sustainable development in South Africa (Anonymous, (n.d.) k).

This report confirms previous studies' findings that HIV/AIDS contributes to a rise in poverty and further generates new poverty due to a loss of employment (ibid). The alarming fact is that HIV/AIDS has a high incidence amongst the youth which is the future supply of the labour market. It has the double impact of killing the youth (especially young parents) then leaving the older person who is becoming less productive with age, to remain economically active and care for a family.

The HIV/Aids aspect is further discussed in paragraphs 6.2.1, 6.2.3, Table 6.3 and paragraph 6.2.6.

2.8.2 Hierarchical structure

The continuance of the traditional hierarchical structure in view of increased competition is questionable since the emergence of new technologies imply that companies need to be a lot more flexible, to compete on quality, customization and innovation more so than on cost (Anonymous, (n.d.) h: 13) This has an impact on the workforce which requires a huge emphasis on the skills, knowledge and problem solving capabilities with a high degree of substantial delegation. This implies moving away from the vertical division of labour, thereby reducing the reliance on multiple layers of management and supervisors (ibid).

The New Venture Creation focuses particularly on generating entrepreneurs who can operate a business using a 'flat management structure' as one of the criteria for surviving past the 'critical period' for small and medium enterprises.

Entrepreneurs are also considered leaders who must take responsibility in leading their company/enterprise (no matter how small) while co-coordinating the activities of their employees/subordinates in order to achieve the company's objectives (Hellriegel and Slocum, 1989: 15). Leadership qualities and its concomitant combinations are also detailed in the individual assessments in Annexure K to AC.

2.8.3 Leadership roles

Leadership Ability is a construct that is assessed under the Corporate Functioning areas (refer paragraphs 2.6.2.5 and 6.4.1) for the respondents' supervisors and the

ability of the respondent himself. It deals with the requirements to be an effective leader (leadership qualities) and which of the constructs within the leadership matrix can/cannot be trained while the constructs that relate to leadership ability (leadership combinations) are the Communication Skills, Listening Skills and Positive Attitude while the constructs that relate to competence are Initiative, Problem Solving Ability, Commitment, Passion and Focus. For the Responsibility construct, the Self Discipline and Reliability constructs were grouped together. The issue of leadership and entrepreneurship is also further dealt with in Chapter 4 and candidates were also assessed for leadership qualities (refer Annexure K).

2.8.4 Fair treatment

Fair treatment of a workforce has always been a contentious issue – one that has resulted in extensive labour laws and the institution of labour unions as legislated with the passing of the Factories Act and the Regulation of Wages, Apprentices and Improvers Act in 1918 (refer Paragraph 1.1) Van Reenen, *et al.*, (1935: 11). Regulation of an industry has as its main objective the rules of conduct of business towards the state and towards their employees/workers. Numerous acts were passed since then (such as the Apprenticeship Act, 1922; the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1924; the Wage Act, 1925) of which the most recent are the Basic Employment Equity Act, 1977 and the original Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995). The latter act has had a number of amendments since 1995 (the Labour Relations Amendment Act (Act 42 of 1996), the Labour Relations Amendment Act (Act 127 of 1998), the Labour Relations Amendment Bill, 2000, the Labour Relations Amendment Bill, 2000 and Explanatory Memorandum - 26 July and the Labour Relations Amendment Act 2002) which proves how legislation had to be adapted to include changes in the labour market (Department of Labour, (nd.) j).

The construct 'Equality' means fair treatment and in the context of this research, respondents rated the treatment they received from their supervisor (refer paragraph 2.6.2.6).

2.8.5 The worker and employment

A worker is defined as an “...employee, an unemployed person or someone who is looking for work” according to the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 (Department of Labour, (n.d.) c: 58). The definition of ‘employee’ and ‘worker’ are used intermittently when searching the Thesaurus of Microsoft Word. The general perception of an employee is a person who is in the employ of someone and is earning an income.

In the eyes of the Skills Development Act No 97 of 1998, a worker is classified to include an “...employee, an unemployed person and a work-seeker” (Department of Labour, (n.d.) c). This classification makes absolute sense as the Thesaurus describes an unemployed person as “...without a job, jobless, out of work, unwaged, laid off, made redundant, on unemployment or idle”. It is clear that being unemployed does not imply being without skill or qualification. The same applies to someone who is looking for work. One can’t help but notice that the Skills Development Act is sensitive to ‘discriminating’ against anyone, hence the ‘broad’ description of a worker.

Although resistance with regard to discrimination in terms of age appears to have been clarified (refer Table 2.2), preference towards the youth is evident in strategic objective number six of the Skills Development Strategy (SDS) (refer Table 3.1).

