CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE BODY OF SCHOLARSHIP

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 explains the context of this study, offering an overview of the rise of the Skills Development Act (SDA), and arguing that Higher Education institutions (HEIs) have made little attempt to understand the underlying intent of the SDA, and therefore to determine whether and why such an intent coincides with or differs from the view of staff development in HEIs. Although various authors (refer Chapter 1) note that HEIs encounter challenges with the implementation of the SDA, they do not, however, state why the challenges occur. This implies, as also argued in Chapter 1, that the challenges may be only the tip of the iceberg regarding the underlying problems that indicate a mismatch between the reasons for the implementation of the SDA, on the one hand, and for staff development in HEIs, on the other. The differences in reasons and why they occur should, therefore, be explored to achieve the aims of this study, namely to understand how SDFs perceive the effects of the implementation of the SDA on staff development in HEIs. Achieving the aforementioned implies that this study should interrogate discourses in order to unveil underlying perceptions, such as power relations, ideologies and meanings attached to the rationale for and means of achieving the goals of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs. The aim of this study is not to determine which staff development practices have changed since the implementation of the SDA. It is also not the aim of this study to determine the number of staff development practices that have changed since the implementation of the SDA. Instead, it is to determine the reasons for the match or mismatch between the rationale for and means of achieving the goals of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs. This is why it is argued in Chapter 1 that this study is positioned against the paradigmatic intersection of interpretivism and critical theory.

In this Chapter I provide a critical interpretation of the literature pertaining to the rationale for the implementation of the SDA and also of the rationale for staff development in HEIs, as separate fields of study. I intended to understand the nature of both staff development in HEIs and skills development as it is captured in the SDA.

To establish the rationale for and means of achieving the goals of the SDA, I have limited the review to the domain of skills development as envisaged in the implementation of the SDA (refer definition in §1.4.3). My fishing net was therefore

proverbially cast to find the rationale for the implementation of the SDA and the means to achieve its goals, as portrayed in the SDA. Subsequently, other publications which explain or report on developments within SA's legislative framework for skills development were also reviewed. The literature review culminated in presenting thematically the rationale for and the means of achieving the goals of the SDA. In conclusion, a critical interpretative summary (against the epistemological backdrop of this study, namely the intersection of interpretivism and critical theory) offers the reasons for and the means of achieving the goals behind the implementation of the SDA and its consequences for staff development in HEIs.

In order to gain a sense of the rationale for staff development in HEIs and the means of achieving its goals, the review was initially limited to publications dealing with the implementation of the SDA in SA HEIs. Although I found a number of publications that dealt with the effects of the implementation of the SDA in SA industry, I struggled, however, to find enough authoritative sources dealing with the implementation of the SDA in HEIs. In this regard, I found solace in the statement by Kapp *et al*. (2006:4) that South African studies are usually limited to single case studies of particular HEIs. As a consequence, I extended the review to include the rationale for and means (forms) of staff development as it evolved over time in national and international HEIs. My aim was to determine the core characteristics of staff development in order to establish the match or mismatch between the aims of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs. Therefore, I document the characteristics of staff development in HEIs as historical and chronological themes. I conclude the review with a critical interpretative summary (against the epistemological backdrop of this study: Critical Theory) of the core characteristics of staff development in HEIs. Thereafter I table the match and mismatch between the reasons for and means of achieving the goals of the implementation of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs.

After an extensive review of the body of scholarship on the rationale for and means of achieving the goals of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs, I argue in this chapter that the mismatch between the goals of the implementation of the SDA and those of staff development can be summarised as follows: the implementation of the SDA is driven by a labour[17] perspective (which has arisen more visibly since

[17] It is stated in discussion paper 1 of the National Skills Conference that the Congress of South African Trade Unions took the: "lead in developing a practical strategy for training reform" in South Africa (Department of Labour, 2007a:49).

1994 as part of the democratisation of SA), namely that investment in education and training would lead to the financial prosperity of the individual, employer and country at large. Against the background of this perspective (which seems to relate closely to Human Capital Theory) the employer (in this case, the HEIs) is held responsible and accountable for planning, funding and reporting on the development of staff members (prioritised for designated[18] staff members) as well as for contributing to the skills development of unemployed SA citizens. The government therefore introduced a levy scheme, compelling HEIs to budget for institutional as well as national skills development priorities and established the Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority[19] (ETDP SETA) to monitor within a certain prescribed time frame not only who should benefit from skills development but also what the quality of such development should be.

The aforementioned context of the implementation of the SDA contrasts with the core rationale for and means of staff development in HEIs. Staff development opportunities were available to all staff members in SA and international HEIs long before the implementation of the SDA. The structures such as policy, budget and practices (also referred to as means or forms) in support of staff development have consequently evolved over time to address the personal as well as the professional development needs of individuals in tandem with institutional development needs. Although numerous authors such as Knight *et al*. (2006:320), Kapp *et al*. (2006:4), Allen, Blackwell and Gibbs (2003: 66 to 78), Blackwell *et al*. (2003:3), Beardwell (2003:169), Ljubljana (1995:68-69) Zuber-Skerrit (1995a:106) and Bitzer *et al*. (1998:11) describe various forms of staff development and ways to enhance learning, the literature remains silent on the planning, recording and reporting of staff development activities in HEIs. This could be ascribed to staff development activities being viewed predominantly as self-motivated and informally driven (i.e. a voluntary activity by the individual). This implies that HEIs could encounter problems with the planning and recording of skills development activities that appear on the ETDP SETA template because information does not seem to be readily available. In my extensive literature review, I have not come across any instances either where staff members were willing to commit themselves to development opportunities with the intention of achieving a qualification that could be exchanged for financial benefits. It

[18] Designated means black people, women and people with disabilities (Department of Labour, 2004:3; Department of Labour, 2007b:2).
[19] HEIs fall within the scope of the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) (Department of Labour, 2000a:8).

could, therefore, be argued that staff development is viewed mainly from a task accomplishment perspective, rather than from a financial perspective. This is why I argue in this chapter that the only match between the goals of the SDA and those of staff development is the fact that the SDA and staff development in HEIs both aim to provide opportunities for employee development. There is, however, a mismatch between the SDA and staff development in HEIs in terms of the rationale and process for achieving staff development.

In conclusion, I argue in this chapter that as the implementation of the SDA seems to relate closely to Human Capital Theory, it should be examined more closely. I thereafter discuss Social Capital Theory and argue that it is the key to understanding the SDFs' perceptions of the effects of the implementation of the SDA in HEIs. I also indicate what has already been achieved by previous research, what remains to be researched and how the present study may endeavour to address these lacunae. My review of the reasons for and means of achieving the goals of the SDA follows below, where I focus on the rationale and goals for achieving the aims of the SDA.

2.2 Review of the body of scholarship on the reasons for and means to achieve the goals of the Skills Development Act

I have identified three recurring themes in the body of scholarship pertaining to the reasons why the South African (SA) government implemented the Skills Development Act (SDA) and the means to achieve its goals, namely:

- Investment in education and training towards economic growth
- The pursuit of equality in education and training
- The provision of structures to achieve the first two imperatives.

It should be noted that the above-mentioned three themes should not be seen as distinct and separate from one another. They are interrelated and their boundaries are blurred. An explanation of the above-mentioned three themes is given in the following sections (2.2.1 to 2.2.3).

2.2.1 Investment in education and training towards economic growth

The first reason for the implementation of the SDA is an economic imperative: to increase investment in education and training so as to improve workers'[20] productivity as a means of increasing SA's economic prosperity. For example, the SDA *inter alia* states that [its] purposes are: "to develop the skills of the South African workforce – to improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employers; … [and] to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve the return on that investment" (Republic of South Africa, 2004:4). In addition, the Memorandum[21] of the SDA notes that South Africa's poor economic performance can be attributed to the poor quality and relevance of skills in the workplace as well as the low levels of investment in education and training in the workplace (Memorandum of the Skills Development Act, 1998:46).

A *leitmotif* running throughout the Memorandum of the SDA and the statement of purpose of the SDA and its implementation, is the notion that skills development will improve employee productivity and in turn lead to the economic prosperity of individuals, industry and the country as a whole (Mdladlana, 2003a:2; Samuel, 1996: 17; Van Dyk *et al*., 1997:41; Mercorio *et al*., 2000:5 and 12; Shaik, 2001:3 and 50; Cloete, 2001:17; Cloete, 2005:7 to 10, Van Dijk, 2003:2). The aforementioned suggests that the theory of Human Capital is the underlying rationale for the implementation of the SDA (see §2.4).

The notion that investment in education and training will lead to economic gains is also clear from the various statements made by government officials in the past four years. For example:

- "[T]he single greatest impediment to economic growth in South Africa is the shortage of skills" (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006:7);
- [T]he SA economy is seen as a dualistic economy – a First-World economy based on a skilled labour force and a Third-World economy based on marginalised or unskilled workers regarded as unemployable (Department of Labour and German Technical Co-Operation, 2007:3; Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2007:2; Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006:8; Mbeki, 2003:1; Ernst, 2000:4);

[20] Worker in this context means the employed as well as the unemployed worker (Republic of South Africa, 1998b:2).
[21] Before any Act is promulgated in SA, a memorandum on a particular Act is compiled for discussion in parliament.

- "There is compelling evidence that points to the strong relationship between investments in human capital (education, training, health, nutrition) and economic growth and development" (Pandor, 2006:1); and
- "The organisations that stand to gain the most are those that equip their employees with knowledge, talent, skills and opportunities to deliver and create value. It is such organisations that will establish a culture of lifelong learning and that will ensure sustainable growth in our economy" (Mdladlana, 2003a:1).

The above-mentioned statements made by government officials also clearly demonstrate government's assumption that investment in education and training is key to SA's economic prosperity. This stance can even be traced back to policy documents preceding the implementation of the SDA. The policy document called the Policy Framework for Education and Training (1994), states: "Unless the types of knowledge and skills available to society are transformed, the apartheid labour market will continue to exist … and economic development will remain stagnant." (African National Congress, 1994b:8). Hence, an investment should be made in education and training to address the "economic inequality, fragmentation and environmental destruction caused by apartheid" (Samuel, 1996:34). Similarly, the initial concept of the Green Paper on Skills Development (1997), another draft policy document under the auspices of National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), refers to "skills" as the "project of employee development … for economic purpose" (Department of Labour, 1997:Preface).

It is clear from the above-mentioned publications that precede the implementation of the SDA as well as in the previously mentioned governmental statements that the assumed economic value of investment in education and training is a firmly embedded government stance. However, it is of interest to note that in none of the aforementioned publications could I find any justification for the belief that investment in education and training would lead to economic prosperity, only verbal and written attempts to sell its assumed value to the general SA public. Nor did I find in the aforementioned publications an explanation of the meaning of the term, skills. For example the term "skills development" is elaborated on in the Green Paper on Skills Development, referring to "skills" as the "project of employee development … for economic purpose" (Department of Labour, 1997:Preface), yet it does not explain the meaning of skills. Similarly the SDA refers to skills as: "to provide employees with the opportunities to acquire new skills" (Republic of South Africa, 2004:4), yet it also

does not explain the meaning of the term “skills”. The SDA states that its purpose is to increase investment in education and training, which explains how skills would be enhanced, but not what the term “skills” means. I believe that it is important that I could not find scholarly research that indicates that HEIs' involvement in discussions would be a means of gaining an understanding of the meaning of the term skills and the intention of the SDA. Although government's media briefing on Accelerated and Shared Growth (ASGISA) refers to public enterprises being consulted in training and development matters, it is not clear whether HEIs were included (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006:1). In my opinion, the implementation of the SDA seems therefore to be little more than a popularised “labourism”.

Even if it were true that investment in education and training would lead to economic prosperity, it remains a moot point why the SDA recognises only workplace education and training as a means for creating economic prosperity but fails to recognise education and training outside the workplace. In this regard the SDA states: “to encourage employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment” (Republic of South Africa, 2004:4) and that workers (employees) should be encouraged to: “partake in Learnerships and other training programmes” (Republic of South Africa, 2004:4 and 16 to 18). It is also a moot point whether government is willing to recognise development that takes place outside the workplace. This may well be the case, since Learnerships and other training programmes are described in the SDA as learning directed towards workplace needs (Department of Labour, 2003:4). Therefore, the SDA (Chapters 4 and 5) sets out the development and provision of Learnerships and Skills Programmes that lead towards a qualification (Republic of South Africa, 2004:16 and 19) and that are directed towards particular workplaces, for example a Learnership or Skills Programme for Educators in Schooling (teachers) or Higher Education Practitioners (lecturers) (ETDP SETA, 2003:30). The significance of the aforementioned Learnership or Skills Programme is that it aims at enhancing the skills required in a particular workplace (schooling or practitioners in HE). The significance of formal qualifications differs, however, from Learnerships or Skills Programmes in the sense that they are intended to provide generic skills and knowledge (Geyser 2004:17; Hay and Marais, 2004:59 to 60; Drew, 1998:8) which are applicable across workplaces. An example would be a HE education or accounting qualification that does not restrict the individual to being an educationist in HE only. It also does not restrict an individual from being an accountant in industry only. A Learnership or Skills Programme qualification therefore refers to a specific workplace qualification and differs essentially from a formal

qualification provided by an HEI. This calls into question whether this implies that HEIs which train educationists, doctors, engineers, etc. by means of formal qualifications should now have to change their programme qualifications mix (PQM) to offer Learnerships or Skills Programmes for the sake of providing qualifications that would seemingly lead to SA's economic prosperity.

