

Skills dearth - a veracity or just a façade in the globalised South Africa

Ntokozo Mthembu

Abstract

This paper critically scrutinises the South Africa's historic skills development from pre-industrial communities to the globalised era that is characterised by international competition and new skills demand such as computer literacy. So, this paper emanates from the study that utilised in-depth interviews and semi-structured questionnaires in gathering data from government employees. This study shed some light on national policy intervention by the contemporary regime through policies such as the Employment Equity Act and its impact in redressing past injustices whilst promoting development that attempts to review issues such as the assessment approach in relations to reproduction of unequal society in South Africa. In addition, the study revealed that the lack of job security goes with the possibility of an immediate replacement by other workers from the "reserve army" that identifies the secondary occupations. It also reveals the legacy of racism in the shop-floor and its linkages towards guaranteeing daily livelihoods especially amongst the previously disadvantaged populace. Furthermore, it also reveals that the same old form of coercion that compels adult African persons to be continuously subjected in selling their labour power for meager wage that perpetuates racist cheap labour system. Finally, findings of the study confirm the theory of control, as it highlighted that technical control, emerges only when the whole production process has large segments of society are based on technology that paces and directs the labour processes.

Introduction

This paper serves as the brief outcome report of the study conducted to fulfill the academic requirements, which focused on the skills, equity and the labour market in South Africa. In doing so, the paper will summarises the history of skills and highlight the equity in the emergence of the labour market. In addition, the paper will also bring forth data collected in the case study of Botanic Garden in eThekweni Municipality.

For us to have a better understanding about the skills in South Africa, we need to note that the question of skill has always been analysed in terms of its relationship to work, performance and labour market. In apartheid South Africa, skills were racialised and that is reflected in the nature of labour market segmentations whereby Black workers were reduced to unskilled and semi-skilled occupations while white workers occupied mainly semi-skilled and skilled jobs. This historical racialised skills because of the apartheid legacy has led to a chronic skills shortage amongst the especially the previously disadvantaged black communities, today this presents serious challenges, and serve as a constraint to competitiveness in the era of global integration (Adam, 1997: 232). Changes that are taking place in South Africa are associated with globalisation¹, which has influenced the livelihoods of the individuals in different workplaces. Today, rapid technological changes have aggravated this situation as the demand for skilled workforce has increased. In response to the challenges, the South African government has adopted strategies such as the Skills Development Strategy for skills development and generation of a productive labour force (See Hlekiso, 2005: 2).

The study concerns itself with issues of skills development and its impact not only on performance and productivity, but also on the lives of the historically disadvantaged and of the designated groups in terms of fulfilling the goals of social equity and sustainable

¹ The term 'globalisation' is a more recent coinage than the phenomena which it purports to proclaim is distinctly un-scholarly in its origin, as at first, it serves as something of an embellishment, referring to a rather specific phenomenon in economic history—an observed tendency of the share of cross-border transactions to increase among all economic transactions that normally benefit the Western countries—with a term that radiates a world-historical and all-inclusive, pan-human sense of an epochal shift (see Böröcz, 2006)

job creation. The examination of the labour market situation in SA today through the case study of eThekweni Municipality's Durban Botanic Gardens, whereby specific focus at Parks department. Although the primary focus of this study is on the skills development question in the eThekweni municipality's Durban Botanic Gardens, the implications of its findings for the same challenges and other related issues and strategies is aimed at addressing them in SA at large. The study shed the light on national policy intervention through, for instance, the Employment Equity Act and its impact in redressing the past injustices whilst promoting development. Two factors were considered when assessing the contemporary state of skills in South Africa. These factors are related to the education and training insufficiency that has been inherited from apartheid prior to 1994 (See Kraak, 2003:74). The broad general problem is generally a low level of education acquired by the South African workforce, specifically amongst the African workforce (See Vally, 1997a:40). The improvement of the educational background of the current workforce remains very low with the enormous majority of African workers possessing less than a matriculation certificate (See Department of Labour, 2005:31). In addition, this research will shed some light in understanding whether or not skills acquired by the employed workers help to sustain their livelihoods when they become unemployed. Furthermore, this study will assess the impact of changes in the area understudy whether it had experienced segmentation and casualisation of workforce and as well as technological changes or not.

The integration of South Africa into the global economy presented the country with serious challenges of competitiveness. As part of responding to this challenge, then South African government adopted neoliberal policies centered on GEAR as the macro-economic framework that was enacted after 1994 of which gave rise to significant changes within the labour market. This happened as firms and other industrial enterprises sought not only to survive but also to become competitive by promoting flexible and multi-skilled workforce (See Webster and Von Holdt, 2005). Given the country's skills shortage, the government had further adopted specific policies as means to address this problem (See Stones, 2006). The 'skills shortage' and firms' restructuring saw an upswing in unemployment that was estimated at 28.6% during the

period of transition to democracy, and is now estimated at about 41.2% and 27.8% when using the strict definition (See Streak and van der Westhuizen, 2004). This translates, respectively, to 8.4 million or 4.6 million unemployed people, depending on the definition of unemployment statistics being used (See Streak and van der Westhuizen, 2004; EPWP). Another two major pieces of legislation were promulgated in 1994 again in order to redress issues of equity and skills shortages in the South African labour market. These are the Employment Equity Act (EEA) and the Skills Development Act (SDA) (see Department of Labour, 2005:31). In the light of this, this study attempts to provide some basic assessment of whether or not skills training and capacitating programme that are provided to the formerly disadvantaged workers enhances effective redress of past inequalities and performance in the workplace.

The area that was studied is one of the areas that play a meaningful role in the economic development of South Africa in general. In addition, the area is one of the areas that are regarded as the industry categorised as tourist and farming sector known as a low paying sector. Tourism is the world's largest earner of foreign currency in South Africa and it only attracts about 0.2% of the annual estimated 300 million tourists in the world. South Africa was ranked 25th in the world's top tourism destinations in 1998 and up to 10% on 1997 but was only ranked 42nd when it comes to top tourism earners in the world. Tourism brings an estimated 20 billion Rand (R) (US \$3.1 billion) into our economy, second only to manufacturing and mining in its contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) in short it contributed about 8.2% to South Africa's GDP in 1998 (See Cloete, 2006). The number of people visiting Botanic Garden concurs, as it hosts approximately 500 000 visitors per year, many of whom are foreign tourists (http://www.durban.gov.za/eThekweni/Services/parks/index_html/view?searchterm=park%20and%20recreation).

Historical skills development in South Africa

The question of skill in South Africa cannot be clearly dealt and fairly without looking at its historical development settings that influenced the contemporary skills in the

workplace. Some of the problems arise when determining what should be included or left out in classifying the skill and how to measure skill level for various occupations (see Brown, 2001:53). Skills in the South African labour market need to be analysed in conjunction with the background of the emergence of the *proletarianisation*² of the Black people to workers and formation of white workers craft trade union that became a labour aristocracy that was protected by job reservation and union-management accord. Since, South Africa has become an industrialised country, it succumbs to what Marx call the appearance of the relationships of production that includes the division of labour that permits the accumulation of surplus production that is appropriated by a minority groupings that stands in the exploitative relations to the mass of producers. Marx argues further that every *dominant*³ class asserts the universality of the ideology that legitimises its position of domination (see Webster and Leger, 1992:53; Giddens, 1971:36).

Before, we look historic development; we need briefly look at the definition of skills in order more understanding. However, the conventional definition of skill normally sees skill as composed of two components of which are manual skill and knowledge (see Webster and Leger, 1992:53). '*Skill*' is a well-known concept that is hard to define without excluding its measurement. *Manual* refers to the ability to perform rapidly and efficiently a vast project that require the organisation of perceptual and driving methodology. If we only define skill in terms of manual and knowledge and do not define skill in terms of quantity, then that will mean all workers possess skill. The term skill implies that workers have gone through some barrier to entry into occupation whether it is apprenticeship, an examination or a formal training course. In relation to the skilled worker, some workers are regarded as *semi-skilled* or *unskilled* irrespective of the fact that they practice a variety of skills in their workplace. Max Weber argues that barriers such as the acts as mechanism of exclusion that are regarded as *social closure* by because skills are capable to exclude outsiders and dominate resources that are in turn

² Markets in Africa (Evanston, 1962) - 'the famous "market principle" specifically evolved through the coloniser's violent intervention against the previous mode of production' that led to the dispossession of majority which is one of the "classes" and capitalist class jointly forms the capitalist system (see Giddens, 1971:10; Wolpe and Gana, 1982:338).