Du Toit (2003:5) identifies reasons why unemployment is higher for youths than for adults. She states that lack of demand is the major cause for unemployment in adults while aggregate demand, youth wages, size of the youth labour force and lack of skills are the main determinants of youth unemployment. Two other definitions by Du Toit (2003: 6) of unemployment are that of “...an individual who must have taken steps to find employment for four weeks prior to a given point” (expanded definition) or it is “...the discouraged (despairing) individuals who have not taken steps to find work”. This ‘expanded’ definition is also referred to in literature as a ‘broad’ or ‘extended’ definition which includes the non-searching unemployed (Dias, 2002: 2). The narrow definition of unemployment according to the Trade and Industry Monitor is an individual who “...did not work in the last seven days but actively looked for work” (Anonymous, (2000:3) ab).

In the context of the focus of this study, the temptation to search for the term 'self-employed' could not be resisted and the Thesaurus yielded terms such as 'freelance', 'temporary', 'irregular', 'casual', 'ad hoc' and even included the term 'permanent'. A further search on 'freelance' revealed the same terms as 'self-employed'. Should one look at the definition of self-employment, particularly in the literature on SMEs, one can deduce that the descriptions for self-employed implies ownership. It is not a direct description however as SMEs are recognized as being able to create employment (Anonymous, (n.d.) u; Ylinenpää & Havenga, 1997). This is certainly the case for many white males who are edged into early retirement because of having become 'redundant' due to restructuring.

Distinction for self-employed individuals is made by highlighting those who became self-employed by choice and those who are pushed into self-employment (Anonymous, (n.d.) i: 11). In the context of the Skills Development Strategy, a worker can also be a learner, being a person "...who is gaining skills and knowledge according to a programme" (Department of Labour, (n.d.) c: 52).

Note the inclusion of skills in addition to knowledge. Skills refer to the ability to do something/perform certain functions. Learners are therefore assessed in what they can do (practical) as well as what they know (theory) (Department of Labour, (n.d.) c: 52). Outcomes - based education and training allows each learner to accomplish knowledge and skills as well as mastering processes necessary to accept the challenges and opportunities of the world of the future, and is based on the demonstration of outcomes.

Outcomes based learning refers to the "...end result of learning that can be assessed, and always results in a product, service or decision" (Anonymous, (n.d.) ad). There are three types on contexts in which an 'outcome' is applied. Firstly, the educational context, which can be an assignment on a particular area of the production process. Secondly, in a service context, that is to write a report on the impact of a piece of production equipment breaking down which should include a recommendation on the replacement of a piece of production equipment; and thirdly, in a training context meaning a manufactured article. A service may be the replacement of a component in a piece of production equipment and a decision may be advice on how to replace the production equipment to achieve optimum production (Anonymous, (n.d.) ah).

2.8.6 Male/female

The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) and the Equity Act are quite clear when it comes to race and gender. It states that equal chances must be given to "...black and white people, women and men, people with and without disabilities" (Department of Labour, (n.d.). c: 50). Black people are categorised as "...people who were classified as African, Indian or Coloured under apartheid" (Department of Labour, (n.d.) c: 49). The traditional role of the male originally was reflected in working activities such as hunting, fishing, herding and trading (Du Toit, 2003: 1). The females were the support at home and tended to the needs of the family. Evidence, however, suggests that females also performed the 'non-traditional' jobs simply because there was no one else to do them (ibid.).

Moving on to the second part of this chapter where the emphasis is on the fact that remuneration is the reward (or at least part of the reward) for work done, the extent of the remuneration is determined by the effort and resultant outcome of work done.

2.9 WORK AND PERFORMANCE

Authors Shaw and Peel (2004: 2) confirm the importance of a balanced structured performance measurement system (PMS) and refer extensively to publications by authors such as Kaplan and Norton, 1992, Medori and Steeple, 2000 and Neely, *et al.*, 2000 that have contributed to an already well-researched area.

The significance of individual performance is important in identifying specific areas which need to be improved in order to improve performance (output). It also assists in controlling the individual and his/her behaviour and actions to reach a desired outcome. When one thinks about performance, terms such as measurement, monitoring, moderation and assessment come to mind. The common thread of all these terms is the fact that effort has been put in where after a certain output is produced which is then evaluated. Outputs are for example, profit which is influenced by other 'input' variables ("set up time" or "down time") and its measures for these might be "hours spent setting up" and "hours machine unavailable" (Tan, Platts and Noble, 2004: 235).

Evaluation/assessment is usually done *after* a piece of work in increments during a specified/pre-specified period. This method evaluation/assessment is considered best as mistakes and/or problems can be sorted out timeously. More valuable is the feedback the employee gets with regards to the progress towards the achievement of the individual objectives and where performance is not up to standard or sluggish, appropriate corrective actions are defined by the employee in conjunction with management (De Waal, 2002: 16).