The Minister of Labour, who is responsible for the implementation of the SDA, refers to skills as: "gaining knowledge, talent, skills and opportunities to deliver and create value" (Mdladlana, 2003a:1). Similarly, the Minister of Labour said: "qualifications would come in very handy for the country" (Mdladlana, 2007:1). The message of the Minister of Labour is confusing because his message refers to skills development being somewhat broader than the definition that is tendered in the SDA, as previously discussed. It seems that the Minister's message does not restrict skills development only to Learnership and Skills Programme qualifications, but includes any form of learning that could lead to gaining knowledge, skills, etc. This again draws attention to the confusing messages that the meaning of the term "skills" seems to transmit. This leads to another question, namely whether the Minister's message implies that skills refer to knowledge acquisition as a skill, or whether the acquisition of knowledge, with the emphasis on the term acquisition, should be understood to be a skill.

In concluding this section – based on what has been said above, I argue, for the following reasons, that the economic inclination of the SDA seems to reflect a political ideology that is intended to govern investment in education towards achieving economic gains:

- No literature could be traced to substantiate the viewpoint that investment in education and training is the only foolproof recipe for economic gains; and
- the available literature does not refer to any attempt by government to consult with HEIs regarding the rationale and goals for achieving the aims of the SDA, nor to explain the meaning of the terminology contained in the SDA. The absence of public debate between HEIs and the ETDP SETA regarding the aims and rationale for the implementation of the SDA and how the latter matches or differs from those for staff development in HEIs could, therefore, be (as argued in Chapter 1) the reason why HEIs encounter challenges with the implementation of the SDA.

The next section explains that the ideological leaning of government towards investment in education and training as a seemingly foolproof recipe for economic prosperity is not the only reason for implementing the SDA; instead, the pursuit of equality seems to be the second reason.

2.2.2 Pursuit of equality in education and training

It is my contention that the second reason for implementing the SDA concerns social imperatives in pursuit of equality,[22] which involve redressing the past imbalances in the education and training of previously disadvantaged individuals. The focus on redressing past imbalances is obvious in the SDA, for example the statement of the SDA's purpose includes the following: "to improve the quality of life of workers, their prospects of work and labour mobility; … to improve the employment prospects of persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination and to redress those disadvantages through training and education" (Republic of South Africa, 2004:5). When he introduced the SDA, Labour Minister Mdladlana (Mdladlana, 2001:2) stated that the new legislation (SDA) sought to address the impediments to social development in SA in general, and the challenges of equity[23] in particular. Apart from legislating the government's intent to pursue equality in the SDA, various statements and publications made by government officials endorse government's notion of redress in education and training in SA (Samuel, 1996: 17; Van Dyk *et al*., 1997:41; Mercorio *et al*., 2000:5 and 12; Shaik, 2001:3 and 50; Cloete, 2001:17; Cloete, 2005:7 to 10; Van Dijk, 2003:2). A few examples are offered below:

- Only 8,7% of the economically active portion of the SA population received education before the democratisation of SA (1994) (Ernst, 2000:4; Van Dyk *et al*., 1997:25);
- The current shortage of skills in SA is due to the policies of the apartheid era (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006:7);
- "[P]ast skills development practices have not provided the range, diversity, quality and level of skills needed for socio-economic development" (Department of Labour, 2002a:7).

[22] Equality in this context means providing education and training opportunities to those adversely affected by SA's previous apartheid regime (Samuel, 1996:34).
[23] Equity refers to equal treatment and opportunities whereas access refers to entry to education, training and employment. Redress refers to the reversal of past unfair discrimination (Mercorio *et al*., 2000:23).

The above-mentioned statements as well as excerpts from the SDA clearly indicate government's protest against the pre-1994 government's failure to allow all SA citizens equal opportunities for education and training. In this regard, it is interesting that Cloete (2005:9), Pick (2005:1), Mbeki (2003:1), Cloete (2001:2), Shaik (2001:48), Mercorio *et al*. (2000:18) and Samuel (1996:1) should postulate that the SDA has been implemented to redress past inequalities in education and training.

Policy documents in the course of the development of the SDA furthermore point to government's goal of achieving equality and redress in the current education and training dispensation (SDA). The policy document: the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), contends, for example, that the education and training system under apartheid was fragmented along racial lines and furthermore biased in its access to education and training (African National Congress, 1994a:58). Following the RDP, the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) released by the Department of Labour in February 2001 (Department of Labour, 2000b:1) and the NSDS(2) in 2005 (Department of Labour, 2005:2) are examples of government's efforts to redress the inequalities in education and training that were the legacy of the apartheid regime.

The NSDS(2) provides that education and training should be prioritised towards the so-called categories of designated people in SA, namely: "85% black, 54% females and 4% people with disabilities" (Department of Labour, 2005:2). In addition, the principle of employment equity also crystallised in another legislative policy, namely, the Employment Equity Act (EEA), with its strong emphasis on the education and training of designated employees (Republic of South Africa, 1998a:1). The EEA refers to the SDA in paragraph 15(2)(d), where skills development is regarded as an affirmative action measure to retain and develop people from designated groups and to implement appropriate training measures, specifically to accelerate the career progress of people from the designated groups. For this reason, Cloete (2005:15), Cooper (2004:25) and Mercorio *et al*. (2000:7,49 and 109) are of the opinion that the SDA, SDLA and SAQA Act are "interlocked" with the EEA. In other words, the SDA provides a platform for planning the education and training of designated groups (to redress past inequalities in the education and training policies of SA) in the workplace.

Neither the EEA and the SDA nor the documentation of the ETDP SETA describes how the previously mentioned percentages should be interpreted. One possibility is

that this implies that when HEIs prioritise their education and training needs, 85% should be earmarked for black people, while 54% of the 85% should be females and should include 4% people with disabilities. Another possibility suggests that 4% of an institution's education and training needs should be earmarked for people with disabilities (irrespective of race and gender) and 85% for black people. This leaves 11% that could logically be allocated to formally advantaged white people. This also raises the question whether the aforementioned percentages refer to the SDA's 1% levy rebate or to the total education and training budget of HEIs. What is important to establish is the political and ideological basis according to which these percentages should be calculated. In this regard, the following questions could be asked:

- Would HEIs forfeit their rebate if the education and training provided were for non-designated staff members where the majority of the staff members in that particular HEI fall in the non-designated categories[24]?
- Would a focus on designated staff categories be perceived as discriminating against non-designated groupings in HEIs.[25]

In concluding this section, I argue that the aforementioned historical and recent policy documents clearly demonstrate government's intention to redress the inequality in education and training in the workplace, resulting from the legacy of the apartheid regime. I could not, however, track down any publications on how HEIs could or should achieve redress in education and training among their employee cadres which, in the case of HEIs, also include employees in non-designated groupings. The only logical conclusion I could draw is that government's failure to provide for a debate (or guidelines) on gaining an understanding of how to achieve equality in education and training in HEIs (as argued in Chapter 1) is another reason for the challenges that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA.

The background provided so far offers an explanation for the first two reasons behind the implementation of the SDA, namely investment in education and training (see §2.2.1) and achieving equality (as explained in §2.2.2). The next section explains that the third reason for the implementation of the SDA (according to my understanding of the literature) is to provide structures that will ensure that the aims of the SDA are achieved.

[24] As such, whites constitute 73% of staff at universities (Study South Africa, 2005:21).
[25] The SDA, as it is currently worded, seems to indicate that government's rationale for achieving equality in education and training is that it should be left to the HEIs to determine how best to manage this.

2.2.3 Provision of structures to pursue a return on investment in education and training, equality and quality

The third reason for the implementation of the SDA concerns the provision of various national and institutional structures to ensure a return on investment in education and training, as well as equality and quality in same. In terms of national structures, the SDA states *inter alia* that the purposes of the SDA are to be achieved by: "establishing an institutional and financial framework composing of the National Skills Authority (NSA), … sector education and training authorities (SETAs); … a skills development levy-financing scheme as contemplated in the Skills Development Levies Act; … [and] the South African Qualifications Authority [SAQA]" (Republic of South Africa, 2004:5). With regard to institutional structures, the SDA requires *inter alia* the: "appointment by employers of workplace skills development facilitators" (Republic of South Africa, 2004:26) and that employers should consult with employee representatives on matters dealt with in the SDA (Republic of South Africa, 2004:26).

The implementation of these national and institutional structures demonstrates that the realisation has dawned at governmental level that investing in and achieving equality and quality in education and training not only costs money but also requires structures (as previously described) to support the aims of the implementation of the SDA (as explained in §2.2.2 and §2.2.3). The opinion of authors such as Cloete (2005:9), Mdladlana (2001:2), Shaik (2001:25), Mercorio *et al*. (2000:5) could be mentioned in support of this statement. Although the aforementioned authors endorse the value of these structures as far as achieving the aims of the SDA is concerned, they do not draw attention to the possible effects that these structures might have on the tradition of staff development in a particular industry (and in HEIs in particular). HEIs might view the implementation of the aforementioned structures as an invasion of institutional autonomy and privacy. Lee (2002:4), Ziderman, (1996:313), as well as Whalley and Ziderman (1990: 377), for example, caution that industry might view the levy-financing scheme as an additional form of taxation. What seems to be of greater concern is government's attempt to govern (and invade) HEIs' staff development traditions. The SDA, for example, requires the establishment of an institutional Skills Development Committee to serve as a consultative forum regarding the implementation of and reporting on employee skills development to government (ETDP SETA) (Republic of South Africa, 2004:26). This leads to the

question why the management of HEIs' staff members' education and training practices cannot proceed without employee representative interaction and consent? Does this imply that HEI management is not, in the eyes of government, fit to manage the education and training of its own staff members, or is it merely a matter of government attempting to govern HEIs' staff development traditions?

With regard to the national structures put in place to achieve the aims of the SDA, the SDA outlines the functions and responsibilities of SETAs (HEIs belong in the ETDP SETA) to: "develop a sector skills plan in the framework of the national skills development strategy … allocating grants[26] in the prescribed manner and in accordance with any prescribed standards and criteria to employers, education and training providers … [and] to monitor education and training in the sector" (Republic of South Africa, 2004:6-10). What can be concluded from the above-mentioned functions of the ETDP SETA is that they attempt to intersect with the manner in which staff development is managed in HEIs. In this way it endeavours to monitor the planning and quality of staff development in HEIs on the one hand. On the other hand, based on HEIs performance in this regard, it endeavours to pay a rebate to HEIs. By implication the HEIs are compelled firstly to plan and report on a prescribed ETDP SETA template their staff development initiatives within a time frame spanning from 1 April to 28 March annually. Secondly, to plan and report on staff development initiatives against NSDS targets; and thirdly to indicate the NQF level[27] of education and training initiatives. Although the template provided by the ETDP SETA does not restrict HEIs from planning and reporting on their education and training initiatives for staff members in designated groups only, the criteria used for evaluating South African industries' plans and reports are based solely on the previously described NSDS targets (percentages) (Republic of South Africa, 2004:10).

The background so far clearly illustrates that government has established various structures to ensure that the goals of the SDA are achieved. I found ample examples in the literature referring to the role that a SETA should play in monitoring industries'

[26] The Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) outlines the levy grant system. With effect from 1 April 2000, South African employers must pay a levy of 0,5% and from 1 April 1% of their total payroll. The levy is paid to the SETA. Employers receive training rebates from the SETA when their workplace skills plan and report reflect compliance with national imperatives, are submitted within the prescribed time frames and have been approved by the relevant stakeholders (Cloete, 2005:13; Republic of South Africa, 2004:1; Mercorio *et al*., 2000:77).

[27] The level of the programme is based on national standards, hence recognised under a single national credit-based qualifications framework called the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as outlined in the SAQA Act (Republic of South Africa, 1995).

compliance with the SDA. Refer for example to the publications of authors such as Cloete (2005:11), Nxesi (2005:25), Vuma (2004:4), Möhr and Fourie (2002:34 and 128), Greyling (2001:38), Shaik (2001:25), Mercorio *et al*. (2000:2, 48 and 50), Bellis (2000:10) and Pretorius (1998:5 and 6). I have not, however, found literature that speak to the effects of the implementation of the SDA in HEIs nor on the attempts made between the ETDP SETA and HEIs to gain an understanding of the challenges that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA. What further complicates the communication between the ETDP SETA and the HEIs is the fact that various categories of education and training providers fall inside the scope of the ETDP SETA structure (Republic of South Africa, 2000:8; ETDP SETA, 2007:6). As such, HEIs' education and training matters are deliberated on in one of the two ETDP SETA chambers (in this case, the Levy Chamber) (ETDP SETA, 2007:6). The first chamber is the Budget Chamber under which the Department of Education (the umbrella body of public schools) falls. The second chamber is the Levy Chamber that includes ten categories of education and training providers that pay levies on their payroll for employee development. This includes providers such as trade unions, independent schools, political parties and libraries and archives (ETDP SETA, 2007:6) that, in my opinion, differ considerably from HEIs with regard to the nature and role of the institution and their government subsidies. With regard to how the skills development matters of HEIs are discussed at chamber level, it is assumed that matters submitted by the Skills Development Facilitators working in the 23 HEIs (Study South Africa, 2005: 3) are captured by nine ETDP SETA skills advisers (one skills adviser in each of the nine provinces of SA). The ETDP SETA skills adviser structure does not, however, provide for a co-ordinating function so that the HEI-specific needs from the nine provinces can be consolidated for presentation to the ETDP SETA Levy Chamber. This implies that, as the skills development matters submitted by HEIs are not co-ordinated, they cannot be presented as HEIs' collective needs to the ETDP SETA Levy Chamber.