³ The concept of domination refers specifically to the instances where the exercises power -(Weber defines it as the prospect that an actor will be able to see his own goals irrespective of opposition from others with whom he is in social relationship) where an actor observe a particular authority issued by another (see Giddens, 1971:156)

denied to others (see Giddens, 1971). Another significant fact is that barriers are *artificial social construct* that can be related to the skills that are practiced by workers and regarded as the social construction of skill. Therefore, the skills inquiry suggests that skill is socially

constructed and that suggests that skill cannot be measured objectively, since its construction is the result of the related strength of employers and employees in a particular historical milieu. In addition, each milieu is influenced by the organisational power of workers at the point of production and the labour market (see Webster and Leger, 1992:55).

In gaining some understanding about the *craft as 'on job' knowledge*, there are many descriptions of crafts or traditional trades. Most literature have in common feature that emphasis on the relationship between worker, materials and tools and a depiction of the craft worker as being responsible for producing the *whole* item. The craft worker performs in succession all the operations necessary to produce a specific item, using a wide range of tools and mindful of the inherent qualities of the material used. The relationship between part and whole is essential, as the craft worker must be able to see how the parts fit into a whole and how the whole consists of a series of interlocking parts. What relates the parts to the whole is an 'embodied principle of arrangement'. Principles operate at a general and non-empirical level, but craft workers grasp the relationship between part and whole through the act of *visualisation* rather than through formal reasoning, talking, reading and writing (see Gamble 2002; Giddens, 1971).

Therefore, it is a known practical manner of passing knowledge through modelling rather than through verbal instruction. This explains the marginal role of language in the master-apprentice instruction process. Craft has something in common with general principled knowledge as we find it in the natural, social sciences, in formal secondary and tertiary knowledge but it is also very different. The similar between the two kinds of knowledge's is that both have an epistemic logic that links *procedures* with *principles*. Their differences lie in the nature of the principles involved, as well as in the

directionality of the epistemic logic. In craft, the principle in particular is personified in the item that is being created. In the natural and social sciences, principles are abstract and non-empirical and are achieved through formal reasoning (see Gamble, 2004).

Therefore, the contemporary South African system of trades training is directly descended from the English system of technical education also differed markedly from systems of technical education that developed on the European continent. Mumford (1930) argues that vocational knowledge has never been static, as it considers the relationship between maker, materials and tools or sources of power as a variety of 'technical complexes', which inter-penetrate and overlap even today. For example, the Eotechnic phase, extending from about AD 1000 to 1760 was a 'water-and-wood complex'. In unbundling skills inquest in South Africa industrial era, we need to acknowledge the fact that African people were *subsistence society*⁴ that depended on the land, domestic animals such as sheep, goat, cattle and goats, family labour, community and trade. Since the people were close to the land, it was vital to have sufficient labour of which came from family members who worked together to produce their basic need. Family member's possessed different skills, such as farming and women were skilled in pottery and other things at home including raising children (see Callinicos, 1990: 2; Magema, 1979; Wolpe and Gana, 1982:338).

Whilst men trained on specialised duties such as of being a healer/ spiritual healers, some musician, iron making. In this period, iron-making skills were regarded at high status, as they provided farmers with implements and soldiers with weapons of war such as spears. Almost all early human societies (that were characterised as tribal including early European societies) before the division of labour were subsistence society did not have class differences because land was not owned individually (see Giddens, 1971:24). Most subsistence farmers were skilled farmers and were able to meet relevant conditions for their various plants. The subsistence community worked for

⁴ Subsistence societies relied on agricultural system that had self-sustaining formations that dependent less on the control of the means of material production than on the means of human reproduction (see Wolpe and Gana, 1982:338). This era is referred to as *Communalism* is the state whereby property such as land is collectively owned by the community, work is done in common, and goods are shared out equally (Rodney, 1973:7).

the whole community besides their immediate family, as their prosperity rose or fell with prosperity of the community. Land was significant in subsistence society, as it provided people place to plant their crops for food, grazing cattle and other animals and building material such as bricks, thatch and clay. However, they were also involved in bartering exchange trading system and few people depended on trading guided by the *theocratic values*⁵ among themselves and outside world such as Arabs and European (see Callinicos, 1990: 2; Magera, 1979:10; Giddens, 1971). The availability of land helped the subsistence indigenous farmers to survive, experienced the family growth and the expansion of *kingdoms*⁶.

Therefore, the expansion and differing interests of kingdoms led to the rise of wars of land power and control and resulted in the change of type of governance, traditional subsistence livelihood and migration. Weber argues further that the simple type of *bureaucratic*⁷ organisation was first practice in the early kingdoms, which was characterised by administration activities that are conducted by staffing on the regular basis. Levels of administration and of authority are clearly defined in the form of a hierarchy of offices and recruitments are based on display of competence via competitive examinations or possession of certificate or diplomas or degree as a proof of suitable qualification. Furthermore, the advance bureaucratisation is linked directly to the expansion of the division of labour in various levels of social life (see Giddens, 1971:158; Callinicos, 1990: 2; Magera, 1979; Wolpe and Gana, 1982:3389). In addition, the victorious kingdom had power to control over spoils of war such as people, land and to select *chiefs/indunas* of which later became the aristocracy, as they enjoyed more power and privileges (see Callinicos, 1990:5; Giddens, 1971:27). During ranging of the *Mfecane* Wars, the Dutch settlers emerged in the 1600s with colonisation

⁵ See Magera (1979:9-11 & 90) where he argues and reach conclusion about the origin of African people in this south part of Africa that they are the branch Israelites that believed and live theocratically, as theocracy means the rule of people by people for the Creator. Therefore, I will argue further that theocratic values are normally documented in 'totality' in the normal Bible. For example, the Zulu people used practice the ceremony that resembles those documented in the Bible (Jeremiah 2:3) like the ceremony of the First Fruit (Mercury, 31 July 2007, p14).

⁶ Refer to Magera (1979:9; Callinicos, 1990: 5) where indicates that ten tribes of Ethiopia left the north part of Africa and went down to the south where they elected their own Kings that managed their Kingdoms that were eventually destroyed through Mfecane Wars. Through these wars the Kings were forced to abdicate their thrones to become what we call today chiefs of the well known King Shaka and new tribes such as Zulu, Basotho and Ndebele came into existence.

⁷ Weber argues that bureaucracy was first experienced prior to the development of the modern capitalist economy and major examples of such advanced bureaucratic civilisations were those of ancient Egypt, China later Roman principate (Giddens, 1971:158).

programme that altered the Africa subsistence society further. When the Africans return to their places from their areas of refuge, their territories were occupied by white trekkers and that started another bitter war for land dispossession/ *alienation*⁸ of which was first experienced in the Cape between the Dutch and later the British, and then Natal between Zulus and the Dutch and the British. When, we look at the historic transformational phases of the industrialisation in general after the Imfecane period. It is noted that the Paleotechnic phase of the industrial revolution was a 'coal-and-iron complex', succeeded by the Neotechnic phase, which was an 'electricity-and-alloy complex'. The last phase can be regarded as the microchip and non-materials, where tiny particles of materials are manipulated (see Gamble, 2004:180).