To be able to make a decision on success/failure (or alternatively achievement/non-achievement) of objectives, one has to determine what these objectives are. De Waal (2002:16) looks at assessments in terms of functional objectives being the requirements that an organization places on a certain position to add value to the organization. The functional objectives are translated into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and similar to the learnership, competencies are identified for every functional objective which the individual needs in order to achieve that objective successfully (ibid.). Being certified competent or having been successful at achieving one's KPIs is the point at which both the company and individual would like to arrive. It is also true for a learnership where competencies are expressed in terms of the knowledge and skills a person has.

In a learnership, an assessment (evaluation) is necessary to determine the quality of work and is indicative of the standard required. During the learnership, the coach performs an informal evaluation as part of the coaching process, however, this is followed by a formal assessment by a trained assessor which is defined as "...measuring and judging a learner's performance" (Department of Labour, (n.d.). c: 49).

"At the end of the Learnership, Learners have the opportunity of being assessed and certificated as competent at a level comparable with people working on a full-time and permanent basis in an Industry" (Anonymous, (n.d.) y). The end of a learning programme is formally referred to as the 'Exit' point at which a person can be tested to see if they have the skills and knowledge for a qualification (Department of Labour, (n.d.). c: 51). The learner is then tested on 'exit level outcomes' which is "...what a learner must know and be able to do to get a qualification" (ibid.).

The skills development literature is very clear on the development, standard and understanding of a unit standard as this is what is being measured/tested (Anonymous, (n.d.) d). Thus the evaluation is done on a continuous basis with intermittent checking by a moderator to ensure a fair, valid and reliable assessment of the outcomes described in the National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications (Anonymous, (n.d.) b). Learners know exactly what and how much they have to learn, when they are being tested and assessed and who their moderator is. They also know what the outcomes are. The degree of involvement for the learner is therefore:

- coaching during learning by a qualified Coach.
- assessment by a qualified Assessor.
- moderation by a qualified Moderator.

2.10 WORK AND REMUNERATION

Payment for work in today's terms is also contractually recorded in work contracts including the learnership contract. It refers to the allowance of the learner, the calculation of the remuneration and allowances, how and when payment is to be made as well as deductions (Department of Labour, (n.d.) i: 18, 19). Currently (1 July 2004), the Department of Labour has stipulated that a minimum amount of R240 per week (also referred to as a stipend) should be paid to a learner. This amount is only a guideline indicating the minimum. The Services SETA however, prefers a sliding scale starting at a R1000 per month which increases incrementally to R2000 as the learner successfully completes the unit standards (Pillay, 2003). The remainder of the learnership funding is aimed at covering the training expenses of the learnership. Bloementhal (2004), CEO of the Services SETA aptly points out that "...reward structures have moved from 'payment for time' to 'payment for skilled contribution'.

Remuneration is also only applicable for the period of employment, or in this case, the learnership. Another aspect is the period for which the learner is 'employed'. Both these aspects, along with a number of others (such as fair treatment (paragraph 2.8.4), the worker and employment (paragraph 2.8.5) and equality (Annexure K to AC) mentioned earlier confirm its comprehensive legislative representation. The

same applies to the rights and responsibilities of the employer (which can eventually be the entrepreneur) and learner in relation to each other as described in terms of the learnership agreement (below).

2.11 LEARNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The learnership contracts are legislated by the Skills Development Act no 97 of 1998, indicating that the employer is under no obligation to provide employment for a learner or fill a vacancy in the organisation (Anonymous (n.d.) p). The learner is only in the employ of the company for the duration of the learnership contract. This ruling entices the employers to participate in the learnership process, which helps them to get to know the learner better and experience his/her capabilities. It also gives a good indication of the attitude and personality of the learner, which often comes into play when interactions between colleagues and customers become strained.

The purpose of a learnership agreement therefore is a "...legally binding description on the rights and responsibilities of each party in relation to other parties with the aim of ensuring quality and maintaining appropriate labour relations" (Anonymous, (n.d.) p). The issues addressed in the agreement are:

- rights and obligations of learnership parties (learner, employer, registered training provider and SETA).
- entry requirements (age, educational, physical and mental requirements).
- registration office (place and period of learnership are registered at relevant SETA).
- period and terms of termination of the agreement (including variations clearly stated).
- provision for school going learners to enter the learnership system.
- parents of learners younger than 15 years to sign on behalf of the child.

Attention was paid to different concepts that in one way or the other address or contribute to elucidating the question of the origin of, or current status of learnerships.

The last part of this chapter is an apt analysis of a number of areas considered to encapsulate the essence of a learnership.