In concluding this section, I reiterate that the implementation of various structures (as outlined in this section) is the third reason for the implementation of the SDA. The above-mentioned background to this study has a twofold significance. Firstly, it seems that the government places a higher value on the education and training of the designated groupings than on the capacity of the internal resources required to educate and train in HEIs or on the benefit that learning has for the individual or the institution (apart from economic gains). Secondly, the implementation of the aforementioned structures indicates that government seeks interaction between itself

on the one hand, and the ETDP SETA and the HEIs on the other. This implies that government recognises that the value of social capital (see §2.5) is pivotal to achieving the SDA's aims. This also implies that if there was a break in interaction (consultation and debate) between the ETDP SETA and HEIs as far as staff development matters are concerned, it could lead to social disorder or social deficit. In Chapter 1 I argued that HEIs have made little attempt to understand the underlying intent of the SDA and therefore to determine whether and why such an intent coincides with or differs from the view of staff development in HEIs. This is an indication that there is a measure of social deficit between the ETDP SETA and HEIs.

An extensive review of the literature indicates that the ETDP SETA has made little or no attempt to use the structures established under the SDA to promote communication and debate between HEIs and the ETDP SETA. For this reason, it is argued firstly, that the implementation of the SDA will remain a governmental political ideology unless efforts are made to ensure that skills development matters are debated between the HEIs and the ETDP SETA. Secondly, the failure of the ETDP SETA to provide fora for debate in order to develop an understanding of the rationale for the implementation of the SDA in the context of the HEIs' staff development could be the reason why HEIs encounter challenges (as argued in Chapter 1) with the implementation of the SDA.

Against this backdrop (§2.2.1 and §2.2.3), a critical interpretative summary will now be offered of the rationale for the implementation of the SDA and its consequences for the education and training of staff members in HEIs.

2.2.4 Critical interpretative summary of the reasons for the Skills Development Act and its consequences for staff development in Higher Education Institutions

The implementation of the SDA projects the government's view that the education and training policies and practices of the apartheid era were ineffective. As the implementation of the SDA is seen as a useful tool for SA's socio-economic development, as outlined in §2.2.1 to 2.2.3, the main reasons for the implementation of the SDA are as follows:

2.2.4.1 Investment in education and training would lead to economic prosperity in South Africa, and the education and training of those disadvantaged by the education and training policies and practices of apartheid should be prioritised.

Government's aim for the implementation of the SDA is, juristically, to govern workplace education and training so as to improve productivity and competitiveness in the industrial, commercial and service sectors and in this way ultimately to promote the South African economy. Hence, HEIs are compelled to invest in the education and training of their staff members, giving priority to people disadvantaged by apartheid. Consequently, if HEIs can afford to pay only for the development of designated staff members, the development of non-designated staff members will be neglected. For this reason, the SDA could not only create a negative social relationship between HEIs and their employees but could also hamper the HEIs' capacity to enhance the quality of student learning. I contend that the SDA's focus on preferential treatment for certain staff categories in HEIs is another example of the way in which Human Capital Theory is embedded in the fabric of the SDA, because prioritisation implies that organisations have to implement decision-making systems which, by implication, manage humans in a way similar to managing machines in a production chain (Baptiste, 2001:185). In addition, it implies that the SDA as an instrument now becomes an objective in its own right. Because government assumes that there is no tradition of educating and training staff members, it has implemented the SDA at a juristic level to govern HEIs' workplace education and training so as to give priority to those disadvantaged by apartheid. It is therefore questionable whether government, in its quest for economic prosperity, recognises the value of the staff members who did benefit from education and training under apartheid. It could furthermore be questioned whether investment in education and training has a direct correlation (causal effect) with economic prosperity. Even if there were a direct correlation, how can HEIs maintain or enhance the efficiency of their core tasks of teaching and research when expenditure on education and training needs should be prioritised for training those disadvantaged by apartheid? Alternatively, does this mean that the HEIs' budget for education and training expenditure should be increased to be higher than the levy amount to ensure that the staff members who benefited under apartheid also have an opportunity for education and training?

From the point of view of South African macro socio-economic development, the thrust towards skills development is accepted in principle by various authors, such as Cloete (2005:31), Govender (2003:12 and 71), Pretorius (1998:5), Shaik (2001:47) and Genis (1997:2). Similar sentiments are also echoed in the broader African context. King and McGrath (2002:119) argue that: "Skills development can be seen as an important tool linking social and economic agendas and ensuring that globalisation is infused with a social inclusion and poverty eradication focus." After all, it remains one of the responsibilities of government to provide a national structure for the development of human resources (Möhr *et al*., 2002:73 and 131; Ernst, 2000:4). The above-mentioned authors do not, however, express the notion that education and training should be legislated to ensure the education and training of employees from certain groupings, nor that the education and training of employees should be governed by bodies external to an organisation (in this case the HEIs).

2.2.4.2 The SDA would provide the structures and resources to ensure that the former two aims of the SDA are achieved

The structures established in terms of the SDA indicate that the government realised that achieving the aims of the SDA would not only cost money but would also require structural support. By imposing a levy grant system and establishing the ETDP SETA and the NQF structure the government therefore intends to make HEIs co-responsible for funding the education and training of not only their own employees but also the unemployed population of the country. These structures and aims have the following consequences for HEIs:

- HEIs are compelled to pay a levy of 1% of their payroll. On the basis of compliance (with various criteria as previously described), HEIs earn a rebate from the ETDP SETA. The levy grant system indicates that government does not seem to trust the ability of HEIs to budget and use education and training funds responsibly. It can, therefore, be questioned whether the education and training budget of HEIs has not decreased after the implementation of the SDA, because the mandatory grant (rebate) only equates to 50% of the HEIs' levy amount paid (Republic of South Africa, 1999:8-15).
- HEIs are compelled to provide credentialled workplace skills programmes. The SDA favours credentialled[28] training, that is, NQF-accredited[29] education

[28] Credentialled training means programmes that are standard-based and have credits attached to the standards accredited on the NQF (Mercorio *et al*., 2000:157; Cloete 2005:22).
[29] The SDA outlines the implementation of Skills Programmes and Learnerships that by their nature, are both accredited learning programmes (Republic of South Africa, 2004).

and training programmes which lead to a qualification. This implies, as previously argued, that government is not interested in the process of learning but in its outcome. This furthermore implies that government is trapped in the paradigm that investment in education and training will lead to economic prosperity, which resonates with the tenets of Human Capital Theory (refer to §2.4). It also implies that HEIs' workplace education and training programmes for staff members should be developed on the basis of unit standards, be accredited on the NQF and be registered with the ETDP SETA. The quality of the education programmes provided by HEIs is, however, quality assured by the Higher Education Quality Committee, and it is based on the principle of self-accreditation (Naidoo, 2004:3). In other words, the programmes provided by HEIs are not recognised by SETAs as registered programmes based on unit standards. This calls into question whether the SDA attempts to overshadow the accreditation process of HEIs regarding staff development.

- HEIs are compelled to liaise with the ETDP SETA with regard to Workplace Skills Plans and Annual Training Reports. However, the virtually non-existent interaction between the HEIs and the ETDP SETA, as previously explained, indicates that the problems that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA (as explained in Chapter 1) will remain for the foreseeable future. My view is that what is of greater importance and value, but not visible between HEIs and the ETDP SETA, are the actual and virtual resources that accrue during interaction. This refers to the value of Social Capital (refer to §2.5). For this reason, I argue that the government's failure to focus on the value of Social Capital could create a dissonance between industry's (HEIs') and the government's view of education and training. It therefore stands to reason that the ETDP SETA's failure to create fora for debate has reinforced the view that the SDA is merely the government's political ideology and could be far removed from the realities that HEIs are facing.

Although it is not my intention to depoliticise government's intention for the implementation of the SDA, I propose that "political ideologies", despite being a dominant motivating force, are only effective to the extent that they have been communicated and when there is mutual understanding between all stakeholders (government and industry).

In conclusion: §2.2 explains the underlying rationale for the implementation of the SDA and its consequences for HEIs. In addition, the underlying reasons for the

implementation of the SDA are questioned with a view to indicating the possible causes of the challenges that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA (as outlined in Chapter 1). This section concludes by proposing that the implementation of the SDA will remain a governmental political ideology if no effort is made to enhance communication between the HEIs and the ETDP SETA. To this end, the ETDP SETA should provide fora for debate so that the challenges that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA can be overcome. The theory of Social Capital is positioned in this study as key to understanding the effects of the implementation of the SDA on staff development in HEIs.

In this section I explained the underlying reasons for the implementation of the SDA and also indicated its theoretical basis, which resonates with Human Capital Theory. In addition I noted the implications of the implementation of the SDA for HEIs and also posed questions that remain unanswered due to the lack of interaction between the ETDP SETA and the HEIs. In the next section, I attempt to paint a picture of the rationale for and goals of staff development in HEIs. Thereafter I highlight the critical characteristics of staff development in HEIs and also point out the possible match and mismatch between the aims of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs.

2.3 Review of the body of scholarship on the underlying reasons for staff development in SA HEIs: more than meets the eye

2.3.1 Introduction

My review of the body of scholarship on the nature of staff development in HEIs indicates that this is a recurring topic. Several international and country-specific (including South African) perspectives can be found in the recorded literature. My Internet searches (e.g. SABINET ONLINE, OCLC and EBSCOhost) on 17 August 2007, using key words such as: staff or educator or academic or professional learning, skills, training, education, development in Higher Education Institutions, produced 247 publications of possible value. However, of all the publications reviewed (including the Internet responses), only nine publications were found to be vaguely related to the aim of this study, namely, the SDFs' perceptions of the effects of the implementation of the Skills Development Act (SDA) on staff development in South African HEIs. In the majority of these publications, with the exception of Greyling (2001) on “Skills Development in HE”, the focus of the research was either on other sectors in SA or on the attempts made to provide a model for skills planning

in South African industries (for example, Adeniji (2002); Gordon-Davis (2002); Mkhwanazi and Baijnath (2003); Kaplan (2003); Scott, (2003); Le Grange (2004); Mapesela and Strydom (2004); and Von Stapelberg (2006); Damian (2001)). As such, these publications did not provide any clues regarding the SDFs' perceptions of the effects that the SDA has on the staff development practices in HEIs.

Since publications falling in the scope of this research project are few and far between, I extended the review to the domain of the rationale for and means (forms) of staff development that have evolved over time in national and international HEIs. My review of the body of scholarship was, therefore, not restricted to South African HEIs only, but extended to include the historical rise of staff development in international and national HEIs in order to determine the critical features of staff development as it emerged in SA and in other countries. In addition, I argued in Chapter 1 that the absence of feasible explanations for the problems that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA, seem to indicate that it involves a great deal more than meets the eye.

As previously described, this study is positioned against the epistemological intersection of interpretivism and critical theory. By implication the literature review that follows is similarly positioned.

2.3.2 Staff development extends beyond the mere improvement of skills

One of the first books published on staff development is entitled *Staff Development in Higher Education*, and edited by Teather (1979). This book consists of an international compendium of papers contributed, in the main, by practising staff developers from 12 parts of the world: Australia, Britain, Canada, Denmark, East and West Germany, the Indian subcontinent, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America. Each writer defines staff development and discusses the staff development approaches and practices that seem appropriate to the country concerned. Together they describe a vision of far-reaching development beyond the mere improvement of skills. The definitions offered in Teather (1979) suggest that staff development includes the processes, structures and programmes that harmonise individual and institutional interests towards mutual growth. A few examples are offered below:

- “A systematic attempt to harmonise individuals' interests and wishes, and their carefully assessed requirements for furthering their careers with the

forthcoming requirement of the organisation in which they are expected to work" (Piper and Glatter, 1977:14).

- "Staff development involves the individual and the institution in a mutual process of change" (Greenaway and Mortimer, 1979: 61).
- "Staff development refers to improving the skills and knowledge of the faculty" (Shore, 1979:77). Shore (1979) furthermore notes that the improvement of skills and knowledge is "only part of the story of improving teaching in a university. Some improvements can be made by changing the reward system for good teaching, upgrading it *vis-à-vis* the publishing, committee and administration achievements, which are in practice, the main criteria for tenure and promotion. Other improvements can be made by offering better media service" (Shore, 1979:77).
- "Staff development is conceived in terms of in-service training" (Isaacs, 1979:82).
- "Staff development should promote understanding between various kinds of staff and different levels of administration" (Jalling, 1979:209).
- "[I]nstructional design of conditions of learning, faculty or organisational development" (Gaff, 1979:237).