Prior to the South African industrial revolution of the late nineteenth century, *British and Dutch colonists participated in bartering exchange trade* but when they established themselves, traders began to demand *money*⁹ (thus the introduction of *monetary system*) instead of goods (See Terreblanche, 2002: 155; Callinicos, 1990: 2; Giddens, 1971:162). The *state*¹⁰ passed a series of legislation to control the influx of African immigrant workers by introduction of Pass Laws as early as 1760 to early slaves in the Cape, and in 1809 and eventually that applied to all South Africa and forcing indigenous people to live in one place and possess *pass* (sees Callinicos, 1990). Durkheim argues that the developmental of the modern form of society is related to expansion of 'individualism' that is associated with division of labour that produces a specialised occupational function, fosters the development of particular skill, capacity and attitudes that are not shared by everyone in society (Giddens, 1971:73).

The emergence of the industrial market

The emergence of the industrial market systems in Europe and Americas that accompanied colonisation led to the labeling people as "employed" of which became the

⁸ Marx argued that alienation in the capitalist production begins with the current economic fact is that

⁹ Weber argues that plays a vital role, as it makes possible for speculation for values exchanged in quantitative and fixed rather than in subjective terms (see Giddens, 1971:164).

¹⁰ Traditional states its where political organisations play the role of being 'estate' and means of administration are controlled by the bureaucracy (see Giddens, 1971:180).

differential taken from the rest of the economy and the rest of the community. The rise of early industrialisation in South Africa it was accompanied by the land dispossession of which led indigenous populace to lack means of survival, thus forcing indigenous people to seek employment in the mines (see Callinicos, 1990: 7). This type of development that was based on discrimination of which major sectors of the economy, including the public sector developing rigid forms of division of labour according to racial lines. The division was further entrenched by legislation and other barriers to access to skills especially among Africans (see Moleke, 2003:205).

The idea of formally providing industrial education to Africans in South Africa was first debated in the mid-1800s. Under Cape Governor George Grey the notion of a prosperous Christian African peasantry was actively pursued. The aim was to create a settled and industrious peasantry that would work its own land or the land of white farmers and contribute to social order. Later the plan was abandoned, for reasons that included ongoing conflict between settlers and Africans over land and cattle on the frontier (see McGrath, 2004).

The industrial education model of the Grey Plan was different to that of the late nineteenth century. First, Grey's idea was to apply industrial forms of education only to a specific group of Africans who were located within a strategic space as a buffer group on the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony. African people started participating in the white capitalist's economy about 1830 and 1890 that led them to emerge, as peasants whose progress was promising although was short span (see Callinicos, 1990: 8). In this respect, the origins of vocational education are traceable back to various mission schools for 'native' and coloured children. In 1855, the Governor of the Cape Colony, instituted a scheme of industrial education for 'native' children, and in 1861, industrial departments were attached to certain coloured mission schools at the Cape. This was evident through 'different' or 'approaches that were adapted in developing a special education for 'primitive people in a rural context. The most striking exception to this was amongst the coloured community of the Western Cape and by the middle of nineteenth

century; coloured males were increasingly becoming involved in semi-skilled and craftwork in Cape Town and other urban settlements (see McGrath, 2004: 11-23).

These changes coincided with the 'discovery'¹¹ of gold in the Rand that needed more capital for special machinery for deeper level mining. This type of mining also demanded experienced skilled labour to sink shafts, fit pipes and pumps, install lifts, build props, drive engines and operate drilling machines and sorting and extracting gold from the ore above ground (see Callinicos, 1990). Lastly, it also needed unskilled labour force for heavy task of lashing, tramming and to hammer tunnels into ore. One need to note that African people were colonised systemically as they were forced to be peasants were seen as non-permanent labour - hence no need to invest in their skills (see Joffe, 1995). The expansion of mining industry influenced the emergence of the manufacturing industry of which needed the supervisors to direct and control workers and managers who enjoyed most privileged than most of them and earn enormous income. The history of industrial development shows how late nineteenth-century technology started drawing more strongly on general scientific principles that resulted in the increase in specialisation and division of labour (Giddens, 1971).

This period is characterised by the shifting of traditional work based apprenticeships to a theory–practice combination of either evening classes, or day- or block-release for apprentices indentured in workplaces. In addition, *it coincides with the need of skilled labour force in the mines in the Rand. The curricular arrangement that characterised trades training for over a hundred years. The combination of theory taught in a college linked to on-job apprenticeships became the model* for what Young (2001) calls a 'knowledge based approach' to vocational preparation. A particular feature of this curriculum mode was the exclusion of practical application. In the English *Technical Instruction Act* of 1889, technical education was defined as being 'limited to instruction in the principles of science and art applicable to industry' and *not* to include 'teaching the practice of any trade or industry or employment'. This definition fitted with the requirements of professional scientists who were teachers and examiners in the new

¹¹ The discovery of gold in the 1886 differed with gold mined by Africans hundreds of years earlier by the fact that it ran for many miles underground (see Callinicos, 1990: 8)

system, but there were also other reasons. Government in collaboration with mine owners such as passed laws such as Glen Grey Act of 1894 to force the Natives to work in towns and on the mines as *cheap labour* (see Callinicos, 1990: 23; Giddens, 1971:11).

In contrast, by the turn of the century the Cape government was concerned with designing a form of education applicable to all school-going Africans. Second, the later concept of industrial education for Africans was educationally far less ambitious than that of the earlier Grey Plan. It will be argued that it did not present African learners with vocational skills that had real market value, leaving them with only their labour to sell (see McGrath, 2004:83). Forms of industrial training accessible to Africans had been part of the mission school tradition since the 1850s and before. But this industrial training was concentrated in only a few mission institutions. The missionary schools were extremely diverse in terms of the quality of their instruction and curriculum. This was the direct consequence of the freedom of the competing missionary societies to strategically allocate resources both in order to maximise conversions and increase membership, and to provide educational opportunities. Nevertheless, a tiered pattern of provision emerged which the dual system of training and to other co-determinist principles, and even though they have invested heavily outside of the German economy in the past decade, they still continue to replicate the high performance systems in foreign subsidiaries hoping to continue the successes achieved in the home country. The unequal structure of South African society has not diminished. The failure of Government in its role as 'developmental state' in steering the economy up the value chain towards more highly skilled production (see Brown *et al.* 2001: 209).

Labour market is gearing to be a universal structure, a world market of labour that has several years of history (see Potts, 1990:7). The system in which workers from Latin America, Asia and Africa populace were brought into forced labour, immigration were exposed to extermination, abduction and exploitation. These changes have been taking place since 1970s in the international labour market in the form of the segmented labour that affects workers in the developing and industrialised countries that resulted in the

geographical shifts and production and the establishment of free production zones. Furthermore, these changes facilitate the production environment that will enable the industrial market for and “*cheap labour*” in the home supplying countries, various colonial powers to be profitable (see Baskin, 2000:53; Barker, 2003:18).

In gaining a better understanding about changes in the labour market, the segmented labour market theory will be of significance. This theory argues that labour market is always divided into various segments that have their characteristics that have their own operative measures. Market forces are not always having a greater influence in main determiner or pricing role in these divisions. Institutional forces such as management and union they bargain to replace security and rules, which are sometimes not in line with economic factors such as market forces and worker productivity. Another characteristic of segmented labour market is the access to the better segmented is controlled and mobility between segments is highly restricted. For example, the some of the segments that are the labour market for various professions such as medical doctors and lawyer (see Barker, 2003:23).

The labour market in general has is divided into two labour market that are characterised by two non-competing markets, i.e. the *primary* and *secondary* labour markets. High earnings, good working conditions and employment stability identify the primary segment. It normally has large enterprises or labour market where trade unions play a meaningful responsibility. It can be also divided into a number of internal labour markets that can be referred to individual enterprises or occupations such as multinational corporations or the labour markets for lawyers or medical practitioners. In addition, other identities of this market:

⇒ Skilled occupations are more often not filled by promotion from within the enterprise.

Promotion is decided by bureaucratic and rigid rules of the enterprise or job that have been recognised through collective bargaining.

McConnell and Brue (1989) noted that workers in these markets are protected against the competitive market forces of supply and demand and their behaviour is formed by internal regulation.