2.12 THE LEARNERSHIP AS A PARTNERSHIP

A learnership is a partnership between the learner, the employer and the SETA. Employees in the private sector, the SETAs and educational institutions need to participate in the learnership process (Abedian, Brown, Lombard and Nicol, (2004: 10, 14).

Even international partnerships (financial or otherwise) were considered critical in the development of the skills development strategy. Bird (1998:1) suggests moving away from the old 'parent-child' relationship to a "...worker employability in the 'partnership' relationship where employers provide employees with opportunities for career and skill development, and employees take advantage of the opportunities they are given to enhance their skills, marketability, and potential for continued employment" (Brown, 1997: 1).

The participation of the learner in this partnership is just as important. The learner must be willing to be trained while the employer must be willing to take on a learner. It is important to note that the willingness of both learner and employer will also only be functional if their values are aligned as described in paragraph 2.6.1. This 'partnership' is then formalized by means of a legal contract with the learner, employer and the SETA as parties to the contract. This relationship is neatly contained in the definition of a learnership which is a "...contract between a learner, employer and a training provider for a specified period leading to acquisition of National Qualifications and/or credits towards National Qualifications" (Anonymous, (n.d.) e). Figure 2.1 depicts this relationship.

2.12.1 Criticism and participation

Criticism (with regard to the promotion and implementation of learnerships) such as a lack of commitment, infrastructure and organization has been leveled against the educational sector, the SETAs as well as their accreditation structures. The approach

of these role players should show a higher level of efficiency and application to what has been shown up to now. Abedian, *et al.*, (2004:10) refers to this lack of commitment and participation as lip-service with a negligible scale of delivery. It will be interesting to note if, and by what margin, the original objective of 80 000 learnerships by 2005 (refer Table 3.1) is achieved.

To help speed up the process, Nedlac's task (National Economic Development and Labour Council) came to the rescue with the process of agreements reached at the Growth and Development Summit in 2003 (van Gass, 2003).

Another level of 'criticism' if one can call it that, is the pressure the SETAs have been under to achieve their targets, resulting in an unintegrated and uncoordinated approach to selection of learners and possible lack of evaluation tools for the suitability of learners to a learnership (refer paragraph 3.4.2).

2.12.2 The learner defined

The definitions of a learner (or apprentice for that matter) refer to the individual who performs the acts of acquiring knowledge, experience or exposure to an occupation/vocation in order to at a minimum, sustain oneself to earn a living. The department of labour defines a learner as "...any person receiving education and training (in terms of the ABET Act of 2000)" (Department of Labour, (n.d.) I).

2.12.3 What is a learnership?

A learnership is composed of both structured learning and structured work experience, designed to complement each other in an integrated structure. Du Pre (n.d.) refers to it as 'cooperative education' which "...allows students to benefit from both formal education and training along with first-hand work experience in the marketplace".

It is critical that in every learnership, theory and practice are combined – that there are practical applications within the structured learning as well as theoretical reflections within work experience. It is not simply a matter of timing the theoretical curriculum of structured learning to match the practical applications in the workplace.

