

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The nature and structure of South African social and economic systems are undergoing complex and far-reaching changes, as are the values and beliefs individuals hold about themselves. The "post-industrial, rapidly changing society" experienced by the rest of the world has not passed us by - quite the contrary in fact. For some time now, many authors and researchers (compare Borow 1984, Miller-Tiedeman & Tiedeman 1985, Hofmeyr & Moulder 1988, Patterson 1985) have been commenting on the shift that is taking place from an industrial era to an information age and that is characterized by a knowledge explosion (HSRC 1081:9). Gysbers (1984:18-19) noted that the world is moving from a goods-producing economy base to a service-information economy while we continue to experience rapid acceleration in the use of higher technology and automation. According to Godsell (1993:1), South Africa's transition away from apartheid is underpinned by these much deeper, broader and more fundamental transitions.

In effect, the changes in trends currently taking place both nationally and internationally mean that future entrants into the labour market will need both generic and specific skills in order to be able to compete for the available jobs, to adapt to expanding career opportunities and to practise their chosen careers successfully.

Taking into consideration that we have moved from a paradigm of predictability to one of uncertainty, it would be safe to assume that we cannot enter the future with outmoded and obsolete ideas. Rather, life skills for life career development (Gysbers & Moore 1975:1981 in Gysbers 1984:7-11) have become necessary. If our universities are to produce graduates whose training is to have relevance in the "new South Africa", cognizance will have to be taken of the call on the part of both employers and the self-employed for successful provision of much-needed life competencies and skills.

## 1.2 TITLE AND CONCEPT ELUCIDATION

### 1.2.1 Title elucidation

A careful inspection of the title of this study, "Guidance support for undergraduate university students", reveals a relationship between the need for guidance support of undergraduate students via the use of certain, pertinent life skills and the successful managing of both life and the future careers of said students.

### 1.2.2 Concept elucidation

Certain concepts allied to those used in the title need to be defined more clearly.

#### 1.2.2.1 Guidance

The **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980: 334) defines **guidance** as "1. n the act of guiding; direction; leadership. 2. something that guides. 3. advice or assistance. 4. the process of directing the course of a spacecraft, missile, etc."

**Webster's Dictionary** (Gove 1981: 430) includes the following: "1b. advice in choosing courses, preparing for a vocation for further education, or coping with personal problems given to students by a teacher or a professional counsellor."

Downing (1968:7), describes **guidance** as follows: "... an organized set of specialized services established as an integral part of the educational environment. It is designed to promote the development of students and assist them toward a realization of sound, wholesome adjustment and maximum accomplishments commensurate with their potentialities."

An analysis of the above elucidation and definitions indicates that guidance involves a treatment wherein one person (the counsellor) undertakes to guide another (the student).

The report of the Work Committee: Guidance of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (HSRC 1981:8,10) refers specifically to School Guidance. Nevertheless some of

what it has to say about guidance can as easily be extrapolated to include guidance of students studying at university level. It sees guidance as incorporating education towards and preparation for adulthood (inclusive thus of career adulthood), and involving a particular view of man which implies "the common human dignity and basic rights of all persons" as well as "the importance of individual differences within every person".

Overall, the aim of guidance as seen by the authors of the HSRC report (HSRC 1981:11) is "the self-orientation and self-actualization of every individual, with particular stress on self-knowledge, autonomous choice and self-development". The above includes effective decision-making and coping skills regarding life situations as well as career choices so the youth can "successfully manage his adult life in a changing world, in work situations and in other social activities" (HSRC 1981:11). It is the opinion of the researcher that the above-mentioned life skills, amongst others, be actively taught at university level as well.

#### 1.2.2.2 Career Guidance

The noun **career** is defined in the **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980:112) as "1. a swift course. 2. one's progress through life in a particular vocation. 3. a profession or occupation". Super (1981:17) speaks of a life career rainbow, which includes "the continuation and sequence of roles played by a person during the course of a lifetime and the pattern in which they fit together at any point in time" (Super in Gysbers 1984:17). Thus the roles of "child, student, leasurite, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, pensioner" (Super 1980:284) are included in this definition.