Employers in the primary market invest large amounts of money on the training of workforce, as part of improvement of productivity that can be linked to high and increasing wages. The high incomes are the product of labour –saving and productive equipment that is being utilised. When it comes to the secondary segment, workers “on the outside” they are mostly have no job security, little chance of promotion, poor working conditions. Joll et al (1983) highlighted that this segment consists of low paying jobs and enterprises are very competitive, small scale, low skills required, labour intensive and companied by low level of unionisation. Dual labour market theory argues that inequality in earning cannot be speedily reduced by investment in education and training unless workers in the secondary markets are integrated through various means into the primary labour market (see Barker, 2003:23; Vally, 1997b:88).

Whilst South African labour market is racial dualism in nature and that means, whites dominate the higher echelons of the labour market, whereas Africans constitute the majority of the lower jobs in the periphery. In addition, this is accompanied by the intermediate category of Coloured and Asian workers (see Webster, 1985:196). The threefold segmentation South African labour market is characterised by the secondary market, the subordinate primary market and the independent primary market. The secondary market is made up of occupations that need limited skill that refers to occupations that are usually repetitive of which involve mostly manual work from light duties to heavy physical tasks. Most of jobs in this category are regarded as semi-skilled because they need the acquisition of elementary skills and have little scope of initiative and decision-making but focus on simple tasks such as usage of checklists. In addition, occupations in this category are casual in nature and do not need any formal training, no formal education and no job security. The lack of job security goes with the possibility of an immediate replacement by other workers from the ‘reserve army’ that

identifies the secondary occupations. In summarising the secondary labour market Edwards concludes:

“It contains low-pay jobs of casual labour, jobs that provide little employment security or stability. These are dead-end jobs offering little opportunity for advancement, and requiring few skills Since, employers have little investment in matching workers and their jobs, they feel free to replace or dismiss workers as their labour needs change” (see Webster, 1985:198).

In comparing with secondary occupations, subordinate primary occupations provide some job security that have secure employment and higher wages and all occupations in this category share the characteristics of well defined occupations. The huge amount of subordinate primary jobs, Edward defined them as “the jobs of the traditional industrial working class – production jobs in the unionised mass production industries. In addition, the subordinate primary occupations are differentiated from independent primary jobs because their work tasks are repetitive, routinised and subject to machine tempo (see Webster, 1985).

Occupations in the independent primary market vary from subordinate primary occupations in that they typically need skills achieved in advanced or specialised schooling; they normally demand education; they are likely to have occupational or professional standards of performance; and likely to entail independent initiative or self speed. Three types of jobs that dominate the independent primary market of which are technical / supervisory, craft and professional – craft workers in Grade A. The fundamental characteristics of the independent primary market are the possession of general and self-pacing. Labour markets are segmented, Edward citing the reasoning based on the historical segmentation of the labour process in particular the distinct system of control inside the firm that inspires each of the three market segments. Furthermore, the basic bases for division into these segments are found in the workplace and not in the labour market (see Webster, 1985: 200). The type of development that shows that the industrial employment model of which is the perfect example of the economic system that is identified by a series of distinct practices such

as the (a) indication proves that production is capitalised, (b) division of labour is highly developed, (c) manufacturing and other operations are located in a specific plants. In addition, d) firms are managed by specialists, (e) enterprises are owned by relatively large numbers of individual shareholders and corporations, and (f) that economic and social activity are normally organised on voluntary, exchange, or contractual basis (see Abbot, 1980). At this industrial epoch, management sought more control over workers, thereby led to the emergence of the bureaucratic method.

This study helps in reaching for better understanding about modern industrial enterprise control. There are three types of control of which are distinguished of which is simple control, technical control and bureaucratic control (see Abbott, 1980:15). This can be highlighted the difference between the modern and earlier management control strategies are that (a) the differentiation of managerial from proprietorial role-statuses (b) separations between senior, middle, and junior management and (c) the specialisation of management roles in particular functional areas such as production, marketing, personnel, and finance. In general, a broader social developmental and cross-cultural perspective, modern professional management can be contrasted with “patrimonial”, “political”, “custodial”, and “syndicalist” types (see Abbott, 1980:51). These control mechanisms are adopted in various historical epochs of labour market in general.

Therefore, when looking at how labour market applies these types of controls in general taking from the historical or cross-cultural viewpoint suggests that “employed people” and employers were not easily separated in the primitive –traditional societies. The simple control was much more applicable in this period of which is regarded as part of early management where they had direct control. The historical viewpoint argues that technology was in a low stages and economic –organisational development, the role or statuses of “employer” and “employee”, or of “manage” and “operative” were not easily differentiated. Because the set-up was that, the owner of the enterprise participated in managing and in operational-production activities.

The modern economic system definition tends to ignore the limitations of the labour market, industrial employment, and unemployment to the capitalist model of economic organisation. In addition, employment definition focuses on the buying and selling of *labour* power as the major factor from other production factors. We need also to note the limits of this term, as its meaning has become not clear although it's a highly used (See Standing, 1999). Whilst Durkheim argues that in fact the labour market is a society of high level of specialisation of economic and other structures of processes that are organised on an organic instead on a mechanic basis (see Abbot, 1980:15). Standing and Abbot illustrate by highlighting the story of lemon of which cannot speak as the object or improve itself once it is removed from the tree. That type of set-up can only be witnessed in a slave labour market as there are no sober minded individuals who can be devoted on spending most of their valuable time working for somebody.

We need to note further that the theory has two parts that one relates to nature of occupational choice that every man will seek a better paying work and that will persuade him to move to advantageous and leave disadvantaged employment. The other part concerns the consequences of behavioral choice system of maybe equal or moving towards equality. What is identified as common to all is that the influence which the circumstances of different employments have upon the number of workers who will avail themselves to be hired. In addition, the occupation that is equal in other factors would tend to be equal in wage, but occupations unequal in other factors would be unequal in wage. Although the labour market processes are illustrated as free but the classical economists know that real world markets are not free (see Rottenberg, 1971).

There are three identifiable restrictions on perfect independence of real world markets. Smith argued that there are other circumstances in the labour markets of his time in which men distributed among occupations by other criteria other than relative ordinary advantage. Firstly, some people disposed to enter a trade but were denied from participating in the trade. Second, other people expectant to enter a trade that they would otherwise not be forced to enter. Third, some people were prohibited movement from one employment to another (see Rottenberg, 1971: 51). When looking at the wage

variation that differs into two categories that can be 'compensating' in case they are function as a variation in the non-income qualities of various occupation. Perhaps, they can be 'real' in case they act as prohibition on freedom of occupational option. The same conditions can make the firm to restrict the employment of labour to a number within the period of increasing physical productivity per unit of labour that are likely to result decreasing secondary actual revenue productivity of labour. These conditions are: an inseparability of the firm's physical plant facilitates, adhere with either or both; a low increase of the demand for the firm's product, or and a low increase of the supply of the labour to the firm (see Rottenberg, 1971: 42).

In addition, the existence of a skill shortage in a traditional and partial equilibrium framework of which can be easily identified. In case where the demand for labour in a particular job exceeds the supply then a shortage detected. A simple static model of the labour market, competitive market forces will push up the wage rate and eradicate shortage. Due to the fact that employers react haphazardly to the changing labour market without proper information about increasing wages and job seekers don't have data concerning available occupation. There are continuous practices of changes in the working conditions that combine with various features that work together at same time (see Cohen and Zaidi, 2002: 5). Labour market dynamics can make clear skills shortages if change speed is slow or if there are difficulties in change.