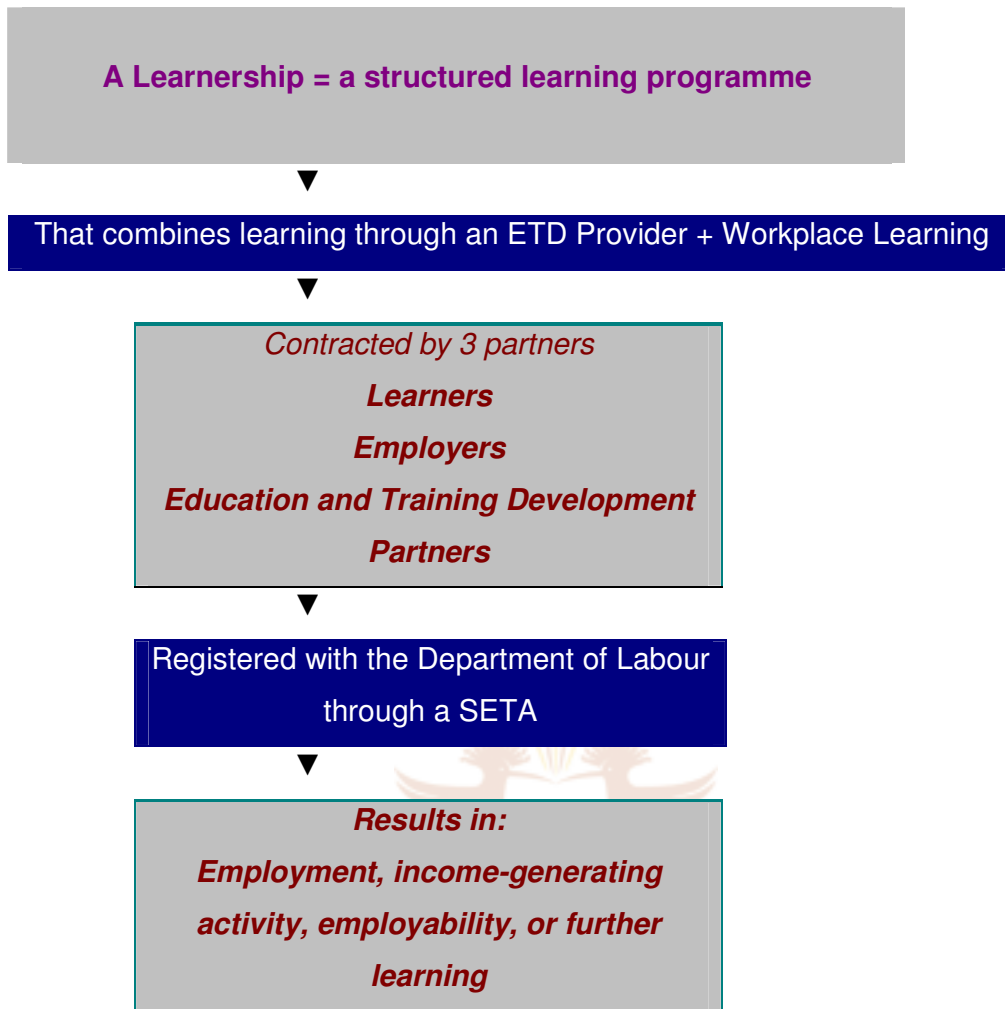
Each must take place within the other. It should therefore be inconceivable to have a learnership planned in which the provision of work experience has not been secured.

The definition of a learnership used by the Services SETA indicates that it is “...designed by an Industry, to satisfy the needs identified by both Employers and Labour representatives in that industry to fill either ‘real’ or ‘probable’ gaps in labour supply within the industry” (Anonymous, (n.d.) y). Real needs are the shortage of trained and skilled staff in existing job categories while probable needs refer to skilled staff requirements that will become important in the future as a result of businesses expanding or operating methods changing (ibid).

Having a clear concept of what a learnership is only provides part of the picture. A learnership has to be designed following a pre-described process. Team effort is paramount and a number of milestones need to be achieved before a learnership is officially recognised by government.

The New Venture Creation Learnership on which this research is based has been through all these phases and its recognition is confirmed by its official registration number (SAQA Qualification ID 23953; Standard Generating Body – Generic Management; National Standards Body 03 – Business, Commerce and Management studies: refer 11.3.3 of this chapter) as allocated by the South African Qualifications Authority SAQA (Anonymous, (n.d.) ac).

Figure 2.1: Steps in the learnership process



Source: Anonymous, (n.d.) e.

2.12.4 Stages in designing a learnership

The first step is to scan the labour market to identify areas of skill shortage or opportunity. This is followed by designing the occupation and skill areas that must be covered in a learnership. Thirdly, a skills profile is developed where after the outcomes and stages of the learnership are identified. The next step is to liaise with a Standard Generating Body (SGB) or if there is no SGB, to create one. Work is then carried out on the unit standards and qualification. At this point the learning material is developed.

Assessment arrangements are designed and lastly, the evaluation and registration according to Skills Development Act no 97 of 1998 and learnership regulations complete the process. These steps are illustrated in Figure 2.2 showing all the role players and stages as well as the contents, specific requirements and measurement items of a learnership. The Department of Labour (DoL) will conduct pre- and post-implementation evaluations on a periodic basis (Anonymous, (n.d.) p).

2.12.5 Principles of designing a learnership

The design of a learnership should meet the challenges posed by the labour market, that is, productivity, employability and innovation. To establish whether this is the case, a number of principles should be adhered to (Anonymous, (n.d.) d). They are:

2.12.5.1 Co-operation and partnerships

“The design and implementation of learnerships should involve co-operation and partnerships between employers, education and training providers and the state” (Anonymous, (n.d.) d). This is becoming evident when Wawa Damane, Chief Director of the Enterprise Development Unit of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) pointed out the need for solid partnerships to strengthen the relationships between the government and the private sector and “...to have greater co-ordination with the business chamber” Daniels (2004:23).

2.12.5.2 Demand led

“Learnerships must be responsive to a demonstrable social or economic need”(Anonymous, (n.d.) d). Extensive desk research shows that job creation and economic growth to a level of global competitiveness stems largely from the SME sector (Lloyd, 2002:2).