The above-mentioned definitions provide clues to the nature of staff development (at least as perceived up to 1979). Firstly, since staff development matters have been widely published since 1979, it could be argued that staff development is a historical given in HEIs (Fraser, 2005:158; Webb, 1996b:1). Bitzer *et al*. (1998:11) note that while staff development units in most SA historically privileged HEIs were established during the late 1970s, there was a significant rise in staff development in SA HEIs during the 1990s (Bitzer *et al*., 1998:11).

Secondly, the value of staff development is perceived as the key to responding to and shaping individual and institutional goals. Thirdly, the references to action learning and research, discussions, mentoring in learning, careers and creating understanding among staff in various categories, indicate that the vision of development extends well beyond the mere improvement of skills. Instead, staff development is perceived as including the structures, processes and programmes that support employee development.

This leads to the fourth and perhaps most prominent characteristic of staff development in HEIs. In none of the previously mentioned definitions are attempts

made to base the value of staff development on the acquisition of monetary wealth, but rather on growth in skills and knowledge. By implication, this denotes the irrelevance of accreditation (category[30]) attached to an opportunity for staff development, as long as the opportunity contributes to the individual's skills and knowledge in harmony with institutional needs. I therefore argue that it is not surprising to note that the terms associated with those opportunities which HEIs recognise to be staff development opportunities are widely divergent. In the next section I will, therefore, elaborate on the different uses of terms associated with staff development practices in HEIs.

2.3.3 Staff development opportunities make use of widely divergent terms

The report of Foster and Roe (1979:17-37) is based on the findings of a national Australian survey of HEIs, and makes the following points:

- Staff development activities include formal[31] courses leading to a qualification. These are, however, not common in Australian universities (p. 25).
- Staff development activities include short informal courses. These take a variety of forms, ranging from scheduled programmes to impromptu events arranged to suit the needs of a particular group or department (p. 25).
- Staff development activities include other forms of development, such as seminars, workshops, guidance from a colleague, finding out what other people are doing (pp. 22 and 23), the secondment of staff (ranging from a few months to a year) and/or joint inter-institutional research projects (p 30).
- Staff development activities are provided in-house or external to the institution on a classroom or self-instruction basis (p. 25). With regard to the provision of in-house programmes, Forster *et al*. (1979) note that the research and development units in most Australian universities provide or co-ordinate staff development activities. In some Australian HEIs where there are no research and development units, advisory committees (known by various names) provide consultations or various development activities (p. 18).
- Participation in staff development is voluntary (p. 18).

[30] Formal, informal or non-formal programmes that are either accredited or not. Category, in this case, refers to the nature of the programme: is it a degree, a short course, a unit standard a diploma, certificate etc.

[31] In South Africa formal qualifications are referred to as those programmes that are credentialled and recognised on the National Qualifications Framework (Republic of South Africa, 1995; Mercorio *et al*., 2000:157; Cloete, 2005:22).

In a similar vein, Nisbit and McAleese (1979:38-56) summarise the 1979 position of staff development in British universities as follows:

- "Initial training": generally available, short (one-week) courses, usually specific to the university, including an induction element.
- "Formal provision for experienced staff to develop their teaching": beginning to grow, still mainly in the form of short conferences for discussion, often in a singe discipline, regional or national.
- "Informal provision within universities" (often in departments: well established for research, quite extensive for teaching, but not organised, and wide variations).
- "Other aspects (training and supervision for research students, courses in administration): beginning of awareness of a need" (Nisbit *et al*., 1979:46).

The above-mentioned staff development activities in British universities noted by Nisbit and McAleese (1979:38-56) clearly match the previous summary of staff development drawn from the Foster *et al*. (1979:17-37) report on a survey of Australian universities. It is, however, of interest to note that Nisbit *et al*. (1979:37) use the term formal when referring to programmes being structured whereas in the previously mentioned report of Foster *et al*. (1979:17-37), the term formal refers to a programme leading to a qualification. This difference in the meaning attached to the term formal, for example, once again reinforces my view that the meanings attached to various staff development opportunities are widely divergent. For ease of understanding in the present study, the term formal, therefore, refers to those programmes leading to a qualification, in contrast to the term "non-formal" that refers to any other structured programmes that do not necessarily lead to any qualification (i.e. a short course). Informal also refers to learning through group discussions, trial and error, reflection, discovery and learning from one another (i.e. in a seminar, workshop, group discussion).

The report of Shore (1979:76-86) on Canadian universities provides strands of practices similar to those discussed in the previously mentioned reports. In addition, Shore argues, however, that the improvement of skills and knowledge in a faculty (the term faculty refers to members of academia) is only part of the story of improving learning and teaching (Shore, 1979:77). Some improvements can also be made by: "changing the reward system for good teaching, upgrading it *vis-à-vis* the publishing, committee and administration achievements, which are in practice the main criteria for tenure and promotion" (Shore, 1979:77). Shore emphasises that staff

development is regarded not only as the obvious, previously defined, structured formal or non-formal staff development programmes but also as the structures in HEIs that support staff development. Shore (1979:77) also notes that most Canadian HEIs have opted for consultations, discussions and guidance from more experienced staff members as the means for staff development. In other words, staff development not only consists of formal, non-formal or associated structures but also includes informal activities (consultations, discussions, and guidance).

With regard to informal activities forming part of staff development, Nisbit and McAleese (1979:42) also note: “It is customary also for universities to stress the informal training in departments by the experience of working alongside colleagues” (Nisbit *et al*., 1979:42). These authors state, however, that the provision of this kind of training is so informal and disorganised that it did not fall within the scope of their survey. I contend that although no good examples are provided in the reports of Nisbit *et al*. (1979) and Shore (1979) respectively, their reports do illustrate that staff development in HEIs involves more than meets the eye.

Against this background, it follows that terms are used in a widely divergent manner when it comes to the various strategies applied in HEIs to achieve staff development. In the present study, the various staff development strategies as previously stated are, therefore, categorised as formal (credentialled[32] programmes leading to a qualification), non-formal (structured programmes not leading to any qualification, such as short courses), and informal development (i.e. a group discussion, workshop, seminar, conference, guidance from mentors). The widely divergent use of terms, alluded to above, does not, however, end here. In the next section I explain that the terms "training" and "development" each have particular semantic values in different HEIs.

[32] Credentialled training means programmes that are standard-based and have credits attached to the standards accredited on the NQF (Mercorio *et al*., 2000:157; Cloete, 2005:22).

2.3.4 Meaning of the terms "training" and "development" in HEIs

The report of Nisbit and McAleese (1979:51) in particular provides clues to the meaning attached to the term "training" in HEIs. The survey of Nisbit and McAleese (1979:53) reveals that virtually all universities make some kind of provision for structured non-formal courses in British universities. These courses are structured in a way that allows individuals to develop their own competence and understanding rather than imparting to the novice a set of values and/or generally accepted standards predetermined by someone else, where he/she has limited freedom to question such predetermined standards or values. Nisbit *et al*. (1979:50) argue, therefore, that the extensive use of the term "training" is an "unfortunate choice" for describing the professional requirements of teachers in British universities (Nisbit *et al*., 1979:50). In other words, the terminology is misleading. These authors argue that the term "training" implies that "there is a body of knowledge or a set of skills to be imparted to the novice, and has the connotation of a limited and even unquestioning acquisition of an accepted practice" (Nisbit *et al*., 1979:50). Jalling (1979:218) make the same point, stating that: "training is designed to make people and their actions conform". Nisbit *et al*. (1979:48) argue that although the notion of imparting a set of skills to a novice is communally understood as training or development in industry, this does not hold true for HEIs which regard staff training as a wider approach. Staff training or development in HEIs is an activity of debate towards finding solutions for a particular need. Nisbit and McAleese (1979:48) argue that training, as applied in British universities, has a standard pattern or design which includes discussion sessions, small-group teaching and assessment, and videotaped recordings of each course member in action (Nisbit and McAleese 1979:48). In other words, the programme is designed to allow debate and self-development, not to enforce certain set standards predetermined by someone else.

The report of Isaacs (1979:173) on universities in the Netherlands and the report of Gaff (cited in Teather 1979:232) on universities in the United States of America reveal that courses in those countries are designed in a similar fashion. Isaacs (1979:173) notes, for example, that: "[t]he course consists of the training of pairs of people ... Diagnosis of deficiencies is facilitated by videotaping a lecture by each of the trainees prior to the commencement of training. Training consists mainly of practising the desired skills in the trainee's normal lectures; background is supplied by a course book and feedback and support by the trainees to each other – each attends the other's lectures" (Isaacs, 1979:173). Similarly, Gaff (1979:283) notes that:

"... faculty members have recorded their classes with either video or audiotapes and have discussed the tapes with students and/or colleagues."

Against this background, it is clear that the meaning attached to training in HEIs differs from its meaning in industry. Training is perceived in industry as an activity to "pull" people towards a standard of practice determined by someone else. By contrast, HEIs view training in a similar light as self-development. Nisbit and McAleese (1979:50) argue, therefore, that the concept of training in HEIs is linked to that of development, since development: "shifts the onus from the trainer to the staff member himself [*sic*]: it is his task to develop his own competence and understanding, and it has the connotation of personal growth and maturity" (Nisbit and McAleese, 1979:50). In a similar vein, Jalling (1979:218) emphasises that: "staff development, on the other hand, aims at increasing the readiness to accept and promote innovation". It seems that the above-mentioned understanding of training applies not only to teaching skills but also to the acquisition of research skills. Nisbit and McAleese argue that the research scholar: "learns his [her] skills alongside a skilled researcher". Similarly, Isaacs (1979:165) notes (albeit with a touch of irony) that academic staff members do seem to manage to develop their research skills on their own or by osmosis or by apprenticeship in the course of their work.

The conclusion that could be drawn from the previous two paragraphs concerning the meaning attached to training in HEIs is that employee development is about matters such as debate, support, guidance, critical reflection and self-awareness. The approach followed is, therefore, not about the enforcement of a set of generally accepted practices; instead, it relies on debate which, by implication, leads to self-development but not to forced development. Nisbit and McAleese (1979:54) argue that: "there has been a move towards interpreting the task [training] as one of development by building up a coherent body of knowledge from which scholars can draw as they do from the scientific theories of their own disciplines" (Nisbit *et al*., 1979:54). I am furthermore of the opinion that the report of Nisbit and McAleese (1979) illustrates the attempts that staff developers in British HEIs have made to distance the nature of staff development from the concept of training which is a common practice in both business and industry.

In this section I have explained that the terms "training" and "development" each have a particular meaning in HEIs. In the next section I explain another critical characteristic of staff development in HEIs, namely the perceived differences in the

programme delivery strategies for staff development opportunities of academic staff members and support staff members.

2.3.5 Perceived differences in the programme delivery strategies of development for academic and support staff members

Greenaway and Mortimer (1979:71) argue that although the basic approach of academic development is no different from the development of other categories of staff in HEIs, the time scale for achieving this development differs. For convenience, the present study refers from this point on to the other categories of staff members as support[33] staff members. Greenaway and Mortimer (1979:71) add that it takes longer to perfect teaching skills than it does to learn manual or administrative tasks. A great deal of staff development for support staff takes place on the job, by learning new tasks from more experienced colleagues or from the activities provided by the professional body to which the person is affiliated (Greenaway *et al*., 1979:73). The tasks in the academic profession are, however, more complex, as the following example shows. The task of curriculum development and course design entails various design methods, internal validation procedures, submission to an external validating body, as well as monitoring and evaluation procedures. To complete this process may take up to five years, after which the programme has become obsolete as far as newest content and up-to-date data is concerned. Greenaway and Mortimer (1979) furthermore explain the longer length of time needed to perfect teaching skills (compared to the time it takes to acquire skills related to the clerical profession) as follows: “Perhaps the greater difference is created by the loneliness of teaching compared with the interactive group nature of most non-teaching work. Teaching involves mostly a single teacher meeting a group of students. Non-teaching work usually relies on the performance of various tasks by several people who each contribute one, or at the most, a couple of activities. The product is identifiable and can usually be measured and assessed. The opportunity for each to learn from the other while actually doing the job is therefore much greater” (Greenaway and Mortimer, 1979:72). The point they make is that the concept of teamwork is strong among support staff, in contrast to the relative loneliness of the academic during teaching and research. The timescale for perfecting teaching-related skills differs, therefore, from the shorter time it usually takes to acquire administrative skills.