Arrow and Capton (1959) introduce a dynamic notion of labour market and they argue that a slow increase change in the demand curve will result in a shortage. This happen in situation where are unfilled vacancies in positions where salaries are the same as those currently are paid in others of the same type and grade. Therefore, the dynamic notion is demonstrated in Figure 2 and it shows that shortages can result due to the continuous changes in the demand curve during the process of adjustment to changing conditions. In addition, Blank and Stigler (1957) noted that unfilled vacancies in particular occupations and caused shortages when the number of workers available increases in lesser that the number of demanded at the wage paid in the recently. Another view by Trutko et al (1991) suggests that shortages prevail when the existence

of individual sources of unequal leads to slow adjustment speed and place obstacles to adjustment. The dynamic notion highlights that the labour market mechanism can describe labour shortages only in cases where special regulations or restrictions, the relations of other related reasons and the absurdity of the labour market are acknowledged and measured (see Cohen and Zaidi, 2002: 5).

The measurements of labour shortages have advantages and disadvantages and restrictions are enforced by labour market conditions, the demand of particular jobs and the availability and consistency of the information. Six indicators are theoretically acceptable and their selection and utilisation could provide resolution to the problem of recognising and understanding skills shortages. Normally, the low unemployed rate indicates a skills shortage but a high rate of unemployment does not necessarily guarantee the skills shortage. For example, job vacancies could be present even in a state where an unemployment rate is above zero. This can be the outcome of the lack of proper classification of jobs, frictional unemployment and variation in different jobs due to difference in search time not related to skills shortages, the correspondence between theoretical and official measures and other related factors.

Second, then rate of growth of employment of which reflects the trend in demand for workers in a specific jobs. There are high chances of skill shortage to happen in case a demand increases than in cases where is constant or reduced. Therefore, the disadvantages with this measurement are related with occupational categorisations and the relations between employment changes and changes in demand for labour. Third, the swift increase of wages is consistent with a skill shortage since wages will be jerked up when demand supply surpass supply. The demand and supply of workers jointly with the unemployment rate give reliable data concerning the prevailing conditions in the market. The weakness in this measurement is that it can exclude other significant information such as changes in the benefits structure, self employed workers' incomes, commissions and other income that come irregularly (see Cohen and Zaidi, 2002: 12).

Fourth, the employers can encounter problems in filling vacancies that require high level of education, training or experience and this play a meaningful role in determining in supplying various vacant positions. Fifth, the governmental projections on the future demand can be also utilised to assess shortages in different jobs. Generally, jobs with high expectations on growth are possible to have skill shortage. Even in the last measurement, Cohen also noted that skill shortages are the percentage of immigrants accepted in a particular occupation as workers can be also utilised. In addition, Cohen (1995) utilised the huge number of certification is a helpful gauge but it does not necessarily indicates the labour market state of affairs. This might arise in the legal processes that produce various outcomes that economic analysis and regulations may not always shows national shortages or surpluses (see Cohen and Zaidi, 2002).

The essence of simple control is the arbitrary power of foreman and supervisors to direct work, to monitor performance, and to discipline or reward workers and this system offer some job security. The secondary labour market reflects the workplaces organisation based on simple control. The technical control is found only in case when the whole production process or large segments of it are base on technology that determines the flows and directs the labour process. The large –scale enterprises and technological advance industries in the modern industries dictates the employment of outsider specialist into major managerial, technical, and other roles, and without allocation of roles and reward generally on skill, performance, or experiential bases. In addition, the modern professional, performance based management differ in structural-functional type from the political; management. For example, the pre-industrial and modern societies are characterised by the involvement of *familial* and *governmental* ownership and control of production, distribution, consumption, and investment-savings. The subordinate primary market composed of workplaces under the ‘mixed’ of technical control and unions. The bureaucratic control is the institutionalisation of hierarchical power. Rule of law it’s when firm’s law is replaces the supervisors’ command. The independent primary labour market shows the bureaucratic controlled labour process and (see Webster, 1985: 201; Vally, 1997b: 83; Mzaca, 2001:9).

When scrutinising the South African labour market today we cannot be able to do that without looking at the labour power to the development of capitalism beyond the times of slave trade. In addition, the world market for labour power is vital to the development especially from 1970s. The building of world *infrastructure of the world market for labour power played a meaningful role in establishing the world infrastructure to achieve the colonial and imperialist exploitation*. Lastly, *the world labour market has a significant role in developing of the metropolis and to the underdevelopment of the colonised territories* (see Potts, 1990:223; Callaghan, 1997:1). In looking further to the labour market, we look further to the question of labour power in relations to the dependency theory approach pertaining to those countries that were not allowed to develop. Singer looks at employment and the reproduction of labour power within the context of dependency theory and underdevelopment of other countries and concludes that:

“Capital thus produces and reproduces its own labour power... to the extent that it actually purchases labour power from the workers and distributes to the wage worker such resources as allow him to support himself on a daily basis and compensation at the end of his productive life” (see Potts, 1999:168).

The early and middle of the nineteenth century economists such as McCulloch and Mill revisited Adam Smith in describing the current labour market behaviour. Smith summed up the definition of the theory of labour market as:

The whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock must, in the same neighbourhood, be either perfectly equal or continually tending to equality. If, in the same neighbourhood, there was any employment evidently either more or less advantageous than the rest, so many people would crowd into it in the one case, and so many would desert it in the other, that its advantages would soon return to the level of other employments. This at least would be the case in a society where things were left to follow their natural course, where there was perfect liberty, and where every man was perfectly free both to choose what occupation he thought proper, and to change it as often as he thought proper (see Rottenberg, 1971:50).

Furthermore, in looking at Mandel and Sternberg debates that highlight that labour power in the metropolis is highly valued because of trade union movement, countries become underdeveloped because they have little returns and limited income from poor wages. Currently, in attempt to gain some understanding about labour market of which has become flexible and insecure in the current labour processes. We need to analyse the labour as a system of social structures and processes in which one-man middle economic services of technical, organisational, or informational nature that are bought, sold, and priced. The labour market is usually viewed as the competitiveness of modern markets where buyers and sellers of labour are not independent actors but are associations such as employers' associations and trade unions, and labour cartels – (in the form of labour brokers) (see Abbot, 1980:11). At the same time the structures and processes of the labour market is uneven power relations between capital and labour that is influenced by vast range of external social and non-social issues. This type of set up can have some influences that have low legal directive in the given labour market and it can be a high level of tangible control through governmental wage-curtailing policies, trade union regulations and familial and educational influences.

Therefore, this tends to stimulate interests to various social analysts to policy makers and legislators. The labour supplier has choice of placing their services amongst various alternative productive spheres such as wage rates. In the ideal-type labour market, wage income differences are determined by differences in the nature or a number of labour services that are supplied to production and other organisation. Wage induced labour movement or mobility continues and tends to proceed to a state where differences disappear or become same in the same job category. At the end, the “optional” allocation of labour resources such as national income in society would not increase income in case an individual move from the current job to any other job.

In real labour world market, it is impossible to achieve such state of affairs because labour markets are open systems that subsist within, act upon, and dictated by various physical, cultural, personality and social environments. Where models of supply,

demand, and price in the labour markets continuously influenced by constant changes in overall models of inclination of employees for a particular type of jobs and changes in technical-production arrangements (see Abbot, 1980; Barker, 2003).

Skills demand in the contemporary labour market

Presently, the South African labour market is experiencing a decline labour absorption; due to the fact, that it is not adjusting changing circumstances. The OECD (1986) notes that theory of flexibility suggests that market should adjust to be in line with demand and supply demand conditions and unemployment can be decreased. Labour market flexibility refers to the extent to which an employer can change different aspects of its work and workforce to meet the demands of the business such as the size of the workforce, contents of the jobs, and working time (see Barker, 2003:30).

Chicago school of law and economics suggests that dominated economic policy in the modern times, the following starts from an ethical position close to what is known as the Rawlsian difference principle. Another view that guides the following analysis and proposal is that the powerful need protection from themselves. The less conceptually, the alternative to the orthodox perspective focus to regulations, institutions and incentive-structures to strengthen human development. At the same time acknowledging that flexible markets are essential for economic growth. The point of departure for constructive rethinking of social and economic strategy is the need to create economic conditions for thriving competition that is monitored to ensure that is based on competition between strong partners who are always in opposition and co-operative. This type of competition must promote both social equity and vibrant efficiency and as such, it is a misleading notion to portray a simple tradeoff between 'equity' and 'efficiency'.