According to the Chief Director of the Enterprise Development Unit of the DTI, Wawa Damane, however, it was an expectation that was not met (Daniels, 2004:23) due to the following reasons:

- Lack of a policy framework to meet the needs of SMEs in particular
- Supply-driven institutions that overwhelmed SMEs
- Constraint access to finance
- Globalisation impacted the emerging SME market

There is one source however that makes the distinction that job creation by the SME sector is mainly absorption of “...those who have lost jobs in the large enterprise sector” (Anonymous, (n.d.) w). This does not seem to be a factor if one studies the literature from the Department of Labour.

This is what the New Venture Creation Learnership however, intends to do – firstly to meet the need for job creation by training individuals to become business owners who can employ staff, thereby making a lot of individuals economically active. Secondly, to help individuals to maintain and increase economic activity signaling the confirmation of the successful acquiring of knowledge and skills, namely sustainability.



2.12.5.3 Diversification

Learnerships should be offered in a much wider range of occupations than the traditional blue-collar trades (the focus of the apprenticeship system) and provided across a broad range of educational levels, from schooling through further education and to higher education levels. Du Pre (n.d.) provides a good review of the problems facing education in South Africa of which one is to bridge the gaps existing between higher education and tertiary education.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is one example where the government has already made inroads into providing training in the field of entrepreneurship, particularly for women and the youth by working with universities on an “Entrepreneurial Chair which is designed to assist students to learn a combination of technical and business skills” (Daniels, 2004:23). Another example is the “...urgent inclusion of entrepreneurship in the curriculum” which in turn implicates a close working relationship between the Department of Labour, the Department of Education and the Department of Trade and Industry - DTI (ibid).

Many other examples of this type of training are offered by a number of institutions already. It indicates a new 'buzz' around the development and growth of SME and its environment.

2.12.5.4 Variety of employment contexts

Learnerships should include a variety of employment contexts to firstly provide opportunities for a learner to acquire a broader spectrum of structured work experience. Secondly, it allows employers to participate who would otherwise not be able to, as they are unable to offer the full spectrum of experience required for an occupation (Anonymous, (n.d.) d). This confirms the portability of a learnership.

2.12.5.5 Integrated and planned structure

The two components of learnerships – structured workplace learning and structured learning – should be integrally connected as well as contextualised within a work environment. This means that learnerships should be conceptualised comprehensively when structuring the learning programme.

Both structured learning and structured work experience should attempt to create the following conditions:

- a progression from simple to increasingly complex tasks.
- an initial provision of “scaffolding” of support – the hand on the saddle of the bicycle. This could include, e.g. providing assistance or including examples of completed difficult components to help develop a sense of the final skill.
- increasing responsibility and independence. Brown (1997: 2) refers to the elimination of ‘co-dependant behavior’, becoming ‘self-reliant’ and being ‘career resilient’ creating their own employment security instead of relying on the state or other individuals/companies.
- opportunities to see the broader, more generalised view.

- counteracting the increasing specialisation of enterprises by including experience of similar enterprises as well as a sense of the customers and the clients.
- an underpinning of generic abilities, e.g. goal setting, planning, management, review and reflection, self diagnosis, learning strategies, financial management.

Structured workplace learning is the basis on which learning about an occupation is premised. It structures the skills, knowledge, appropriate general education, and values around that particular occupation. While this kind of learning depends on a combination of instructional tools, mentoring also plays a significant role (Anonymous, (n.d.) d).

Mentoring and giving assistance in the workplace requires mentors/trainers with specialised skills. The learner requires monitoring and assistance, which is intensive at first and gradually “fades” as s/he becomes more independent and responsible (Anonymous, (n.d.) e). Structured learning should go beyond mere content or “trade theory” and look to:



- providing support and mediation between the world of experience and the body of knowledge.
- encouraging learning that is both inductive as well as deductive.
- developing generic abilities, e.g. the critical cross-field outcomes.

Mentors provide counseling and support for conflicts between the learner and work. The mentors act as “...sounding boards for learners when they feel adrift and uncertain with the content of the course” while the coaches “...are there to lend an ear and a shoulder from a psycho-social side”. Should learners have a problem, it can be diagnosed early on to minimize the problem or its impact (Anonymous, (n.d) n).

It is very important that outcomes are clearly stated, including the standards, which shows what must be achieved and how this is to be done. In other words, it must be made clear in advance which standards will be provided through structured learning, which through structured work experience and which will be provided through both. There should always be a schedule outlining the proposed learning programme beforehand.

2.12.5.6 Increased participation of individuals in learnerships

Learnerships should promote increased participation of individuals in accredited vocational education and training by opening access to a range of learning programmes and by demonstrating a real link to employment or self-employment after qualification (Anonymous, (n.d.) d).