[33] Brew (1995b:7) bemoans the lack of an all-encompassing term to describe all the categories of university members other than academic staff. They are variously referred to as allied, general, support or even non-academic staff. In the USA, academics are referred to as

The conclusion that can now be drawn is that staff development opportunities are available for all categories of staff members in HEIs. The perception in HEIs is, however, that as the development needs of support staff members are bound to a relatively fixed task, they could easily acquire skills in a fairly short space of time through on-the-job training, short non-formal courses in the institution or through development activities provided by professional bodies. The development needs of the educator profession are rather differently perceived from those of support staff members. Not only do educators have to take cognisance of the continuing expansion of knowledge and theories in their own disciplines (Nisbit and McAleese, 1979:54) but they are also bound to the lengthy time-span involved in the process of programme and curriculum design, implementation and evaluation. I argue, therefore, that the difference can be ascribed merely to perceptions, since the report of Greenaway and Mortimer (1979) does not provide sufficient evidence to substantiate the claim that the nature of staff development differs as far as the teaching and support-related professions are concerned. No explanation or examples are furthermore given of the skills that academic staff members may require outside the range of their teaching-related duties. Moreover, during my extensive review of the body of scholarship, no publications could be found which specifically address the nature of the difference between staff development opportunities for academic and support staff. The question that was previously asked has, therefore, been only partially answered. Although there is a dearth of literature on this topic, this does not imply that there is no merit in the attempt that Greenaway and Mortimer (1979) are making to suggest this difference. Instead, their attempt draws attention to the gap in scholarly research on this particular topic. It is equally important to record the observation that virtually no research has been reported on the development of support staff in SA HEIs who comprised 35 367 employees out of the total number of 53 230 (Mouton, 2007:1) employees in the South African HE sector in 2004.

So far, I have discussed the rationale for staff development (§2.3.2), the various strategies (formal, non-formal and informal) to reach its aims (§2.3.3) and the meaning attached to the terms “training and “development” in §2.4.4. I furthermore discussed the perceived differences in the programme delivery strategies for staff development opportunities that exist for academic and support staff members respectively in this section.

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faculty and the rest are referred to as staff. In Australia, the term general staff has become the

In the next section I discuss what I consider to be the core characteristic of staff development in HEIs, namely the learning process.

2.3.6 Learning process: the core of staff development in HEIs

As to whether there has been a change since the 1970s in the various programme delivery strategies (previously described as formal, non-formal, informal) and the associated structures of staff development, the evidence suggests that it has remained largely unchanged. There is a strong indication, however, that academic staff development has shifted from a focus on aspects of general teaching facilitation towards the development of capabilities acquired as a consequence of localised social practices (Knight *et al*., 2006:320; Kapp and Frick, 2006:4). The focus of academic staff development has, consequently, shifted towards learning facilitation in the context of the discipline that the lecturer presents (also referred to as course-specific) and the social practices (i.e. debate, reflection, discovery and learning from one another) that are considered to be the core of the process of learning. In this section I indicate, firstly, that staff development strategies and the associated structures (i.e. units and funding to promote staff development in HEIs) have remained largely unchanged since the publication of Teather (previously referred to) in the late 1970s. Secondly, I focus on the social practices viewed as the core of the process of learning that have gained prominence in recent years.

Kapp (1995:14 and 15) presents the results of an international survey on policies, practices and procedures in staff development in higher education with responses from 109 HEIs (including universities in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and in a number of sub-Saharan countries in Africa). This report was published almost 15 years after the compendium of papers edited by Teather (1979). The survey by Kapp (1995) reveals that the majority (57,8%) of the HEIs have staff development units. The mission statements of these staff development units focus mainly on instructional development (67%) and professional development (63,3%). The student feedback services seem to be the most effective, followed by decentralised programmes, consultation and centralised programmes for staff training. Other services provided by some of the units include mini-grants for individual development efforts and non-formal education programmes. These units

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accepted norm.

employ various strategies for their staff development practices. The most frequently used practices – also rated as the most effective strategies for staff development – are workshops, seminars and courses by staff of the unit (96,1%). The types of programmes mentioned in the survey include induction programmes for new staff members, individual teaching consultation, grants for research, joint publications with colleagues and a staff development library.

The findings of Kapp's survey (1995) suggest that the various staff development strategies (previously described as formal, non-formal and informal and associated structures) have remained largely unchanged. Kapp (1995:14) notes, however, that the emphasis on staff development became predominantly focused on excellence, quality and changes in the learning industry and in technology, and that demands for accountability and staff development programmes include themes such as co-operative learning (79%) and active learning (84%). It is my contention that these strategies point to the shift that staff development practices have begun making towards an emphasis on the learning that accrues during the learning process.

In another example, Ljubljana (1995:68-69) notes the following staff development practices in Slovenian universities over the past 15 years: courses, workshops, summer schools and conferences as well as staff development connected to action research projects. This is another example that the various staff development strategies (formal, non-formal and informal and associated structures) have remained largely unchanged. It is interesting to note, however, that Ljubljana (1995:68) specifically reports on the staff development practices connected to learning, where learning is acquired from group discussions, trial and error, reflection, discovery and learning from one another. Ljubljana (1995: 69) adds that the evaluation of gain from different methods and approaches among 214 participants spread over 11 workshops, indicates that informal discussions and experiential methods (mini-lectures with video feedback) rate among the highest scores. It therefore stands to reason that the reports of Kapp (1995) and Ljubljana (1995) both clearly illustrate that the various strategies of staff development have seemingly remained unchanged since the 1970s. A shift has, however, taken place towards a focus on the process of learning. Both the above-mentioned reports illustrate that social activities (i.e. group discussions, trial and error, reflection, discovery, learning from one another or methods of learning previously referred to as co-operative or active learning) are considered to be core elements to the process of learning in HEIs. Social activities such as group discussions and learning from one another seem to have close ties to

the theory of Social Capital. Field (2004:12), for example, refers to forms of debate as networks that provide the basis for the social cohesion that is central to the theory of Social Capital, which is discussed in §2.5.

In another example, Zuber-Skerrit (1995a:106) notes that many Australian HEIs now offer coherent, rather than short one-off programmes. Zuber-Skerrit (1995a:106) comments that, apart from the usual seminar and workshop programme format, the Griffith Institute of Higher Education also provides various one- to two-year programmes. This is yet another example that the various strategies of staff development have seemingly remained unchanged since the 1970s. Of particular importance in Zuber-Skerrit's (1995b) report are the methodological frameworks of the programmes mentioned, and not necessarily whether the programmes are formal, non-formal or informal in nature. Zuber-Skerrit (1995a:108 to 117), who reports on six case studies undertaken between 1992 and 1994, states that action learning and research were the predominant methods of staff development. Zuber-Skerrit (1995a:118) concludes by ascribing the success of action learning and action research in all of the six case studies to: "discussion and reflection in action and on action". This is a clear example that seems to substantiate the inference that the process of learning (at least in the development of academic staff) has not only become more visible since the 1990s, but has also become recognised as a key ingredient in learning. It is, however, important to note that none of the case studies mentioned so far has made reference to or given examples of the recording of the social activities in the process of learning. All the above-mentioned case studies give reasons only for the importance of the social practices that are the core of the learning process.

A recent report by Allen, Blackwell and Gibbs (2003:66 to 78) notes the trend towards the value of the learning process in staff development. Allen *et al*. (2003: 66 to 78) discuss four illustrative case studies of subject-based academic development practices. The emphasis in these four projects was on involving educational development specialists and organisational development specialists in working with the end users (students). The results of the case studies prove the positive potential of subject-based development (previously referred to as the discipline) approaches, as well as the importance of informal learning opportunities such as group discussions and learning from one another. Moreover, these case studies clearly illustrate that informal development has a specific meaning in HEIs. As such, the authors argue that informal development accrues from planned interventions focused

on addressing a certain need (subject-based) and not on the learning that accrues incidentally from normal interaction (general socialisation) with people (Allen *et al*., 2003: 68). These four projects furthermore employed a learning methodology which relates closely with Zuber-Skerrit's (1995b) notion of action learning and action research, which essentially values social activities such as debate and reflection. The informal subject-based academic development practices mentioned by Allen *et al*. (2003) can be summarised as follows:

- Informal development included discussion fora with the aim of deliberating on particular subject matter. Participation in the discussion fora was not restricted to subject-matter experts (educators), but included members of staff from various stakeholder groupings (such as student representatives) (p. 67).
- Seminars and conferences were presented to a broader group to share information, advice, guidance, material and success stories, resulting in a valuable supportive community which was helpful to those not yet experienced in managing subject-based development projects (p. 68-69).
- Development, either that of subject knowledge, facilitation or research, was undertaken in the form of action research projects (p. 69).

The findings of these case studies substantiate the claims in the literature that informal development is a proven method of academic development in HEIs. These case studies also indicate that informal learning, which has been one of the strategies of staff development in recent years, has been raised to the level of strategic importance. Strategic in this context refers to the influence of HE legislation and the collaboration of various role players (such as clients *vis-à-vis* student representatives and specialists in academic staff development) in subject-based academic development (Blackwell *et al*., 2003:3-5). Blackwell *et al*. (2003:5) argue that staff development can no longer take place in isolation from the academic environment. For this reason, academic development should remain as close as possible to the academic subject discipline and should include meeting the needs of the wider institutional context (Blackwell *et al*., 2003:3-5; Kapp *et al*., 2006:4). In other words, the learning gained through informal social practices has become pivotal to the learning process in HEIs. It is, however, important to note that the case study reports of Allen *et al*. (2003) and Blackwell *et al*. (2003) make no reference to the recording of informal development activities.

Against the background of the case studies reviewed so far, it is clear that informal learning is regarded as the core of the process of learning in HEIs. None of the

above-mentioned case studies, however, provides any evidence of the recording of informal development opportunities, although various publications point to the value of social interaction as the core of informal learning. This probably indicates that the exact date or moment when informal development occurs is either difficult to determine, or that recording is regarded as an administrative burden. I am furthermore of the opinion that the absence of recorded informal development opportunities is an indication that the recording and archiving of such learner records is not considered to be an important enough administrative function towards the achievement of credentialled qualifications which can be exchanged for external rewards. In my opinion, if such credentialled qualifications would have been exchanged for external awards, the records of such informal development opportunities would have been made widely available, long ago already. I highlight the lack of records on informal development in HEIs for the following reasons: the SDA acknowledges for rebate purposes (as explained in §2.2.3) only the recorded education and training interventions. The reason for this can be ascribed (as explained in §2.2.1) to the assumption that investment in education and training is believed to lead to the economic prosperity of individuals, institutions and the country at large. In contrast to the aforementioned legislative prescriptions, informal development seems, however, to be an increasingly important but not-yet-recorded means of development in HEIs. This could be one of the core reasons why HEIs encounter problems with the implementation of the SDA. In an attempt to substantiate my contention that social practices (debates, interaction between people, etc.) – although not properly recorded – are generally applicable to staff development (which falls in the realm of informal development) in HEIs, I offer some more examples.

Beardwell (2003:169) gives an account of informal staff development activities in an academic department at the De Montfort University in the United Kingdom (UK). This case study included academic staff members as well as support staff members, setting out specific forms of staff development activities. These activities included self-organised “away-days” and discussion in routine meetings, textbook projects (short courses or seminars or formal mentoring arrangements), conference participation and leadership and management development for the heads of departments. What is also of interest is that the methods of staff development mentioned in this report mirror the various historical staff development strategies (formal, non-formal and informal) in HEIs. In addition, this case study (although it is only one case study) not only reveals the importance of informal learning

opportunities as part and parcel of the learning process of individuals but also indicates that informal learning can be equally applicable to support staff members.

Shahnaz *et al*. (2005) report on a case study at the Bowling Green State University (Ohio) on the development needs of 92 departmental chairs. The response rate of 60% to a questionnaire survey revealed that the departmental chairs believed that the most successful training interventions were round-table discussions or off-campus speakers from other higher education institutions (Shahnaz *et al*., 2005:588). This case study again illustrates that informal development is recognised as a learning strategy, yet it does not provide a clear record of when such events took place or of their duration. Similarly, Blackmore *et al*. (2006:373-387) report on an interview survey completed by 18 leaders in academic staff development at universities in the English Midlands. They found that these academic leaders: "learn informally and 'socially', seek and use feedback, usually of an informal kind" (Blackmore *et al*., 2006: 377). This is yet another example that informal development is recognised as a strategy of development in HEIs. No mention is made, however, of the proper recording of such interventions nor that such informal learning opportunities could be used as a means towards obtaining a qualification. Blackmore *et al*. (2006:377) adds that although just over half the sample had completed PhD degrees and a quarter had no formal qualifications of any kind in education, not one academic leader was engaged in formal education. I argue that this proves the inference that informal development processes have come to be regarded as essential to staff development in recent years. Blackmore *et al*. (2006) also argue that: "one of the most powerful ways of ensuring that leaders in academic development understand the worlds of those they seek to assist is by offering them similar combinations of experiences" (Blackmore *et al*., 2006: 380). For this reason, these authors suggest that: "the challenge is to bring informal processes of learning into the development of the leaders in keeping with findings of leaders' ways of learning reported earlier. Reflection may be assisted through peer mentoring, coaching, co-facilitating events and activities and action learning and 'critical friend' support" (Blackmore *et al*., 2006: 384). In other words, Blackmore *et al*. (2006) draw attention to the value that HEIs still attach to formal or non-formal staff development strategies, although social activities *vis-à-vis* informal development opportunities are viewed as the core of the learning process in HEIs. It should, however, be stressed that the report of Blackmore *et al*. (2006) provides no details of how informal development opportunities should be recorded.