Gysbers and Moore, who proposed the concept of life career development, define it as "self-development over the life span through the integration of the roles, settings and events of a person's life" (in Gysbers 1984:17).

In devising a syllabus for School Guidance, the authors of the HSRC report proposed the term **career education** in preference to career guidance. They maintained that the term included more than guidance in that it represented "a comprehensive and systematic, vocational, educational programme which will help pupils to choose a career and which will provide them with skills, attitudes and knowledge useful for survival and progress." It should enable pupils to make their own career choices consciously and to cope with their

life situations, and should cover aptitude assessments, skills preparation, the world of work, decision making and job strategy (HSRC 1981:80-82,91). Guidance of a similar nature could equally be made available to university students.

### 1.2.2.3 Skills

**The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary** (Onions 1973:2009) defines the word **skill** *inter alia* as follows: "...3. Having practical ability; possessing skill; expert; dexterous, clever. + 4. In the phr. can (or could) s., to have discrimination or knowledge, esp. in a specified manner. 5. Practical knowledge in combination with ability, cleverness, expertness ME. c. a craft, an accomplishment (now US)." The word is derived from "ON. **skil** distinction, discernment" (Onions 1973:2009).

**Webster's Dictionary** (Gove 1981:906) defines skill as "a developed or acquired aptitude or ability".

Bolles (1981:142-150) and Bolles and Fine (in Pickworth 1989:2-3) identify three distinct types of skills. They are adaptive or self-management skills, functional or transferable skills and work-content or specific-content skills.

### 1.2.2.4 Life Skills

Powell (in Pickworth 1989:3) defines life skills as being "the life-coping skills consonant with the development tasks of the basic human development processes, namely those skills necessary to perform the tasks for a given age and sex in the following areas of human development: psychosocial, physical-sexual, vocational, cognitive, moral, ego and emotional."

Hopson and Scally (1980:78) list the following as skills necessary for effective living: relationship skills, management and growth skills, skills needed for education and skills needed at work, at home, at leisure and in the community. These authors (Hopson & Scally 1982:11) see life-skills teaching as being "about growth and development for all groups to enable them to become more self-empowered and through this become more creative, innovative, and committed members of our human community."

### 1.2.2.5 Support

**The Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980:756) defines **support** as follows: "1. *a)* to carry or bear the weight of; hold up *b)* to carry or bear (a specified weight, pressure, etc.) 2. to give courage or faith to; help; comfort. 3. to give approval to or be in favour of; uphold."

According to **The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary** (Onions 1973:2196) support may be defined in the following ways: "**Support** *sb.* I. The action of supporting. 1. The action, or an act, of preventing a person from giving way, backing him up, or taking his part; assistance, countenance, backing. *b.* Spiritual help; mental comfort 1500. *c.* Corroboration or substantiation (*of* a statement, principle, etc.); advocacy (*of* a statement, motion, etc.) 1771. 2. The action of keeping from failing, exhaustion, or perishing; *esp.* the supplying *of* a living thing with what is necessary for subsistence; the maintenance *of* life 1686. *b.* The action of contributing to the success or maintaining the value of something 1912. II. One who or that which supports. 1. A supporter, 'prop', 'stay' 1594. 2. That which supports life; means of livelihood or subsistence 1599. *b.* One who or that which furnishes means of livelihood, or maintains a person or community 1745.

"**Support** *v.* 2. To strengthen the position of (a person or community) by one's assistance, countenance, or adherence; to stand by, back up. late ME. *b.* To uphold or maintain the validity or authority of (a thing); also, to give support to (a course of action) 1638. 3.*b.* To furnish authority for or corroboration of (a statement, etc.); to bear out, substantiate 1761. *c.* To maintain the truth of (an opinion, etc.) 1736. 8. To keep (a person, his mind, etc.) from failing or giving way; to give courage, confidence, or power of endurance to...1602."