A research project of the Research Niche Area (RNA) - Skills Development for Economic Competitiveness of the Centre for Skills Development and Technology Transfer which forms part of the Durban Institute of Technology, quote the findings of the Workforce Development in which three 'types' of barriers affecting the participation of employees and which also have an impact/effect on the employer, are listed.

- Physical barriers, including financial constraints (difficulties learners experience in paying fees) and time constraints (learners being too busy with family responsibilities).
- Structural barriers, such as a lack of learning opportunities and lack of available work-related training.
- Attitudinal barriers, such as a lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and negative attitudes to education and training, peer group culture and perceptions that no tangible benefits from training will accrue (Anonymous, (n.d) g, r).

While the first two types of barriers have been noted in the work environment, is it the first one and the last one that relate to the focus of this study in terms of the functionality of the learner (refer paragraph 2.6).

2.12.5.7 Integration of education and training with workplace experience

Integration and access to workplace training are interlinked as both have to be present to ensure a successful learnership. Access to workplace training was initially recognised in the Green Paper of skills development (Anonymous, (n.d.) i). “The design of a learnership should combine relevant education and training with workplace experience in ways that optimize learning and assessment” (Anonymous, (n.d.) d).

Not only does this allow for both practical and theoretical components to operate together, but it also allows the learner to “...interact within the working environment” and with clients to obtain an “...understanding of workplace dynamics” (Anonymous, (n.d.) aaf).

2.12.5.8 Lifelong learning

According to the SETA, learnerships should equip learners to continue to learn independently. Another term for lifelong learning refers to learnerships being *future-oriented* – they “...prepare learners not only for current work but also for lifelong learning by including abilities and skills which are important in the future of any occupation” (Anonymous, (n.d.) z).

2.12.5.9 Quality

Learning programmes must be of a high standard and be continuously improved and updated. Global competitiveness for example implies meeting standards that are high and continuously changing. Quality and lifelong learning go hand in hand when it comes to the relevance of the content (Anonymous, (n.d.) d)