When looking at efficiency, we find a dynamic efficiency that is developed from having rivals that strong, and this is a justification for promoting co-operation and consensus as guiding principles of corporate governance. The notion of good enterprise cannot be

separated the achievement of efficiency and profitability and failure to achieve these, the firms will be considered as economically not viable. The objective of this notion is to focus on labour and employment feature of good firm that does not cover the all features of what promote 'socially responsible companies' adequately as desirable. This attempts to reflect on controllable set of issues that focus on the development of people through their workplace, relating to the social, political and distributional implications that are at the centre of the 'stakeholder' debate. That does not mean that the environmental or consumer issues are not important and they need to be considered. The term seems to capture the notion of desirable development for the main stakeholders (see Standing, 1989:86).

This development also seek equitable treatment, fair distribution of the income generated by the efforts of workers, managers, employers and those working on their own account. However, it is go around several crucial issues such as the positive value of adversarialism in labour transactions. The fundamental contextual principles concerning the corporate governance must combine incentives for dynamic efficiency and flexibility with monitoring mechanisms to limit opportunism, 'short-termism' and inequitable practices. Flexibility with security secured through strong Voice regulation; and the Efficient Inequality Principle: Varying earnings and benefits between members of the firm should be minimised to the point where economic efficiency is not undermined, with the Rawlsian requirement that priority should be given to improving the situation of the worst- off'.

The basic ethics of the uniformity concept correspond to the neo-liberal model and difference remain rife is not excuse to allow lower standards. However, this tend to show that this concept is the expansion of other people's scheme of which was developed and initially tested in the late 1980s in Malaysia's manufacturing firm through survey. It appears that it correspond to recent advocacy and analysis in the UK, where debate tended to focus on the principles of the macro-economic agenda (see Standing, 1989: 87).

The emphasis to be on opportunities for learning tied with reasonable chances of a personal basic and instrumental 'reward' from the investment in the training. There markers of skills formation are three layers which are: (a) entry level training for newly recruited workers; (b) retraining to improve job performance or to transfer workers to other jobs with similar skills; and (c) retraining for upgrading workers or promotion. Description should be considering the type of training being offered by the firm in case a firm gave informal, on-the-job training and that would be granted less weight than if it involved 'class room' and structured training including apprenticeship training (see Standing, 1989: 91).

The provision for Africans for most of the twentieth century invariably focused on developing 'competencies', skills and attributes that would fit them into various kinds of low or intermediate skill activities in particular geographical situations. Such provision focused predominantly on 'teaching' Africans skills appropriate to predominantly rural agricultural contexts or the routine work of the mine or factory floor (see Paterson, 2004:71). In more recent times is referred to as 'technical and vocational education' was spoken of in the early period of the evolution of education systems in Southern Africa variously as 'industrial', 'manual', 'agricultural' and 'adapted' education. This *mélange* of terms reflected multiple understandings of vocational education that encompassed a variety of skills that might be learned in rural or urban contexts.

Becker highlights that economic theory of discrimination, racial or inter-community discrimination in buying, selling, hiring, and investing are captured to have main dysfunctional outcomes within industry and commerce. In addition, racial discrimination in the local economic matters equal to tariffs and other types of obstruction at international arena. The internal or intra-community discrimination that was perpetrated by Whites against Blacks in South Africa in essence is the same as external or international discrimination (see Abbot, 1980:40). Since the long-term programme is to annihilate discrimination in economic spheres and strong pressures against discrimination on the bases of race, age, sex, or other ascribed, non-performance identities in the modern society. The 'new middle strata' definition encompass the

professional, technical, managerial, executive and administrative as well as clerical, service and market sales workers (above R3 500 per month based on 1995 prices) , tracked at a higher LSM level, include intellectual contribution, influence on culture and as well as role in determining national identity and value systems.

Nevertheless, the commercial pressures might be and frequently opposed by political pressures, legislation, and ideological influences. For example, in South Africa the apartheid racialised regime adopted policies that prohibited Blacks from accumulating human capital and physical vertical and as well as horizontal of mobility (see McCord, and Bhorat, 2003:114). The abiding strength of the political system that seeks its legitimacy, giving voice to the people and adopts continuous efforts to restructure in order to better serve the people has found expression in new laws, improved conditions of public servants and infrastructure to reach the people. Therefore, the polity can have a strong opposition against the racial equality despite the openness of industrial and commercial life and competitiveness. Becker highlight that monopoly is possibly the main structural foundation and pre-condition for the substance of race-prejudice in economic transactions in the modern society.

In 1994, South Africa attempts to partly dismantle the legislated racism in the labour market enabled the economy to experience major structural change that are characterised by two drives for change which are the structure of the economy and increasing capital intensity. There are three principal problems faced the incoming state in this area. First, skill had been profoundly racialised and gendered; black especially female had been denied access to skills development or had received no certification or recognition for their real levels of skills and knowledge learned on the job; and provider institutions and delivery systems were fragmented and dysfunctional. Second, the absence of consensus and co-operation around skills development was not simply about issues of race. The possibility for tripartitism was almost non-existent in one of the most conflict industrial relations systems in the world. Third, South Africa's apartheid-driven industrial development course led to an intense polarisation of skill between high skill and low skill elements; with a serious underdevelopment of the intermediate skill

segment, which is seen as essential to successful industrialisation and competitiveness internationally (see Badroodien, 2004).

The demand for skilled and rising capital intensity during this period demands a “high-end worker” which necessitated a high demand of skilled based at the expense of unskilled elementary occupations (see McCord, and Bhorat, 2003:115). Whilst the demand for the workers with Matric or tertiary education was growing and the demand based on gender inclusion increased and male ratio to female dropped drastically by 1.7% and women increased by 3%. The improvements in education and opportunities facilitated the large amount of young blacks rising to the status of middle strata. Whilst the less educated and unskilled faced the prospect of poverty trap but that goes along with the increase in levels of education especially among young people looking for work (see Netshitenzhe, 2006:44).

McCord and Bhorat argued that the racially polarised employment pattern can be explained by two factors which are the restructuring of the public sector and the decline in the quality and relevance of African tertiary education. There are also contradicting views about the nature of South African graduates. The first view suggests that higher education institutions are producing graduates that are not employable. At the same time the other opinion, suggest that that South Africa’s academic labour market is experiencing shortage of relevant labour supply due to the movement of the academia into the private and public sectors. With regard to our skills base it is of concern that 16% of all adults are functionally illiterate. Other professionals lacking in South Africa are doctors and nurses despite the fact each year about 6 500 nurses are produced. Due to emigration that is estimated to be at 0, 2% per annum. A study commissioned by the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (Jipsa) highlighted that South African tertiary graduates have qualifications that are not suited for the working world (Zake, 2006).

Currently South Africa is experiencing graduate unemployment as it stands at 9%. It is argued that 38% of the adult population has matriculated and only 8% have tertiary

qualifications. In terms of employment skills, there is a gap at all levels between the skills required in the workplace and current skills available in the working population. For example, 60 to 70% of information technology graduates from universities in eThekweni leave our city immediately after graduation (eThekweni Municipality Long Term Development Framework, 2001). South Africa still believes in contracting foreign nationals to curb the domestic skilled labour supply problem (see Woolard et al, 2003:471). This option raised a differing views on the development of skills in South Africa, noting the International Investment Council (IIC) suggestion that argue for the obtaining skilled workforce from abroad, as it view it as essential for the economy's growth. Another view highlights that the country's economic growth hinges on the development of skills in South Africa (see Mpahlwa, 2006).