### 1.2.2.6 Undergraduate Students

#### a) Undergraduate

**The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary** (Onions 1973: 2409) defines **undergraduate** as follows: "A. *sb.* 1. A university student who has not yet taken a degree. 2. *fig.* One imperfectly instructed or inexperienced (*in* something). 1659."

The **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980:819) defines an **undergraduate** as being "n. a student at a university or college who has not yet received a bachelor's degree".

**b) University**

A **university** may be defined, according to the **Shorter Oxford English Dictionary**, as being "1. The whole body of teachers and students pursuing, at a particular place, the higher branches of learning; such persons associated together as a society or corporate body, having the power of conferring degrees and other privileges, and forming an institution for the promotion of education in the higher branches of learning; the colleges, buildings, etc. belonging to such a body."

**c) Students**

According to the **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980:747) a **student** is "1. a person who studies something 2. a person who is enrolled for study in a university, college, etc."

An undergraduate student is, therefore, someone who studies at a university or college in order to obtain a bachelor's degree in, for example, the fields of the Arts, Sciences or Commerce. One may study at a university in order to qualify oneself to enter a profession upon successful completion of the required course of study. The University of Pretoria, for example, currently maintains eleven faculties offering a variety of courses.

English (in Mathee 1991:12) describes a student, from a psycho-analytical perspective, as being a person who is busy with important independent study which is focused on a theme or subject and which has, as a goal, problem-solving, the acquisition of knowledge and training in memory.

From an educational perspective, Hawes (1982:139) typifies a student as "a person attending an educational institution or enrolled in an educational programme."

It can be presumed that the majority of undergraduate students are youngsters who have either just completed secondary schooling or who, should they have spent some time in the Defence Force or have taken a moratorium, may yet be considered to be inexperienced with regard to the world of work, especially as pertains to a chosen profession.

The student, therefore, may be presumed to be someone in need of guidance in relation to his studies, his role in the adult world generally and his chosen profession or future career. It could be argued that support and guidance should be given to students which make conscious and deliberate use of pertinent life skills training in order for self-actualization to take place with regard to each student's unique potential, and to assist him with the successful practice of his future career.

### **1.3 METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION**

This study employs methods (or ways of disclosing) with a view to solving problems that meet the requirements of science and that comply with stipulated views on life and work.

The following methods were used to direct the scientific thought process of the study:

#### **1.3.1 The phenomenological method**

According to Kilian and Viljoen (1974:3), Pedagogics is "a particular form of (practising) science" via the "systematic assimilation of scientific insights", with education as the object of the research. The phenomenological method is employed in order to discover the essences of a phenomenon as they appear against the background of universal reality. Initially the essentials have to be distinguished and separated from the non-essential features of the phenomenon being studied. These essences subsequently disclose themselves only via contemplative thinking, reflection, description, elucidation and interpretation. Reflection includes going to the roots or radical discovery of the aspects: thus Edmund Husserl (in Landman & Gouws 1969:17) calls this method "radical empiricism".



The essences are then described in formulations called categories, which themselves are descriptions of ways of thinking via which the matter itself is penetrated or reached. The categories must have the quality of universal validity and they must, furthermore, be irreducible or ontologically determined. The relationship between categories may be established, but no hierarchical structure of categories exists - only "structural enunciation" (of real pedagogic essences) (Kilian & Viljoen 1974:17).

Criteria are constituted from categories and these criteria are used to judge whether or not an appearance is an authentic manifestation of the phenomenon it appears to be, or not. Criteria link theory to practice (see Landman & Gouws 1969:15-78; Landman, Van Zyl & Roos 1975:1-49; Kilian & Viljoen 1974:3-8, 117; Pickworth 1989:7).