Another survey conducted by Kapp and Frick (2006) on the current nature of staff development in HEIs, reveals trends similar to those discussed so far. The purpose of this project was to reflect on the origins of academic development, analysing the present and predicting the future through an informed forecast. Their literature review included an investigation of the web pages of centres/units in academic staff development across Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom, as well as interviews with 10 representatives of the academic staff development units at 10 universities. The questionnaire survey and web analysis revealed that the main changes in academic staff development during 1995 to 2005 included the change in the profile of academic staff development and the acceptance of continuing professional development in academic staff development, in contrast to the train-and-release approach of the past (Kapp *et al*., 2006:6). In my opinion, the postulation that there has been a change in the profile of academic staff development and continuing professional development clearly demonstrates the prominence of learning processes in recent years. In addition, Kapp *et al*. (2006:6) also point out that the provision of training programmes to staff members has continued. This illustrates that training is of particular importance to maintaining good standards of practice in HEIs (Brew, 1995:20; Nisbit *et al*., 1979:52). These authors, based on their literature survey, furthermore, claim that: "it seems that academic staff development seems to have evolved from a singular focus on teaching, to an understanding of teaching in a broader framework (the context of the institution), to programme design, to learner- centeredness, to networking and the integration of technology" (ibid). This is yet another example where the focus of academic staff development has shifted towards learning facilitation in the context of the discipline that the lecturer presents (also referred to as subject-based) and social practices (networking), which are considered to be at the core of the process of learning. It should be pointed out in this regard that the report of Kapp *et al*. (2006) also does not provide details about the recording of continuing professional development or of networking opportunities.

Against the background of this section, some clear conclusions may be drawn about the characteristics of staff development in HEIs:

- Staff development opportunities have been available and/or provided to all categories of staff members. This implies that staff development could be referred to as inclusive. The aim of staff development furthermore reaches beyond the mere improvement of skills. Staff development is, therefore, an

all-encompassing term referring to the programmes, structures, policies and processes required to create and enhance a continuing staff development culture in HEIs (Webb, 1996b:1; Blackwell *et al*., 2003:23; Kapp and Frick, 2006:1; Denton, 1995:34). A recent definition of staff development in HEIs by Blackwell and Blackmore (2003:13) offer reasons for this contention. Blackwell *et al*. (2003) define[34] staff development as: "development for all staff in their work roles and throughout their working lives".

- Staff development concerns the furthering of a university staff member's knowledge, skills and potential in harmony with the requirements of the HEI (Kapp, 1995:11; Brew, 1995b:1, Webb, 1996b:1; Blackwell *et al*., 2003:23). The term "requirements" is of particular importance since it highlights the fact that staff development is a managed process aimed at enhancing a mutually and reciprocally advantageous relationship between individual and institutional performance (Blackwell *et al*., 2003:23). This study, therefore, argues that the value of staff development is a key component to responding to and shaping institutional strategy (Blackwell *et al*., 2003:5).
- Conversely, this study hypothesises that the value of staff development does not lie primarily in the financial gains which may accrue to the individual, the institution or the country at large.
- Widely divergent categories and labels attached to development interventions indicate that staff development strategies are divergent in HEIs. This study argues, however, that staff development strategies generally refer to development which is formal (leading to a qualification), non-formal (structured programmes which do not lead to a qualification) or informal (such as unrecorded subject-matter debates or reflection sessions) in nature. Of greater importance, however, is the methodological approach that the aforementioned strategies take. As such, the emphasis is on the learning process of elements such as debate, networking, support, guidance, critical reflection and self-awareness, and not on the transfer of particular pre-determined standards. In HEIs the term "training", therefore, seems unacceptable because of the connotation it has to learning transfer, instead of social interaction as the core of development. For this reason, this study proposes that the nature of staff development (with reference to informal development) should be closely related to the theory of Social Capital.

[34] Anheier (2005:39) contends that definitions are neither true nor false, since they are judged by their usefulness in describing a part of a reality of interest.

- The least-recorded development strategy in HEIs is informal development, although it is viewed as the most desirable strategy and the core of the process of learning in HE.
- Lastly, a distinction is drawn between the amount of time it takes to acquire skills for teaching-related and support-related tasks. This implies that although there is a distinction drawn in the literature between the structure and design of development for the teaching-related and the support-related professions, I argue that such a distinction in fact is not of crucial importance. The data gathered during the empirical investigation support this conclusion because it showed that the distinction is not, in fact, crucially important and that it lies on a different level, in any case (refer §4.3.2.2).

In this section I explained the underlying reasons for and goals of staff development in HEIs. I also pointed out the theoretical basis of staff development in HEIs. In addition I posed a number of questions with regard to the recording and archiving of informal staff development opportunities, as well as with regard to the preferred position that Human Capital Theory seems to take compared to Social Capital Theory as far as staff development in HEIs is concerned. In the next section, based on my literature review, I table the match and mismatch between the underlying reasons for and goals of the implementation of the SDA and those of staff development in HEIs.

2.3.7 Match and mismatch tabled between the underlying rationale for and goals of the Skills Development Act and those of staff development in Higher Education Institutions

Against the backdrop of the underlying rationale for and goals of the implementation of the SDA (explained in §2.2) and the underlying rationale for and goals of staff development in HEIs (explained in §2.3) the match and mismatch between these two areas can be tabled as follows:

Table 2.1 Match and mismatch between the underlying rationale and goals of the Skills Development Act and those of staff development in Higher Education Institutions

Underlying rationale for and goals of staff development in Higher Education Institutions	Underlying reasons for and goals of the implementation of the Skills Development Act
Staff development:	**The implementation of the SDA:**
Is a historical (widely published) function in HEIs.	The SDA is a fairly new piece of legislation in SA and, consequently, a fairly recent function.
Is viewed inclusively. In other words,	Is viewed inclusively but the measures

opportunities are available and/or provided to all categories of staff members on an equal basis.	taken to prioritise development of designated groups typify the SDA as exclusive.
Concerns the furthering of a university staff member's knowledge, skills and potential in harmony with the requirements of the HEI.	Concerns investment in education and training as a tool for SA's socio-economic development. This assumption has close ties to the theory of Human Capital.
Reaches beyond the mere improvement of skills and is an all-encompassing term, referring to the programmes, structures, policies and processes for staff development.	Reaches towards skills development through education and training. Structures to reach the SDA's goals are firstly in the form of a levy grant system, that in essence holds HEIs co-responsible for funding the education and training of not only their own employees but also the unemployed population of the country; and secondly the SETA structure that serves as external monitoring system.
Is valued for its process towards growth in skills and knowledge, but not for the acquisition of external recognition such as credentialled development. In other words HEIs value the actual and virtual resources that accrue during interaction. This perception has close ties to Social Capital Theory (refer §2.5.1).	Is valued for its outcome in terms of credits on the NQF. In other words, government values the investment in education and training as a means to achieve the economic prosperity of the individual, institution and country. This perception has close ties to the theory of Human Capital (refer §2.4.1).
Includes formal (programmes leading to a qualification), non-formal (structured programmes that could be registered and quality assured by the CHE) or informal (such as unrecorded subject-matter debates, reflection sessions or participation in conferences, workshops and seminars) programmes. However, informal development is the least recorded form of development, although it is viewed as the most applicable method of learning in HEIs.	Gives prominence to credentialled[35] training, namely NQF-accredited[36] education and training programmes. This implies that HEIs' education and training programmes for staff members should be developed on the basis of unit standards, be accredited on the NQF and be registered with the ETDP SETA. Hence, HEIs should plan their reports on their education and training by using a prescribed template.
Has overshadowed the term staff "training", *per se*, in HEIs. Development is retained to refer to the individual's responsibility for self-development.	Has been focusing, *per se*, on education and training outcomes as the means for achieving economic prosperity.
Draws a distinction between the duration of time needed to acquire skills for teaching-related and support-related tasks.	Draws no distinction between participants' tasks.

[35] Credentialled training means training programmes which are standard-based with credits attached to the standards accredited on the NQF (Mercorio *et al.*, 2000:157; Cloete, 2005:22).
[36] The SDA outlines the implementation of Skills programmes and Learnerships that, by their nature, are both accredited learning programmes (Republic of South Africa, 2004).

The table (2.1) above clearly indicates that the implementation of policy to govern the institutional practices of staff development intersects, yet in some cases contrasts starkly with staff development in HEIs.

In conclusion, I argue that the mismatch between the rationale for the implementation of the SDA and those for staff development in HEIs can be ascribed to the difference in their underlying ontological, epistemological and conceptual basis. The SDA promotes the theory of Human Capital, whereas HEIs desperately want to promote the theory of Social Capital as far as staff development is concerned. The question that should be asked, however, is whether or not the theory of Human Capital assists in any way towards promoting economic wealth? In the next section I attempt to answer this question by explaining the background and development of the theory of Human Capital against the epistemological backdrop to this study, namely the intersection between interpretivism and critical theory.

2.4 Human Capital Theory

The theory describing the relationship between investment in education and economic prosperity is called Human Capital Theory (Llop, 2006:xi; Carnoy *et al*., 2005:4; Field, 2004:12; Harrison *et al*., 2004:12; Nafukho *et al*., 2004:545; Livingstone, 2002:1; Möhr *et al*., 2002:34; Baptise, 2001:195; Quiggin, 2000:130; Lin, 1999:28; Fevre, 1997:1; Livingstone, 1997:9; Hlavna, 1992:47; Stewart, 1997:108). Since the late 1950s, Human Capital Theory has become the dominant approach for explaining the relationship between investment in education and economic development, making it an appropriate basis for education policy (Carnoy *et al*., 2005:4; Livingstone, 2002:1; Baptise, 2001:195; Quiggin, 2000:130; Fevre, 1997:1; Livingstone, 1997:9; Hlavna, 1992:47). Carnoy *et al*. (2005:4) state that the force of Human Capital Theory in society can be observed in the large sums of money that governments, individuals and taxpayers spend on education annually in almost every country of the world, based on the belief that there is some connection between a better-educated labour force and greater economic prosperity. South Africa is certainly not excluded from this view, because various prominent role players in South Africa stress the relationship between investment in education and economic gains (Pandor, 2006:1; Asmal, 2004:1; Reddy, 2004:40, Johanson *et al*., 2004:15; Bartell, 2003:10; Mdladlana, 2003a:1).

In essence, the proponents of Human Capital Theory believe that investment in education creates upwardly spiralling social and economic gains for individuals, organisations and ultimately for society as a whole (Carnoy *et al*., 2005:4; Field, 2004:12; Quiggin, 2000:130; Shaik, 2001:56; Erasmus *et al*., 1996:89; Hlavna, 1992:47). Since investment in education is perceived as providing social and economic gain, the notion is perpetuated among the developers of education policy that individuals, organisations and society are inevitably in partnership to achieve economic prosperity (Hlavna, 1992:47; Carnoy *et al*., 2005:4). There are notable examples of this partnership perception with regard to education investment in South Africa. The use of State funds to subsidise the education sector and the implementation of the SDA to regulate workplace education and training are merely two examples. The importance of this particular conceptual background to this study is that it gives a clear indication that the perceived value of Human Capital Theory is embedded in the SDA. The question is whether there is any evidence to prove that the relationship between investment in credentialled education and training does in fact lead to economic gain.

Harrison *et al*. (2004:24), Baptiste (2001:184) and Baptiste *et al*. (2004:39) contend that the proponents of Human Capital Theory wittingly or unwittingly exclude human behaviour as a key determinant when offering reasons for espousing this theory. Consequently, these proponents usually give a one-sided view of Human Capital, based upon the perceived economic benefit as the prime value of this theory, while downplaying human behaviour and the interests of those who participate in education (Baptiste, 2001:198; Quiggin, 2000:136). Livingstone (1997:9) argues: “Human Capital equates workers' knowledge levels with their levels of formal schooling... [to] estimate individual economic returns to learning.” Lin (1999:29) postulates that the proponents of Human Capital Theory portray the value of investment in education as an ideology for influencing the masses to internalise the values of this theory. For this reason, Lin (1999:29) argues that Human Capital Theory is a capitalist scheme embedded in society, where the dominant class[37] calls for investment to be made in human beings to capture the surplus value generated. Lin (1999:29) comments that the term "capital" in Human Capital Theory is highlighted to refer to certain elements. The first element is the surplus value generated and pocketed by the capitalists, and the second element is the investment by the capitalist, with expected returns in a marketplace (Lin, 1999:29). Lin (1999:29), therefore, asserts that Human Capital

[37] The dominant class refers to those in power (Lin, 1999:29 and 31).

Theory is based on the "exploitative social relations between two classes". In other words, investment in education becomes the one-sided individual's, organisation's or State's euphemism (hidden agenda) for economic growth. What is important in terms of the epistemological backdrop to this study (critical theory) is that Human Capital Theory could be perceived as an exploitative ideology.