The post-apartheid South Africa skills development trend is characterised by the shift from narrow and task oriented to being multi-dimensional in almost all levels of occupational echelons (See Joffe, 1995:186). In addition, the early rise of mining and manufacturing led to the development of skill profile based on *taylorism* – separate skills and knowledge from the workers in the production process and strict demarcations between tasks (see Webster and Leger, 1992:57). These principles tended to shape influenced the hierarchical of work organisation that reinforce racial-entrenched division of labour and strict, highly paid management that do planning decision. Furthermore, the current industrial relations system is characterised by adversarialism in the past and this was witnessed by the division of about 3.3 million members of the labour movements in 1980s based on race and skill. The racism on the shop-floor and lack of promotion of black workers relates to the ideological construct of 'white workers equal skilled workers'.

There is also a reduction in craft and related trades especially among Africans and a significant amount of African employees' remains in elementary occupations, a disproportionately large percentage made up of women. SAARF (2004) highlighted that the proportion of skilled categories among employed increased between 1996 and 2001 from 40% to 46 % (see Netshitenzhe, 2006:19). The racialised skills ownership led to

chronic skills shortage amongst the previously disadvantaged black communities (see Adam, 1997: 232; Joffe, 1995:190) and today presents serious challenges and serve as constraint to competitiveness in the era of global integration. The highly celebrated globalisation processes that are characterised by the spectacle of global commodity flows that perpetuates two crucial aspects of which are the increasingly predominant global linkages that facilitates opportunities and as well as the exclusion, displacement and suffering, and continue to exacerbate global inequalities of all sorts. Secondly, the globalisation notion marked by spreading of highly uneven interconnections in itself (see Kraak, 2003:665; Böröcz, 2006:44).

Findings

The findings of this study helped in revealing and confirming some of the presumed assumptions about the status of skills and equity in South Africa on a general note. Although we get some glimpse of what might be happening in a bigger picture when we speak of skills as means to redress past injustices in the shop floor. This survey tend to limit different interpretation as graphs that were generated from data collected from workers who are in different category highlight clearly the state of affairs in the government workplaces such as Parks and Recreation Department.

The impact of historical socio-political development factors suggests that set foundations of the current experience of skills shortage especially amongst African populace. Because African education and training insufficiency remains the legacy of apartheid state that was “dismantled” in 1994. Again this study revealed that African workers were and still denied accumulating human skills and capital and that has affected them negatively as they could not fairly compete for physical vertical or horizontal of mobility in the workplace (see Adam, 1997: 232; McCord and Bhorat, 2003:114; Terreblanche, 2002: 11 - 17; Vally, 1997a: 40).

Since, the question of skills is analysed in terms of its relationship to work, performance and labour market. For example, SAMWU Workers Representative noted that “*Indian*

workers are given lighter duties and Africans are given duties such as digging trench or ploughing or carrying heavy load especially temporal African workers. Furthermore, Indians remain enjoying permanent status whilst majority of Africans workers remain employed on fixed and temporal status” (Interview, 15 December 2006). This survey confirm the statistics provided by Stats(2010: 39) that income inequalities still vary according to racial groupings. Black Africans earned about 22, 1% of what the white population earned; 33, 3% of what Indian/Asians earned; and 80, 2% of what the Coloured population earned. In the bottom 5% black Africans earn R500 or less per month while the white population earned R2 000 or less per month, so the top 5%, black Africans earned R13 000 or above compared to the white population who earned R34 000 or above per month (see McCord and Borat, 2003: 122 – 124).

The study confirmed that the workplace is still resemble the old segregated workplace, as workers canteen at Botanic Garden still segregated between African who are squashed in their little canteen with less equipments. Whilst Indians and White stay in their separate canteen that is separated by the curtain between them and African workers (Interview: SAMWU – Workers Representative, 15 December 2006). In arguing further data in this study shows that occupation opportunities creates some new form of inequality through its selection process and values that determines the income, status and position in the stratification exercises(see McKay, 1995:32 and 36). In addition, data collected pertaining the working conditions at Botanic Gardens tend to confirm the *correspondence theory* of Bowles and Gintis (1976) that argues that schools and workplace socialise and allocate particular roles in society as part of transmission capitalist economy standards.

In addition, this type of setting places a great challenge and emphasises the continuation of suffering to the same old disadvantage Africans, as they still forced to sell their labour power for their livelihood in the highly competitive labour market that demand skilled workforce. The government’s intervention has also occurred in the context of the “high-skills” whereby high skills seen as being necessary for successful expansion of human resources development and continue to turn a blind eye on the

question of land as part of resolving the problem. Despite the governmental enactment of various legislations such as the Employment Equity Act (EEA) and the Skills Development Act (SDA) since 1994, as the means to redress issues of equity and skills shortages in the South African labour market. In addition, even the attempt by trade union to improve skills through sending of its Workers Representative, as part of its efforts to have input towards such redressing past injustices campaign. The short falls of the trade union training is that it is selective and denies the majority of general membership. Furthermore, the qualification that are attained in the institutions such as Workers College¹² institution that is utilised by trade union are graded as junior and given some credibility to those that are offered by the government institutions.

Despite the offering or recognition of the current different set of educational programmes that are geared to redress the past inequalities by different institutions but what is common to most of them that serve the interests of the current state of socio-political capitalist system. For example, the study revealed that the prerequisite when workers are employed at Botanic Garden is that they must have a particular education standard in this case – Matric. Once workers become Municipality employee, then they are given some informal training in order to improve performances in their respective jobs. In addition, even the trade union skills also serve the aspirations of the same capitalists system and I will argue that it gives workers a false hope that is capable of resolving the past injustices. Whilst trade union skills or training teaches workers in general to be survive or get better treatment within the system that first and foremost proletarianised and devalued them as people to be regarded what they are today workers(see Wolpe, 1995:7; Mthembu, 2005:18).

Therefore, the above mentioned scheme of state of affairs in this study of things suggest that changes that are perceived to be taking place have reformists tendency, as its origins are both the economic and political fundamental demands of corporate capital(see Wolpe, 1995:13). Durkheim and Parson's view tend to confirm what is taking place in South Africa, as it suggests that education mould and restrict individuals based

¹² Based in Durban.

on social veracity, as currently we see government enacting various legislations that attempt to enforce the redress process of the past injustices (see McKay, 1995:31). Again, the buzz of demand of skilled workforce and the shortage of skilled workers especially amongst African workers that are required in the globalised capitalist economy concur with this view.

The South African government tries to legitimise itself after the apartheid era, as it adopted the *ideology of meritocratic /equal opportunity* that legitimise the inequality and promote the belief that talents are determines ones success. Bowles and Gintis argue that meritocratic ideology create illusion that economic success depended on the belief that school provide equality of educational opportunity (see McKay, 1995). This argument is confirmed by what transpired in the interview when he noted that African workers are not offered alternative means such as new skills training to enable them to compete fairly, as they continue to be subjected to the same opportunity to apply for other better paying jobs or training as like all other workers in the Parks Department. In addition, SAMWU Workers Representative also noted that programmes such as the Adult Basic Education Training – *“ABET administrators are not transparent in terms of full programme except to hear the management citing that it does not have money to further its participants. That is witnessed when workers make applications, responses thereto highlight those reasons, and sometimes there is no response in some of the applications”* (Interview, 05 January 2007). On other hand the prerequisite of Matric or tertiary education when workers are hired at Botanic Garden seems to be not serving any purpose, as means nothing in facilitating the redressing the past injustices.

In arguing further, firstly the fact that eThekweni Municipality introduced a new outward focus training that will offer gardening skills to the communities that are surrounding city. In addition, again the attempts by the government - eThekweni Municipality to legitimise itself by using of indigenous rich and strong social values and the principle of *“ubuntu”* of which places great emphasis on reaching out and caring for each other(2004/2005 Annual Report of the eThekweni Municipality; Mthembu, 2005:18). The study suggests that some of the policies are not implemented fully or no political will to apply them in

the shop floor by some members of the management. For example, the majority of workers in the Parks Department remain employed on temporal bases by Trust/Co-op of which employs them for a period not less than five (5) years. This concur with what is mentioned above, as the same old form of coercion that compels the adult African men to work for 'usual wages, for at least one year' and perpetuates the notion of *cheap labour* and still the norm for wages in all other sectors. Another form of coercion of which is more subtle in nature but is much more far reaching in its implications. The imposition of taxes of which today are styled in form of value added tax – VAT that charge same to everybody regardless of social status and these are taxes enforced the obligation to enter the cash economy in order to earn cash wages to pay these taxes (see Popenoe, 1998:424, Lund, 1998).