According to Husserl (in Landman & Gouws 1969:24-25) and Landman (University of Pretoria 1989:2), Phenomenology is the method that allows the phenomena to be seen as they allow themselves to be seen. Thus from a phenomenological standpoint, the method entails going back to the matter itself with the phenomenologist reconnoitring reality by allowing said reality to describe and explain itself as it would have done if it could.

Via the use of phenomenological thought processes and steps, the essentials of the research theme can be uncovered in order to penetrate, non-judgmentally, to the nature thereof. These essentials can then be described and interpreted in a conscious attempt at problem solving.

The point of departure for the phenomenologist is neither subjective nor objective, but rather the subject-object relationship or the relationship between people and the world (Landman & Gouws 1969:28). In order to describe the nature of reality accurately, certain steps need to be followed, the justification of which forces the phenomenologist to test the characteristics he determines against the reality. These steps include:

- i) The identification and delineation of the phenomenon being studied and the use thereof as a point of departure.
- ii) The suspension of all beliefs, dogmas, opinions, theories, philosophies, and presuppositions that might affect the outcome.



- iii) The phenomenologist looks at the diverse ways in which the phenomenon manifests itself from a variety of perspectives, having excluded non-relevant features.
- iv) He distinguishes between and separates the essentials from the non-essentials and deals only with the former, namely those features which do not change, are ontic, real and apparent.
- v) Reflection on how the natural, ontic characteristics can be intentionally and radically empirically constituted which, to a degree, involves the use of intuition.
- vi) The consideration of the alliance and relationship between the characteristics must take place.
- vii) A hermeneutic layout must be applied in order to interpret the meaningfulness of what has been found in the whole structure (Landman & Gouws 1969:30-33).

As regards the present study, the phenomenological method as the fundamental or basic method complies with acceptable methodological requirements as follows:

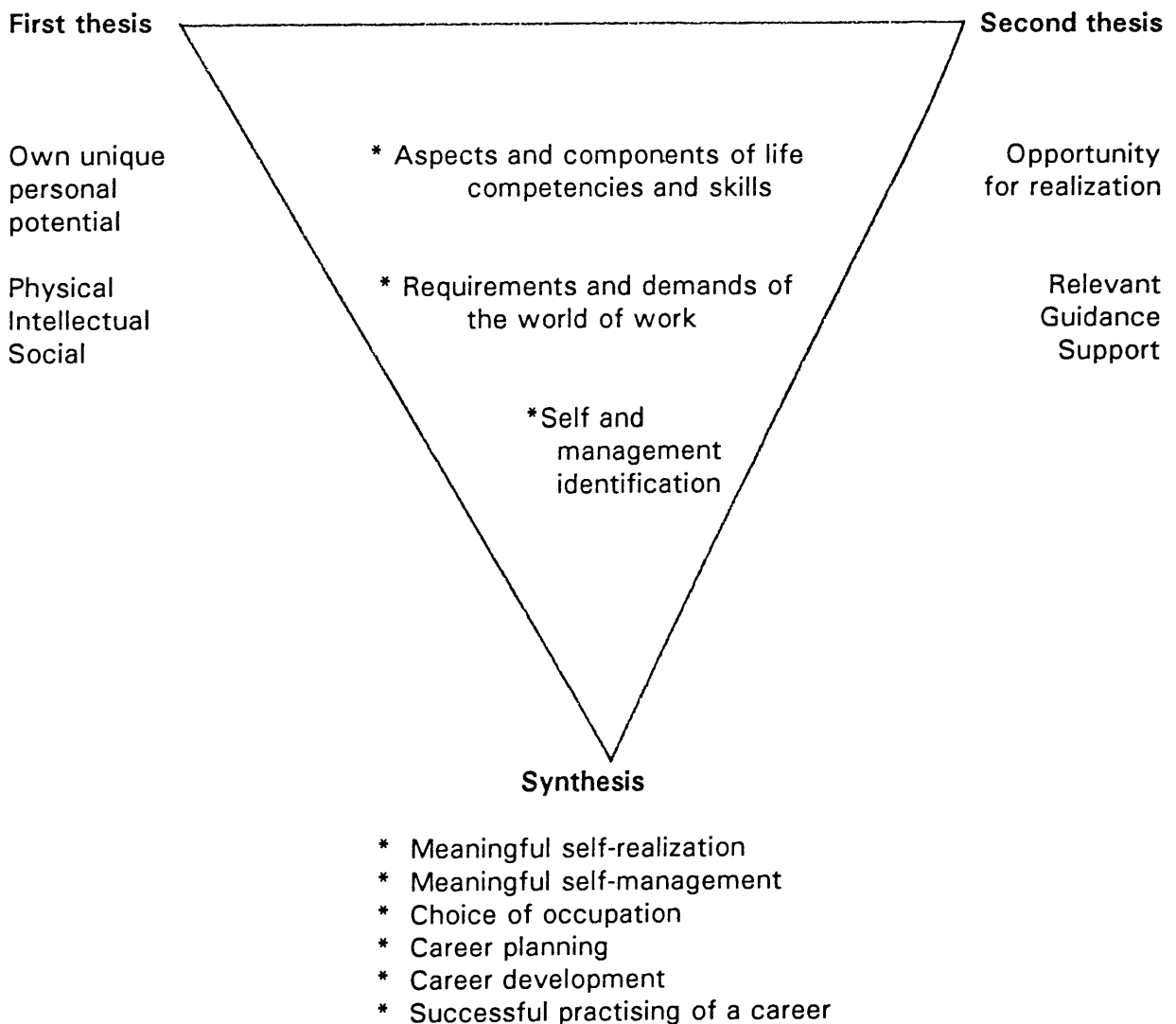
- \* The life-world of the undergraduate student itself represents the point of departure in this study in order to determine the relevance of guidance support for said student in the form of life skills training.
- \* Phenomenology-as-method lends itself to a purposeful, critical and systematic investigation of the relevance of guidance support for undergraduate students.
- \* Via the phenomenological scrutiny of the relevance of guidance support for undergraduate students, the true essence of the contribution it can make to a student's ability to successfully manage his life in general and a career in particular is revealed.
- \* Phenomenology-as-method is free of all prejudicial obfuscation of a metaphysical or theoretical nature so that the knowledge of the relevance of guidance support of undergraduate students is revealed.

- \* For the purpose of this study the phenomenological method is anthropologically and pedagogically accountable and, from a guidance support (life skills) perspective, phenomenology-as-method is also viable and permissible from a life and work view (see Van Wyk 1985:22-23).

### 1.3.2 The triadic method

Using the triadic method involves moving from a first premise or thesis to a second premise or thesis, followed by a level or niveau elevation when synthesis is reached.

The triadic thought process can be schematically represented as follows (Joubert 1982:232):



## Explanation of the triad

### \* First thesis

Each person possess his own, unique potential. This potential can be realized through relevant guidance support resulting in the acquisition of self-knowledge and career development knowledge, and competence in essential life skills needed for the world of work.

### \* Second thesis

Relevant guidance support, as covered in this study, offers the student the opportunity to realize his potential.

### \* Synthesis

In this study, the concept of guidance support, consisting of both personal and career guidance, will be investigated in an attempt to establish the relevance of the contribution it may make in the areas of self-management and the successful future practising of a career.

### 1.3.3 The hermeneutic method

The hermeneutic method involves the science of laying out a matter in order to establish what the goal, sense and purpose of the matter under investigation is. Etymologically speaking, the concept **hermeneutic** derives from the Greek verb **hermeneuein**, which means to interpret, explain and create (Landman & Gouws 1969:32-33).

As hermeneutics is defined in the **Shorter Oxford English Dictionary** (Onions 1973:956) as "pertaining to interpretation", it is used in this study for the purpose of understanding, explanation and interpretation. The hermeneutic question posed in this study is: What is the purpose and meaning underlying the establishment of the relevance of guidance support for undergraduate students?