Fitzsimons (1999:10) and Baptiste (2001:184) both reason that the responsibility for a better education lies largely with the needs and expectations of the individual, not with the prescriptions of anyone else. Baptiste (2001:184), for example, comments that those who choose education as a profession might be doing so because they wish to alleviate social maladies, not necessarily for the capital gains that the Human Capital theorists assume these educators might desire. Schultz (1961:1), one of the leading proponents of Human Capital Theory, writes: "[a]lthough it is obvious that people acquire useful skills and knowledge, it is not obvious that these skills and knowledge are a form of capital, [or] that this capital is a substantial part of a product of deliberate investment." Moreover, empirical evidence to prove the direct economic relationship between investment in education and economic gains is fraught with errors of logic[38] (Livingstone, 1997:10; Hyde, 2006:4).

The description above indicates that there seem to be unsubstantiated beliefs that investment in education will create economic prosperity. Moreover, it could be argued that Human Capital Theory regards human beings as "capital" that can be managed through policy rulings by the dominant class. This implies that people are inferior to policy and cannot make their own decisions. This raises the question of how Human Capital Theory became entrenched as one of the more popular conceptual frameworks in which a significant amount of thinking and praxis with regard to contemporary education are cast.

The next section describes the thinking processes that led to the assumptions contained in Human Capital Theory, in order to explain how this theory became embedded in society. This is of particular importance to the present study, because the aim of this study is to understand the perceptions of SDFs as far as the effects of

[38] Livingstone (1997:10) states that either the average examination results of one group are compared with earlier enrolments, or "specific bits of knowledge are used to argue an increasing general ignorance thesis", which does not tell the whole story. Moreover, Quiggin (2000:132) comments that the number of education enrolments and a country's economic performance are compared with those in other countries when claiming that the one country's human capital is higher than that of another country.

the SDA on staff development in HEIs is concerned, which I contend is based upon assumptions embedded in Human Capital Theory. My contention is based mainly on the notion that the SDA's intention to invest in education and training is a utilitarian[39] approach to enhancing the economic prosperity of SA.

2.4.1 The development of Human Capital Theory

The approach of viewing people as capital and claiming a reciprocal relationship between investment in education and future economic gain as the basic premise of Human Capital Theory can be traced back to 1959. Shultz and Becker (described in *The Wealth of Nations*) articulated the formal theory of human capital (McIntyre, 2002:2; Baptiste, 2001:178). The body of knowledge seeking to describe, explain and validate investment in education and economic earnings is, therefore, called Human Capital Theory. In this regard, it is important to note that Human Capital Theory gained prominence in the aftermath of World War II and in the context of the Cold War, when industrialised countries were entering the age of mass production, when people's earnings increased and there was significant growth in formal schooling (Livingston, 1997:9; Baptiste *et al*., 2004:32). In other words, Human Capital Theory was "discovered" during the era of industrialisation (Carnoy *et al*., 2005:4). Clearly, the growth in formal schooling and similarly the economic boom after World War II gave rise to the notion that investment in education would lead to economic prosperity (the core logic of Human Capital Theory) (Livingstone, 2002:1; McIntyre, 2002:1; Baptiste, 2001:185; Shaik, 2001:21; Livingstone, 1997:9; Field, 2004:12; Schuller and Field, 1998:226).

During the era of industrial growth, people came to be considered as an organisational resource to be combined with other resources (capital and technology) that could be used as productive activities for the economic benefit of the organisation. Similarly, education became viewed as another form of resource that, when added to labour, would enhance workers' capacity to produce (Harrison and Kessels, 2004:21 and 88; Reid *et al*., 2004:3; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11). Baptiste (2001:187) contends that the economic orientation to humans implicitly demonstrates how humans became torn away from self-preservation only to be viewed mechanistically as part of the chain of production. By contrast, Harrison *et al*. (2004:18) do not regard humans (employees) as a capital resource but as suppliers of labour, as problem solvers, sensitive receptors of information, potential improvers

[39] A utilitarian approach means the use of utensils in the making of products (Fevre, 1997:3).

of humankind and innovators. Though a capitalist economy makes it possible for people to sell their labour, there ought not to be a market for human beings similar to the market for machines (Harrison *et al*., 2004:28; Baptiste, 2001:184; Quiggin, 2000:133; Livingstone, 1997:12; Silver, 1991:266). The above-mentioned conceptual background to this study is important in that the notion of Human Capital was "discovered" (Livingstone, 1997:12) during the era of industrialisation when more people enrolled in schooling. Consequently, the term "discovered" denotes a logical connection between investment in education and economic prosperity but is not necessarily based on empirical data or facts.

The assumptions underlying Human Capital Theory have, however, been increasingly called into question since the 1970s when average incomes stagnated, employment rates declined and graduate under-employment,[40] under-utilisation or unemployment increased despite the fact that school enrolment rates continued to rise (Carnoy *et al*., 2005:6; Quiggin, 2000:136; Connor, 1997:169; Livingstone, 1997:9). As a result, it is not clear whether educated people are necessarily more productive or wealthier than uneducated people (Carnoy *et al*., 2005:4; Livingstone, 2002:1; Livingstone, 2002:1; Baptise, 2001:195; Quiggin, 2000:130; Livingstone, 1997:9; Hlavna, 1992:47). In other words, I believe this implies that Human Capital Theory is an ideology dominated by ambitious claims about the seemingly positive and supposed vital link between education and economic growth. I concur with Fevre (1997:3) that Human Capital Theory is simply "a logical outcome of reasoning". Yet, in order to substantiate Human Capital Theory amid economic stagnation, a screening model was employed by government and employers (Baptiste, 2001:187; Livingstone, 1997:9).

Using the screening model, people are screened for admission to education, based on their academic record (examination results). Ranking people according to their examination results perpetuates the tenet of Human Capital Theory that people with high levels of academic achievement can work in high-status jobs and be highly productive. Educational credentials are therefore a substitute for the qualities that employers want (Marginson, 1993:44). The screening model claims that an organisation which employs highly qualified people will outwit and outperform another company which may employ less-qualified people. Harrison *et al*. (2004:33), Quiggin (2000:133) and Hlavna (1992:48) state that there are no fully developed findings from

studies of the screening model that would justify the tenet that a well-educated staff member will be more productive than a less-educated staff member. These authors contend that the rate of return (education:profit rate) can only be accurately assessed after a substantial length of time. This is important to this study because Human Capital Theory seems difficult to prove empirically; which is why various tactics (such as the screening model) were introduced in an attempt to keep validating the theory artificially. As explained above, the relationship between investment in education and economic prosperity has not, however, been proven empirically.

Baptiste (2001:187) states that the contemporary phase in the development of Human Capital Theory highlights the value of education in terms of acquiring the knowledge and abilities needed to cope with change. This concurs with Wozniak's (1984:71) argument that education should not be seen as an income-determining factor, but rather as a mediating factor which enhances people's ability to think and to acquire knowledge. Wozniak (1984:71) is of the opinion that: "[by] augmenting the ability to learn and the capacity to adjust to disequilibria, education helps workers meet the creativity and flexibility of an advancing technology." The proponents of Human Capital Theory recognise that the focus should not be on the outcome of education but on the value of the educational process. Stated differently, the value of education should not be assessed according to its outcomes (economic prosperity) but according to the visual and virtual abilities, knowledge and skills generated during education. This view relates, however, closely to Social Capital Theory (Burt, 2005:5; Crossley, 2005:284; Field. 2004:2 and 15; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:4).

The contemporary phase in the development of Human Capital Theory is of particular importance for this study owing to its claims that investment in formal education is not necessarily a yardstick for economic growth. Instead, it claims that education enhances people's abilities to cope with change, to think independently and to apply changing technologies in an organisational context as they deem fit. In other words, Social Capital has become the key to understanding Human Capital. In his rationale for the latter, Baptiste (2001:188) argues that the contemporary phase of Human Capital Theory gives prominence to the question of who should bear the cost of education. Marginson (1993:49) comments that those who invest in higher education

[40] The term under-employment or under-utilisation refers to graduates in jobs that do not require graduate qualifications (Connor, 1997:100).

might be rewarded with "higher earnings,[41] and therefore there is no obvious reason why the rest of the community should be expected to meet their study costs". It is, therefore, generally accepted that the individual should bear the costs of formal higher education (Johanson *et al*., 2004:27; Flanagan *et al*., 1998:10). Hlavna (1992:3) contends, however, that it is neither equitable nor cost-effective to expect taxpayers to subsidise the attainment of qualifications.

The picture painted above indicates that most authors are currently questioning the assumptions of Human Capital Theory, because if there were unequivocal proof that investment in education did, in fact, lead to economic prosperity, there should be no question about who should be paying for it, namely those who would benefit from it. In other words, if the organisation requires that employees should acquire a particular skill, then the organisation should pay (Hlavna, 1992:3). Similarly, if the individual wants to acquire knowledge and skills to satisfy particular personal needs (not required in the individual's work context) then the individual should pay for such development.

I argue that the contemporary view of Human Capital Theory has shifted its emphasis from the outcome of investment in education (economic prosperity) towards the value of education for its content in terms of the processes that lead to acquiring skills and knowledge (Ferrier, 2001:489). In other words, debate, reflection, support and interaction between learners or between learners and learning facilitators *vis-à-vis* the value of Social Capital has come to the fore as the key to understanding the underlying assumptions of Human Capital Theory. This study, therefore, argues that the SDA's intentions, which are captured in a Human Capital ideology, have apparently become outdated because the contemporary view of education has close ties with Social Capital Theory. The next section explains Social Capital Theory, discusses the relationship between Human Capital Theory and Social Capital Theory and offers reasons for the contention that Social Capital Theory is key to our understanding of Human Capital Theory.

[41] Margison's (1993:49) theory of earnings in this context may also refer to intrinsic and not only to extrinsic rewards.

2.5 Social Capital Theory as key to understanding Human Capital Theory

2.5.1 A brief history of Social Capital Theory

The notion of social capital is believed to have first appeared in Hanifan's discussions of rural school community centres (Hanifan, 1916, 1920). He used the term to describe those tangible substances that count for most in the daily lives of people (Hanifan, 1916:130). He was concerned with the cultivation of goodwill, fellowship, sympathy and social interaction among those that 'make up a social unit' (Smith, 2007). It took some time for the term to come into widespread usage. Contributions from Jacobs (1961) in relation to urban life and neighbourliness, Bourdieu (1983) with regard to social theory, and Coleman (1988) in his discussions of the social context of education moved the idea into the academic arena. However, it was the work of Robert Putnam (1993, 2000), Fukuyama (1996, 1999) and Field (2003) that launched social capital as a focus for research and policy discussion. Social capital has also been picked up by the World Bank as a useful organising idea. The Bank argues that "increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable" (The World Bank, 1999).

In 1983, Bourdieu (1983:249) explained that social capital could be understood as the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. In 1994, Coleman (1994:302) surmised that social capital was defined by its function. He was convinced that it was not a single entity, but rather a variety of different entities with two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals in the structure. The World Bank (1999) indicates that social capital refers to the institutions, relationships and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. It concludes that social capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society – it is the glue that holds them together.

In 2000, Putnam (2000:19) compares social capital with physical and human capital. In his opinion, physical capital refers to physical objects, whereas human capital refers to the properties of individuals. Social capital, Putnam maintains, refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In this sense, social capital is closely related to

the concept of "civic virtue". Social capital calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a network of reciprocal social relations. For Putnam, a society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital.

John Field (2003:1-2) argues that the central thesis of social capital theory is the fact that relationships (especially of trust and tolerance) do matter. Interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to one another, and to knit the social fabric. He argues that a sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks could benefit people greatly. Trust between individuals thus becomes trust between strangers and trust in a broad fabric of social institutions; ultimately, it becomes a shared set of values, virtues, and expectations in society as a whole. Without this interaction, trust decays; at a certain point, this decay begins to manifest itself in the kind of social problems that South Africa currently has. The concept of social capital implies that building or rebuilding community and trust requires face-to-face encounters which depend, *inter alia*, on mutual recognition, neighbourliness, reciprocity, social commitment and social justice (Beem,1999:20).

The work of Fukuyama (1996; 1999: passim) helped to expand this relationship between social capital, community rebuilding and trust to include the concepts of "sharing" and "co-operation". In particular, he describes social capital as the existence of a specific set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group, which permits co-operation among them. There is evidence that communities with a good "stock" of such "social capital" are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement and better economic growth, Smith (2007) states. However, there can also be a significant downside, because groups and organisations with high social capital have the means (and sometimes the motive) to work to exclude and subordinate others. Furthermore, the experience of living in close-knit communities can be stultifying – especially to those who feel they are "different" in some significant way.