Whilst fixed terms workers start, enjoying benefits like permanent workforce after finishing three (3) years of service. Management introduced fixed term system in 2000, the system that places workers on *placement programme* that will enable them to become permanent in the “end”. Fixed terms system does not specify the period, as other workers work for a period estimated to 35 years (SAMWU Workers Representative, Interview: 05 January 2007). Skills that are offered to workers are not meant to redress the past injustices but to help workers to perform their same old duties not for mobility in the echelons on management. SAMWU Official argued in his interview that “*the Municipality offer frivolous skills such as telephone answering, first aid, Batho-Pele and fail to offer meaningful scientific skills that are regarded as scarce i.e. engineering*” (Interview: 15 December 2006). Although Matric or tertiary education is reported to be growing and its demand is based on gender inclusion of which increased women by 3%.

However, in the Parks Department has experience women increase, as there is no single female in our respondents interviewed. This type of development tends to concur with Mzaca when he argues that the theory of labour market highlights the question of labour control and the structure of the labour market itself (see Mzaca, 2001:9). The study confirm this theory because labour force of EThekweni Municipality based at

Botanic Garden are primary labour market characterised by segmentations based on race, job categories with high earnings, upward mobility, job security and high skills requirements; and the secondary labour market characterised by low skills, low wages, minimal job security and no upward mobility(see Vally,1997b:88;).

Furthermore, study agrees with the argument that other segmentation occurred further within the labour market through casualisation and flexibility strategies that are marked by the emergence of divisions between core and non-core workforces (see Webster and Von Holdt, 2005:7; Vally, 1997b: 83). For example, I will argue that workers who are regarded as Horticulturalist I can say in this regard they represent the core workforce of which are Indians, the first category of African are regarded as Assistant Horticulturalist of which represent non-core and second category of Africans represent the casuals that can b regarded as the periphery staff.

This study also confirm the theory of control, as it argues that technical control, emerges only when the whole production process has a large segments of it are based on a technology that paces and directs the labour process (Mzaca, 2001:9; Vally, 1997b: 83). The respondent highlighted that

“technology or machinery take few hours and less labour force, it improve working conditions, as the work done by machine is much better in terms of quality and time when compared to work done by hand” (SAMWU Workers Representatives, Interview: Interview: 05 January 2007). A closely related theory to be referred to in this study is that of the labour process. This theory highlights the relationship between the questions of skill and labour control (see Braverman, 1974; Cressey and MacInnes, 1980; and Burawoy, 1979 and 1985; Maller, 1992).

In view of what is said above concerning government- Municipality strategies to redress past injustices within workplace, the government needs to go further than just assisting communities with gardening skills and its workforce with highly controlled skills training opportunities. At least the eThekweni Municipality acknowledges the need for the communities to be self-reliant by engaging in farming activities. In arguing further there

can be no proper gardening if there is any suitable land to carry out such activity. In view of the fact that African communities are mostly quarantined in the slave camps/ townships where there is suitable land for such activity beside small plots by the road or next to graveyards or unused land that is meant something else.

Concluding remarks

History shows that the question of skills in South Africa has part industrial development and handled differently in different times. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to enable us to have an overview on the skills, equity in the labour market with information gathered within Ethekewini Municipality. Providing basic information and impact of new skills offered on the working conditions in redressing past inequality and injustices in the workplace. In view of the prevailing material conditions that affect workers in their livelihoods and their households, it adopted the situational and drifting away from the uncritical 'captive mind¹³' approaches in analysing data. The *critical theory* is adopted in the analysis because it aspires "to identify the unresolved tensions in the existing social reality and thereby to cause a change of consciousness" (Snyman, 1997: 222). Lukacs argue that because of history of capitalist 'civilisation' that offer us the opportunity to learn about reification from the inside out for the first time, as working individuals are subjected, as a saleable commodity, alienated from social processes that lead to the dehumanisation of which can be made self conscious (Snyman, 1997: 222). Furthermore, the critical theory is needed because is "guided by analysis of the historical process that has an interest in the future" (Snyman, 1997: 223).

Findings conclude that the apartheid legacy keeps on haunting South Africa despite its highly celebrated democratic era, it continues to grapple with issues of redressing past injustices such as unequal provision of skills to its workforce. Income inequalities and

¹³ The uncritically approach that subscribe to the ideas of Western origin or what Alatas (1974) terms as the 'captive mind' - which largely refers to the theoretical and institutional dependence of scholars to Western thought and the uncritical and imitative manner in which such knowledge is assimilated and disseminated. He further notes that intellectual imperialism has resulted in a lack of attention from issues that should be of critical concern to non-Western societies (Abdullah and Low, 2005).

unemployment are still prevalent. This confirmed by one of the Respondents who highlighted in his interview that *“the managerial structures still resemble the same old structure that was characterised by the senior management as it is still white; middle management consists of the majority of Indians followed by whites and small segment of Africans”*(IMATU Workers Representative: Interview, 12 December 2006).

Although Ethekewini Municipality highlights in its vision that it is an African City that draws on its rich and strong social heritage and the principle of *“ubuntu”* which places great emphasis on reaching out and caring for each other. But it still the failing to make that vision to be reality in the workplace where Africans remain subjected to the same old alienating and racist working conditions like in the apartheid state. Pillars colonialism are still intact as the economy is still monetised based on values and cultures of western world and some of the indigenous values and cultures such as *‘ubuntu’¹⁴* are co-opted to the westernised economic system as part of legitimising the current political system.

This study enabled us to ascertain whether the skills training programme that Ethekewini Municipality has invested to its workforce or not or to a formerly disadvantaged populace or is it able to deal with past injustices and as well as the facilitating mobility in a particular job category if any. The study highlights that globalisation has altered the economy in fundamental ways through the creation of common political, economic, and social systems. These conditions have affected business as well and they are increasingly adopting new forms of labour – changing the status of workers employment, from permanent to atypical workforces, consisting of contract and casualised workforce.

¹⁴ Nkosi concurs by arguing that a growing tendency towards greed and commercialisation of land, even by Africans and especially in urban areas and that contributes in gradually destruction of the sense of *‘Ubuntu’* of which is the basis of African spirituality within the theocratic settings –(see Tafete, 2003:89). Therefore, I will argues that it will be unrealistic to expect the success of *“ubuntu”* as a philosophy within the spacious of democracy, as it this philosophy – democracy represent something totally different and it also dismally failed to offer a “holistically approach to offer love and respecting of human beings, nature and other living creatures”. In addition, the custom of asking for rain or making rain through the help of the ancestors and God still features strongly in some communities.

Recommendations

Government needs to consider passing legislation that will enforce and monitor the implementation of its policies;

Government needs to revisit its redress strategies – to consider the reversing the proletarianisation processes - land alienation;

Government should consider redressing skills underdevelopment by introducing relevant education system that function outside bounds of pass and failure principle;

In addition, government should consider introducing relevant education system that encompasses the notion of indigenous knowledge systems;

Further research needs to be conducted to assess how government can assist its departments such as the parks and recreation - sub-sector in speeding up the process of redressing the inequality in the “workplace”;

A detailed, comprehensive study needs to be undertaken by government and trade unions to determine the actual level of deterioration of working conditions within its government departments;

Trade unions need to devise strategies on how to engage positively with skills shortage development programme instead of being ‘spectators’;

Further research needs to be conducted by each government department to assess the viability of redress strategies;

Lastly, government needs to formulate tangible programme to revisit the notion of redressing the past injustices in conjunction with the land redistribution mechanism that will be realistic to the prevailing and historic socio-political conditions in the country.

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