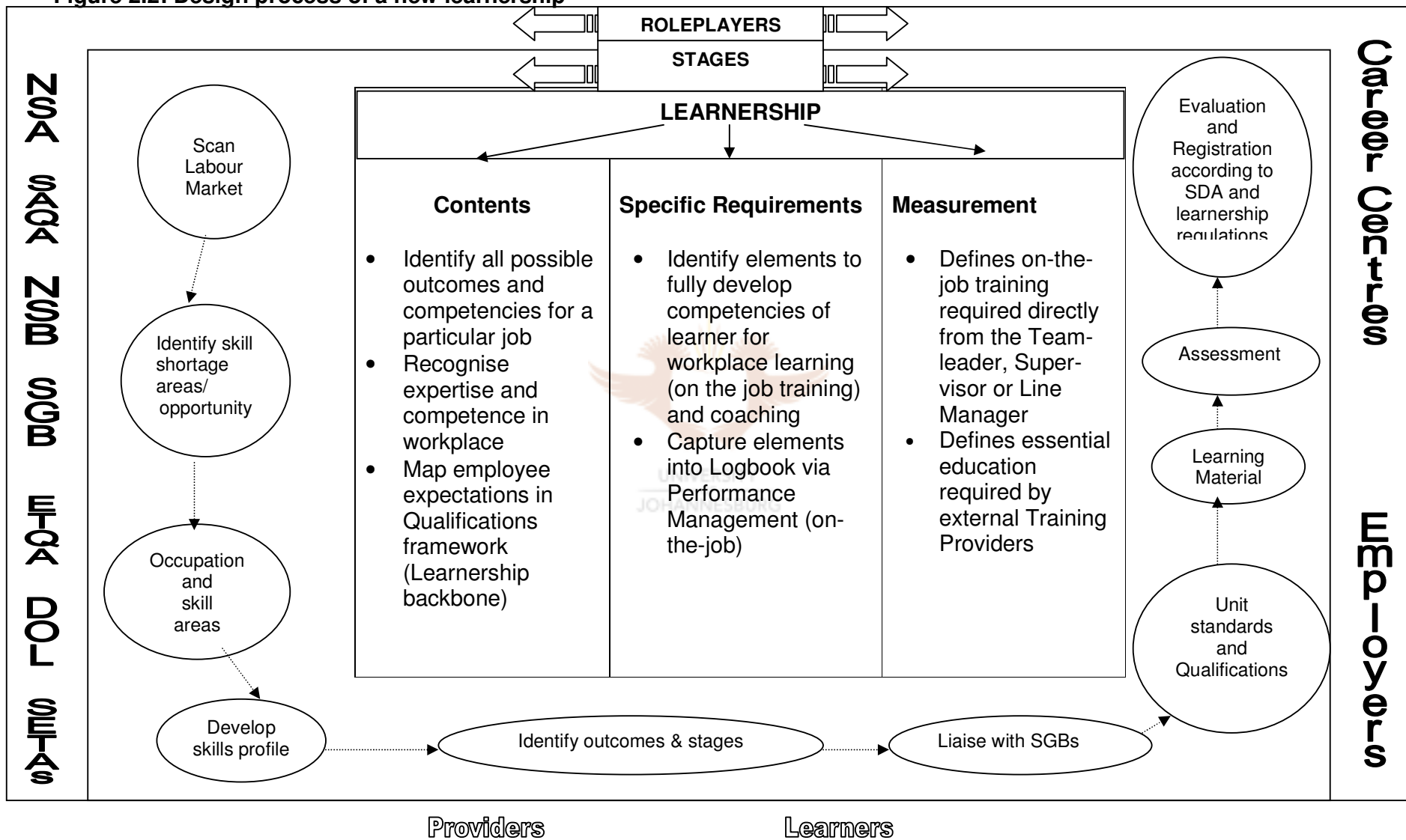
2.12.5.10 Efficiency and sustainability

Learning programmes must be cost-effective and sustainable (Anonymous, (n.d.) d). This has a direct bearing on the cost the employer does not have to carry as it forms part of the learnership grant which is collected from the Skills Development Levy (refer paragraph 3.4.1.1). Learning programmes should also be adopted to suit the changing needs of business, the market and the environment.

The partnership concept can also only work if all the elements discussed under paragraph 2 are present and functioning optimally as intended (refer paragraph 3.3.3).



Figure 2.2: Design process of a new learnership




Source: Adapted from Anonymous (n.d.) a; Department of Labour (n.d.) k, m, t.

2.13 TRANSFORMATION TO EMPOWERMENT USING LEARNERSHIPS

The New Venture Creation learnerships intend to 'create' new entrepreneurs who will be empowered to own their own businesses, hence the reference in the heading which indicates a transformation from employee to employer/owner. What should be clear is that transformation is used in the context of moving or changing an individual from the status of employer to employee or alternatively, from learner to employer. It therefore implies a transformation in the education system as tested by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) through its National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Impact study (Anonymous, (n.d.) aj).

In terms of empowerment, the focus is also on creating initiatives with both local and national SME support structures as part of the introduction to networking. Networking means making available a critical mass of skills and networks to facilitate the support of a range of surrounding SME empowerment initiatives.

2.14 SUMMARY



This chapter provided information on the history and origin of the concept of learnerships and subsequently contrasts it with the preceding apprenticeship system which is still in existence today. Both concepts has the aim that the individual can be employed once the apprenticeship/learnership has been completed. There is therefore a strong link to employment/work hence the funnel approach where the underlying concepts of the origin of the human being and work were discussed. Further detail was given to the role that automation played in relation to humans and their work. Apprenticeships therefore still have a role to play as humans cannot be replaced totally especially in the trades where apprenticeships are applicable.

As individuals we have values – for our jobs as well as personal values. The values of the job and its positive alignment to the personal values of the individual forms a critical part of this study as it will ultimately determine the functionality of that individual within that environment.

A detailed discussion elaborated on how our job and personal values influence our perceptions of what we believe about ourselves. Perceptions therefore pave the way for the six separate constructs on which the FIAT is based. These constructs are the basis of the FIAT to determine suitability of the individual to the entrepreneurial environment.

The related aspects of work (authority, structure, gender, performance and remuneration) which occur in the analysis of the individual assessments formed the next major section of this study.

Defining the terms of a learner and learnership leads the reader into the stages and principles of the design of a learnership. It is necessary to understand enough of the background of a learnership as it seems to be a relatively poorly understood concept.

Chapter 3 continues with a detailed overview of how the Human Resources Development (HRD) Strategy works and came about. The fact that the South African government qualified their HRD Strategy by stating that knowledge and skills as well as the opportunities in which to apply acquired knowledge and skills (refer paragraph 3.2.3) should be a focus point, also applies to and has been a problem for (potential) entrepreneurs.

Various other aspects also have a direct impact and influence on entrepreneurs such as the demand for skills. Certain skills are in demand and those that are not are dealt with by means of retrenchment creating further need for entrepreneurs to create their own employment (paragraph 3.2.3).

Chapter 3 therefore does not only discuss the role and functionality of the legislation that drives the learnership concept but it also gives a short description of the entities responsible for its implementation. Reference to some of the terms used would be out of context if this was not included in the discussion of each of the four parts of the HRD Strategy and particular reference is made continuously to the application to the New Venture Creation Learnership on which this research is based.

Chapter 4 looks at the development of entrepreneurship and stimulation of small business which is a strategic priority for the South African government and which is also confirmed by similar strategies in other countries.