#### 1.3.4 Literature study and critical study of texts

An effective literature study of both primary and secondary sources is essential as it forms a fundamental part of research. It serves as the point of departure by enabling the researcher to acquaint himself thoroughly with the latest research and developments covered in the field being studied. This prevents both trivial and superficial research and unnecessary duplication.

Furthermore, it enables the researcher to determine the boundaries of his field and provides him with the opportunity to place his problem into better perspective which, in turn, results in a better evaluation of his own findings (Landman 1980:33; RAU 1986:7-12).

In support of an effective literature study, a critical study of texts should also be made, inclusive of the following:

- \* Analysis of the title and subtitles of the literature consulted
- \* Analysis of content pages and table of contents
- \* Study of the index
- \* Analysis and evaluation of problem statements and the hypothesis formulation appearing in the various texts
- \* Analysis and evaluation of the methodological justification of the various texts
- \* The compilation of tables of essentials found in and taken from the texts consulted
- \* The analysis and evaluation of the meaning of the texts with regard to guidance support
- \* Logical and phenomenological verification of various statements made as regards guidance support
- \* Acquisition of an overview of the commentaries made in the texts consulted (Van Wyk 1985:2-6).

A literature study using relevant primary and secondary sources and inclusive of a critical study of the texts was undertaken. Cognizance was taken of the phenomenological (reduction) steps.

### **1.3.5 Field study method**

When a researcher seeks a solution to a problem entrenched in the present, he frequently makes a survey of the current conditions prevailing in the field being studied with the aid of, for example, questionnaires, interviews or schedules. This constitutes field research (RAU 1986:31).

Employment of the field study method entailed studying the phenomenon of guidance support with the aid of surveys, interviews and questionnaires, the processing and interpretation of data thus acquired and the compilation of profiles from said data.

- \* Life Skills Questionnaire (see 2.3 p.25)

A structured life skills questionnaire was given to first year residential students of the University of Pretoria (see Chapter 2 and Annexure A for results). The questionnaire consisted of components covering both general and career guidance. Six key areas of life skills were identified, each comprising five subsections. The six main subheadings included:

- \* Community and social development
- \* Development of person and self
- \* Self-management
- \* Physical and sexual development
- \* Career planning
- \* World and life orientation

All students available in the hostels on the days the questionnaire was administered were included in the sample.

## **1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

### **1.4.1 Introduction**

Problem formulation requires the precise formulation of certain questions that need to be answered by means of investigation or research. Relevant questions direct and motivate

the researcher to find meaningful solutions and to disclose the reality of the educational phenomenon under investigation (Landman 1980:44).

#### 1.4.2 Problem formulation

According to Godsell (1993:1-2), the worldwide transformation which is taking place as societies change from a feudal, pastoral and traditional character, to a modern, industrial, urban-based culture, has changed not only the nature and the acquisition of knowledge, but the nature of learning as well. The rapidity of change in both knowledge and technology has particular consequences for the world of work. One of the consequences is that learning has become "continuous - a life-long endeavour...holistic, generic, or inter-connected" (Godsell 1993:2).

Statistics can often act as indicators of potential problem areas. A glance at the statistics presented below can help one to gain perspective on the importance of considering the introduction of guidance support for undergraduate students.

- \* The estimated unemployment rate in South Africa at present is 40% (Bengu 1993:3). Simultaneously, there is a global recession which is exacerbating the situation. As regards OECD countries, for example, the current unemployment rate in Australia is over 11%. In Ireland and Spain rates are as high as 18% and 22% respectively, and Germany is rapidly reaching a 10% unemployment figure (Tothill 1993:42:CNN 1993). This global recession is one of the reasons for the decline in local and international levels of investment in South Africa (Bacchus in Bengu 1993:3).
- \* The South African growth rate experienced an annual decline of 0,5% in 1992 when at least a 5% growth rate was required to match the needs of a growing population and to maintain reasonable standards of living (Ryan in Bengu 1993:3).
- \* Inflation and interest rates are still in double figures whilst a growth of unemployment or under-employment of 3,1 million has occurred over the last 10 years (Ryan in Bengu 1993:4). Predictions are that, 10 years from now, 80% of school leavers seeking jobs will be in unemployment queues (KO in Bengu 1993:4).
- \* Furthermore, there is a decline in job opportunities in the formal sector. Between 1985 and 1990, only 7% of all new labour market entrants could obtain