2.5.2 The value of Social Capital Theory

Social Capital refers to the sum of the actual and invisible (virtual) resources that humans accrue during interaction with a phenomenon and that endures beyond the actual moment of interaction (Burt, 2005:5; Crossley, 2005:284; Field. 2004:2 and 5; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:4 and 11; Collier, 2003:19; Krishna and Uphoff, 2003:85; Lin,

1999:30 and 33). The value of social capital is that it not only triggers the individuals' perceptions of the value of what they have encountered, but also endures as a force beyond the actual moment of acquaintance or interaction. Social Capital could be described as the residue (in the minds of humans) of elements such as trust,[42] belief, an attitude or a feeling of willingness, ties of kinship, inter-dependency, commitment, obligation or support that people gain or perceive as being gained from interaction (Burt, 2005:11 and 93; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11). Social Capital can, therefore, be regarded as the spin-off, by-product or surplus value of human interaction (Crossley, 2006:286; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11,12 and 18; Collier, 2003:20; Gabby *et al*., 2001:6; Lin, 1999:32). Grootaert and Bastelaer (2003:2) emphasise the fact that: "Social Capital is 'social' because [it] involves people behaving sociably" and "[it] could be described as a form of 'capital' because [it] refers to a resource that produces action" (Svendsen *et al*., 2004:18; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2003:2; Gabby and Leenders, 2001:6; Lin, 1999:40). Field (2004:8), contends, however, that the term "capital" in Social Capital Theory is used as a metaphor to parallel the postulations about the economics of investment in Human Capital Theory. In addition, since Social Capital is regarded as an intangible or non-measurable resource, Svensen *et al*., (2004:1) and Lin (1999:31) postulate that Human Capital Theory does not account for Social Capital. This background indicates that although Social Capital is interwoven with Human Capital, it differs distinctly from the concepts in Human Capital Theory.

Human Capital Theory refers to a scheme of a capitalist society, where the dominant class makes an opportunistic tangible investment with expected returns in the marketplace (Lin 1999:29 and 31). By contrast, Social Capital Theory refers to an intangible resource that spontaneously accrues during social interaction and serves as the impetus, trigger or motivation to act (Collier, 2003:22). Collier (2003:22) and Svendsen (2004:40) argue that Social Capital is of "capital" value when its effects persist, and that this occurs when people continuously interact with the role players of interest. Crossley (2005:284) and Putnam (2000:19) claim that Social Capital is most likely to be established in networks among interested parties. In this regard, Putnam (2000:19) postulates that the value of social networks is that they "foster general reciprocity and trust, and in turn facilitate mutual collaboration", which cannot be achieved (or is difficult to achieve) when the individual works in isolation (Field, 2004:1 and 45).

[42] Trust may be viewed in this context as both a source and an outcome of social relations

Svendsen (2004:40) claims that Social Capital: "does not exist *per se* – [it] can be lost and must, therefore, continually be renewed". This means that continuing interaction produces for example an openness of expression, a sharing of feelings, an exchange of norms, values and understanding. This interaction could result in an outward-looking Social Capital orientation that benefits all the parties involved in the work relationship (Harrison *et al*., 2004:16; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11; Taylor, 1999:134). By contrast, when there is no interaction among people, the individual's Social Capital loses its value and this could trigger an inward-looking orientation of distrust, leading to a lack of co-operation. Collier (2003:19) asserts that when interaction does not produce Social Capital externalities, interaction becomes a mere act of "social labour" – people accept or commit themselves to performing tasks for the sake of compliance. In other words, the value of Human Capital cannot achieve its full potential without the value of Social Capital.

Against this background it is clear that Social Capital and Human Capital are interwoven in the efficiency and effectiveness of human performance (Burt, 2005:4; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11). Social capital is therefore the contextual complement to Human Capital (Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11; 12) or, in other words, the proverbial glue that holds people together to fulfil certain aims which could not be attained without it (Burt, 2005:2; Svendsen *et al*., 2004:11; Lin, 1999:31 and 32). Harrison *et al*. (2004: 18) believe that the role of Social Capital in organisations can be described as a "psychological contract"[43] between employees and employers. Therefore, when a "psychological contract" (positive or negative) has been established, the psychological contract serves as the trigger for performance. Lin (1999:31) gives three reasons why Social Capital tends to enhance performance. Firstly, it provides individual(s) with useful information; secondly, Social Capital acts as a certification of the individual's social credentials, thus providing an "added" resource beyond the individual's personal capabilities, which could be useful to the organisation; and thirdly, investment in Social Capital reinforces individual identity and recognition. In this regard, Lin (1999:31) contends that the individual "being assured and recognized of one's worthiness as an individual … not only provides emotional support but also public acknowledgement of one's claims to certain resources". Investment in Social

(Harrison *et al*., 2004:18).

[43] Harrison *et al*. (2004:26) mention that the "psychological contract" between the individual and the institution refers to each party's implicitly felt and perceived expectations, wants and rights. It comprises a dynamic and reciprocal deal with expectations evolving over time.

Capital, by building and sustaining relationships[44] among people, results in a higher level of outcomes (a collaborative "good") than could be achieved by the individual alone (an individual "good"). For this reason, Social Capital is a public good, not only an individual good[45] (Coleman, 1994:312).

Field (2004:8), Grootaert and Bastelaer (2003:9), Putnam (2000:19) and Coleman (1994:314) furthermore postulate that when investment in Social Capital collapses, it could adversely affect the Human Capital value of the individual, organisation and members of a community.

In Chapters one and two I argued that HEIs have made little attempt to understand the underlying intent of the SDA, and therefore to determine whether and why such an intent coincides with or differs from the view of staff development in HEIs. As this indicates that there is a Social Capital deficit between the ETDP SETA and HEIs, it is argued in this study that Social Capital is the missing "link" that would help to optimise the implementation of the SDA in HEIs. As previously explained, Social Capital development is the proverbial trigger for elements such as belief, attitudes or feelings of willingness, ties of kinship, inter-dependency, commitment, obligation or support towards goal achievement. Even if the SDA were implemented with the best of intentions or reasons, a break in social capital could adversely affect the implementation of the SDA in HEIs.

Erasmus and Van der Westhuizen (1996:197) illustrate that social capital is the key determinant of individual and organisational success, as portrayed in the following graphic illustration:

[44] Relationships could result in a formal contractual agreement between the individual and the organisation. In this regard, Albrow (1997:26) argues: "The employee's commitment to his [or her] organizational role will depend partly on how the individual is put in the position to negotiate on his [or her] commitment."

[45] However, the intent of social capital investment may be negative. People or organisations unionise, for example, to protect their interests, but the protection of interests might be unfavourable to other parties concerned (Field, 2004:74 and 76; Putnam, 2000:21).

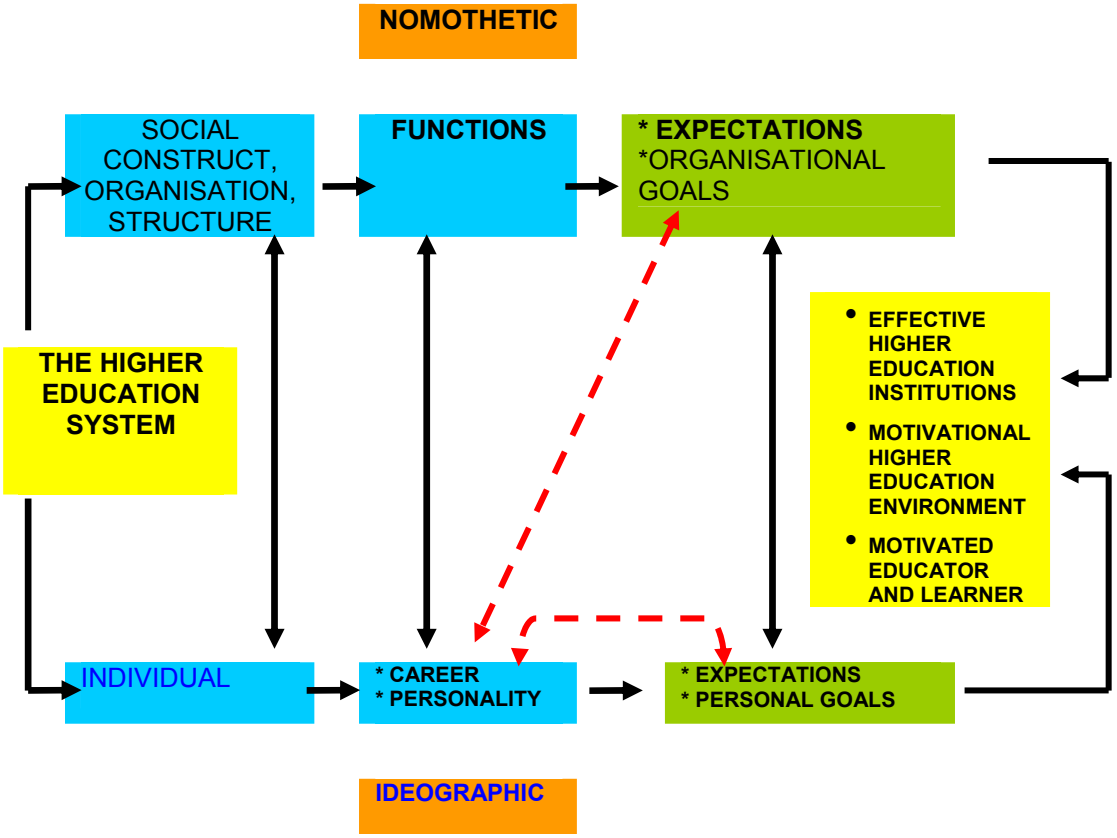

Figure 2.1 The relationship between individual and organisational goals and the Higher Education system (adapted from Erasmus and Van der Westhuizen, 1996:197)

Figure 2.1 illustrates the relationship between the individual's career and personal goal expectations and the effectiveness of HEIs. One of the first conclusions drawn from Figure 2.1 is that the effectiveness of HEIs depends on the alignment of the individual's career, personality, personal goals and expectations to the organisational goals. The second inference is that organisations are social constructs; meaning that structures should be available to enhance Social Capital so as to attain the individual's and organisation's goals. When such structures are sound, they link personal goals with organisational goals, resulting in an effective and motivational HEI environment, and in motivated educators and learners.

Erasmus and Van der Westhuizen's (1996) illustration (adapted in Figure 2.1 above), depicting the value of Social Capital in achieving organisational efficiency, could be key to the implementation of the SDA. In other words, the effectiveness of the implementation of the SDA depends on Social Capital (feeling of willingness, ties of kinship, inter-dependency, commitment, obligation or support) that accrues during interaction between the ETDP SETA and the SDFs at HEIs. If interaction between

the ETDP SETA and SDFs at HEIs leads to the accrual of Social Capital, it would in turn facilitate mutual collaboration (Field, 2004:1 and 45) to address the challenges that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA. Parker (2003:1) comments that the ETDP SETA has not, however, established a strong presence or identity in HEIs. The workshop held by the ETDP SETA on 19 and 20 June 2003 with all the HEIs is the only instance found in the literature (1998 to 2007) of an national attempt made by the SETA to engage in some kind of dialogue to create an in-depth understanding of the HE sector (ETDP SETA, 2003).

This leads me to conclude that the challenges inherent in staff development due to the implementation of the SDA will remain largely unresolved – at least for the foreseeable future – unless a deliberate effort is made to create Social Capital between HEIs and the ETDP SETA. Harrison *et al*. (2004:12) state that a European Community advisory committee for vocational training has been established in the United Kingdom. This committee consists of representatives of the government, labour and employee bodies with the purpose of discussing training and, as part of a "social dialogue"[46], of encouraging education and training. This may be a solution to overcome the challenges HEIs currently face with the implementation of the SDA.

Research confirms that when there is a free flow of communication among parties so that they gain a mutual understanding of what needs to change and how the change will be implemented in a plan of action, people are more open to accepting and coming to grips with such changes (Randell and Bitzer, 1998:143). Employees will be sceptical of any initiatives taken by management if they perceive that they are not involved or consulted (Greyling, 2001:29). Likewise, HEIs will be sceptical of any initiatives taken by the ETDP SETA if they perceive that they (the SDFs in this instance) are not involved or consulted.

The literature review indicates that HEIs have made vague attempts to understand the underlying intent of the SDA, and therefore to determine whether and why such an intent coincides with or differs from the view of staff development in HEIs. The comments of Strydom (2004:292), Van Niekerk (2004:111) and Govender (2003:8) that staff development in HEIs is being hampered by a lack of support and guidance from government through the ETDP SETA, are grounds for believing that there is a

[46] Social dialogue refers to a process involving all social partners in discussing matters of mutual interest so as to form joint opinions on certain matters (Harrison *et al*., 2004:12).

break in social capital between the HEIs and the ETDP SETA that hampers the integration of the SDA in HEIs.

2.6 Concluding remarks

A deliberate attempt has been made to place this research project in the intersection between interpretivism and critical theory as its overarching epistemological home. I have also demonstrated how Human Capital Theory, as well as Social Capital Theory provides the conceptual and theoretical framework for this study. This chapter offers an overview of the literature available on the rationale for the implementation of the SDA as well as those for staff development in HEIs. In addition, the differences between the underlying rationale for the implementation of the SDA and for staff development in HEIs are pointed out. It is therefore argued in this study that Social Capital is the "missing link" in the implementation of the SDA in HEIs. Accordingly, I shall endeavour to ground my research project in a critical interpretative approach to uncover the challenges that HEIs encounter with the implementation of the SDA, in order to test the validity of the contention described in this chapter, namely that there is a mismatch between the rationale for the implementation of the SDA and staff development in HEIs. In other words, the aim is to confirm what has been noted about staff development in HEIs and to identify and gain an understanding of the unique critical features of staff development in the context of SA HEIs, as well as an understanding of the perceptions of SDF about the effects of the implementation of the SDA in HEIs.

The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology of this study and explains how this study was approached empirically.