employment (National Manpower Commission 1992:26). Hence there was a shortfall of 2,5 million jobs in the formal sector during the nineteen eighties (van Aardt 1993:7).

In a talk presented by Clem Sunter on his book, "Quest for Survival" (Sunter 1990), he identified the dilemma posed by the population explosion of the Third World sector. In 1990, 40% of South Africa's population was under 15 years of age. This makes unprecedented demands on the country's education infrastructure if the population is to be adequately equipped to participate in the economic growth of the nation. In Sunter's opinion, provision of jobs and opportunities for economic growth to improve the quality of life for all may constitute South Africa's greatest challenge. A possible answer could be to stimulate the informal sector of the economy via encouragement of free enterprise and entrepreneurial skills (Sunter 1990, Huntley, Siegfried & Sunter 1989:19-94).

As regards university training, Sadie projected that a deficit in executive/managerial and high-level manpower would occur in the period 1980-2000, while a surplus of unskilled manpower was predicted (in Pickworth 1989:12). Thus employment opportunities would decrease due to an oversupply of unskilled workers and an undersupply of the skilled manpower necessary to generate economic growth, namely, those qualified in areas of technology and management.

Bengu (1993:5), maintains that, according to the multi-factor productivity indices (which reflect the changes in the amount of labour and capital used in production, and clearly show the joint effect of the many influences, including changes in technology, production, capacity utilization, managerial skills, characteristics and efforts of the labour force, and the like), there are notable factors that hamper productivity in South Africa. These include:

- \* The lack of high level human resource skills
- \* The lack of technology relating to the application of new knowledge, methods, products and processes
- \* Economic policies of the last decade (Liebenberg in Bengu 1993:5).

Bengu (1993:5), feels that the above are only a few of the many factors which relate in an important way to the role of universities in training and educating for employment.



"They relate to the training, research and outreach activities of these institutions and the impact they make on job opportunities" (Bengu 1993:5).

In nearly all areas requiring high-level trained personnel, there is a continuing shortfall. The National Manpower Commission has pointed out that the ratio of top occupational or executive personnel to the remainder of the workforce was 1:52 in 1989, compared to approximately 1:15 in the developed world and 1:10 in America (National Manpower Commission 1989:28). According to Bengu (1993:5-6), on average South Africa has only 10,4 per 1000 of the population receiving university education while, just to maintain current levels of economic development, the number needs to be increased to 16,51 people. In order to achieve a mere 2% average growth rate until the year 2000, there will need to be 210 200 executives and more than one million highly-skilled white-collar workers by the year 2000 (Bacchus in Bengu 1993:6).

According to Barker, "Education for the requirements of the economy is thus absolutely necessary. Educating without taking careful account of economic realities and manpower needs is a luxury we can no longer afford" (in Niebuhr 1993:9-10). Niebuhr maintains that holistic development of a human being for as long as possible is an approach supported by the World Bank. This implies, amongst other things, the importance of the acquisition of general life skills, including the achievement of adequate levels of literacy and numeracy (Niebuhr 1993:11).

According to Mauer (1993:31-32) potential employers place a great deal of importance on certain basic skills such as literacy and computer literacy skills, the ability to think critically, to assume leadership roles and to be creative. Management training, statistics and interpersonal skills which could translate into the ability eventually to assume management roles, were also desired. He felt that the questions which career guidance counsellors at universities needed to address systematically (with regard to BA graduates) were:

- \* The identification of marketable skills which have to be acquired
- \* Bridging the gap between the academic environment and the world of work
- \* Creating opportunities for students to apply their disciplines to learn about career options
- \* The involvement of university teaching staff in the counselling process and

- \* The involvement of practitioners in the various disciplines as a link between students and employers (Mauer 1993:31-32): in order to produce graduates able "to address issues surrounding the nation's political and economic well-being, which depends on citizens who are informed, critical and articulate" (Duminy 1993:55).

Appropriate and effective guidance needs to be given to students in order adequately to prepare them for the world of work and for a future which, in all likelihood, will be very different to the situation prevailing when most of their lecturers were themselves students. Provision for training in life competencies and skills should be made if universities are to retain their relevance in a changing South Africa.

### 1.4.3 Problem refinement

The following serves as problem refinement for this specific study:

- (a) Can a diagnostic medium successfully be employed in order to establish the level of life competencies and skills of university entrants with the aim of isolating and identifying possible problem areas? (See Chapter 2, p.20.)
- (b) Can the needs and expectations of the world of work be ascertained via the employment of a variety of research methods and what are the implications for future graduates? (See Chapter 3, p.40.)
- (c) Can steps be taken in order both to address and to redress possible problem areas via the establishment of a Guidance Support Department? (See Chapter 4, p.83.)

In order to arrive at a solution to the problem, meaningful answers to the above questions should be found.

## 1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

This research is further directed by the following over-arching hypothesis, in the light of the preceding problem formulation and problem refinement: relevant guidance support, incorporating the life skills necessary to enable students to successfully manage life, become more employable and to practise a career in such a way as to satisfy the demands of the world of work, can be and needs to be provided to facilitate optimum

self-actualization of each individual's personal potential and to increase both employability and economic productivity.

The research hypothesis formulated above necessarily leads to the following refined formulations:

- (a) With regard to university entrants, specific fields of essential life competencies and skills can be identified and diagnoses of potential problem areas can be made via use of a life skills questionnaire (see Chapter 2, p.20).
- (b) Needs of employers and of private practitioners and shortcomings in the training of graduates as pertains to life skills, can be identified (see Chapter 3, p.40).
- (c) Problems can be remediated via the provision of relevant guidance support for university students (see Chapter 4, p.83).

## 1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

The study has three aims:

Firstly:

- \* To employ a life-skills questionnaire that may be used as a diagnostic medium designed to ascertain if and where problem areas lie with regard to university entrants (see Chapter 2, p.20).

Secondly:

- \* To ascertain the needs and expectations of employers and of private practitioners to establish where the training of graduates falls short of the above in respect of life skills (see Chapter 3, p.40).

Thirdly:

- \* To suggest a means of overcoming the above via the introduction of relevant guidance support for university students (see Chapter 4, p.83).

The achievement of the above aims will make a meaningful contribution to ascertaining whether or not the current approaches to the education of undergraduate students can be

improved upon and made more relevant for the students themselves in terms of both life and future career management.

## **1.7 PROGRAMME OUTLINE, REVIEW AND CHAPTER PLANNING**

In order to gain perspective and an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, namely: guidance support of undergraduate students, the following were dealt with in Chapter 1: title and concept elucidation, methodological justification, problem formulation, formulation of research hypotheses and an exposition of the aim of the study.

The following programme will be covered in this study in order to arrive at a problem resolution:

- \* A life-skills questionnaire, designed to identify possible problem areas with regard to university entrants, will be administered (Chapter 2, p.20).
- \* An exposition of the needs and expectations of future employers and private practitioners will be undertaken in order to identify shortcomings in said expectations and steps both employers and self-employed graduates are having to take to remedy the situation (Chapter 3, p.40).
- \* Guidance support for students will be suggested as a possible means of both addressing and redressing the situation (Chapter 4, p.83).
- \* A review and summary of the study will be given with the primary aim of making substantiated recommendations (Chapter 5, p.130).