
**POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA**

# A Critical Analysis of Stakeholder Engagement in Skills Development in Namibia

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Leadership and Change Management in the Harold Pupkewitz Graduate Schools of Business at the Polytechnic of Namibia

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. Any assistance that I have received has been duly acknowledged in the thesis.

It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Leadership and Change Management at the Polytechnic of Namibia. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other Institution of Higher Learning.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & DEDICATION

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Finally, I dedicate this to my mom. She always had to bear the absence of her last born for quite a long time. Your patience and understanding has encouraged me to work hard and complete my study.

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**Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| A/M | Assessors/Moderators |
| CBET | Competency Based Education and Training |
| CIED | Council ad Industry Engagement Division |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| ICT | Information Communication and Technology |
| INDU | Industry group (public and private employers &Employee) |
| ISC | Industry Skills Committee |
| ISEA | Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability |
| EMTO | Engineering and Marine Training Organisation |
| NBC | Namibia Broadcast Cooperation |
| NCCI | Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NTA | Namibia Training Authority |
| NTFC | National Training Fund Council |
| QCA | Qualitative Content Analysis |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SABs | Stakeholder Advisory Boards |
| SACC | Standards Assessment and Certification Council |
| SETA | South Africa Education and Training Authority |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Science |

| | |
|---|---|
| TP | Training Provider |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| TWG | Technical Working Group |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |
| VTC | Vocational Training Centre |
| VTP | Vocational Training Provider |

**Abstract**

In recent years, stakeholder management is increasingly been discussed at national and international levels, primarily due to the many corporate failures across different services. Furthermore, companies are being held responsible for participation in broader social functions that extend beyond their normal routine responsibilities. This study investigates stakeholder engagement practices in skills development in Namibia, in view of the position of the Namibian Training Authority (NTA) as the custodian of skills development in Namibia. The study explores a number of challenges experienced in the process of stakeholder engagement ending with the recommendation for change.

Furthermore, the research findings indicate that the current stakeholder engagement process is inclusive of a variety of stakeholders, however, the process is identified as having a number of challenges. The Level of Engagement model by Arnstein (1969) was used to determine the level of stakeholder engagement by the NTA, this found that a consultation approach was the most common. To improve the practice, it is proposed that the level of stakeholder engagement should be nurtured and progressed to the level of partnership, where all key players are recognised to play their part in determining what is fit for purpose. It was found that the current practice of stakeholder engagement at NTA varies from one activity to another and from one stakeholder group to another, leaving the process of engagement un-satisfactory for many stakeholders.

A number of engagement challenges were identified by the study ranging from lack of recognition of stakeholders needs, lack of communication with stakeholders and poor involvement of stakeholders in skills development activities. The study also

recommends a number of changes required to mitigate these situations. These include the recognition of stakeholders' inputs and commitment to skills development by all parties involved in the process.

**Key Words:** Stakeholder, stakeholder engagement, levels of stakeholder engagements stakeholder groups, consultation, skills development.

# 1. Background to the Research

## 1.1 Introduction

This study is an inquiry into the process of stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia, considering the role of the Namibia Training Authority (NTA). In this study, stakeholder engagement is seen as a strategy of providing opportunities to stakeholders to participate in skills development activities. This study analyses the processes of stakeholder engagement of the NTA with its stakeholders, especially those who have participated in a number of stakeholders activities organised by the NTA.

In Namibia, the skills development activities are coordinated through the NTA as per the Vocational Education and Training Act, Act 1 of 2008. The Act mandates the NTA to create a sustainable partnership among the state, the private sector and civil society, to ensure skills development in Namibia addresses the skills shortages experienced. As the introduction to the study, this chapter provides a broader overview of the research signifying the problem and the context in which the study is based.

## 1.2 Background and Context

Over the years, the Vocational Education and Training (VET) System in Namibia has been operating in isolation from the needs and demands of industry (Namibia Training Authority [NTA], 2010). The management of the system was centralised, and the only training providers were the Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), which had little autonomy as institutions (NTA, 2010). The Government of the Republic of Namibia realised the need to bring change to this practice and, as a result, adopted an act of Parliament, Act 1 of 2008, to respond to this major need. The

Act sanctions the establishment of NTA as an authority to regulate VET in Namibia and facilitate the decentralisation of VET training to industry. The mandate of the NTA requires it to engage business, trade unions, training providers and other relevant stakeholders in building the VET system, and to ensure that VET in Namibia meets the current and emerging needs of industry, business and the broader community (Namibia, Act 1. 2008, P. 6 2, (c), (d). To this effect, the NTA has a responsibility to make sure stakeholders are fully engaged and involved in formulating the skills development system that is responsive to the needs of the labour market.

The NDP4 as a national plan for Namibia set targets to be met by different sectors and the education sector is expected to develop a high quality education system that capacitates the labour force with the skills required in the labour market. Inspired and guided by Vision 2030, the mandate of the education sector clearly states: to educate and train for national development (NDP4, 2012) and its essence is captured in several strategic initiatives and key performance indicators to be achieved during the NDP4 period. In addition, the education and training programme is based on core competencies of major shortage occupations not only to enable the learners with high probability of securing jobs in their areas of training but also contribute to the reduction in unemployment and income inequality, and increase economic growth of the country (NDP4, 2012).

The national plan has also identified challenges that need immediate attention especially by the NTA as the custodian of VET. Challenges such as limited provision of training, negative perception towards vocational and technical education, as well as poor quality of graduates at all levels of education and training (NDP4, 2012). Section 15, 1 (a), (b) and (c) of the VET Act made provision for the NTA Board to

establish its standing committees to assist in creating an enabling environment that is participative and inclusive of industry expertise. The standing committees established as per the VET Act are:

1. Standards, Assessment and Certification Council (SACC)
2. National Training Fund Council (NTFC), and
3. Industry Skills Committees (ISCs).

In brief, the SACC is established to advise the Board on all matters related to standards setting, assessment and certification of industry training interventions. The NTFC, through engagement with key stakeholder groups, coordinates the establishment of the National Training Fund council and ensures the training levy is implemented as stipulated in the VET Act. (Namibia, 2008, 35, 1(b)). Similar to other standing committees, the ISCs are responsible with the function of advising the Board on all matters relating to the training needs of the industries they represent. All the above Board committees comprise industry experts with extensive experience and knowledge about the sectors they represent.

Although the establishment of the ISCs is necessitated by the creation of a strong relationship between the industry and the NTA, the current practice shows that the establishment of the ISC is not yet clear to the industry. The NTA Board established 10 ISCs covering all economic sectors in Namibia, hoping for a smooth facilitation of industry activities by industries themselves. However, the results indicate the opposite findings to this effect as the ISC finds it difficult to carry out this task, in addition to their full time employment. In many cases, the ISCs are also not well informed and not at liberty to share information with the industry. This was raised in a number of ISCs meetings, stressing ‘poor communication’ between the

committees and the NTA, as well as with the Board that appointed them (F & B ISC meeting February & July, 2013).

The NTA established committees are as follow:

1. Hospitality & Tourism
2. Mining, Quarrying, Construction, and Electricity, Gas, Water Supply and Sanitation
3. Financial and Business Services
4. Fishing and Maritime
5. Agriculture & Forestry
6. Health Care and Social Services
7. Wholesale and Retail Trade
8. Telecommunication and Postal Services
9. Transport, Warehousing and Logistics, and
10. Manufacturing, Repair of Motor Vehicles, and Arts & Crafts industry

The focus of the present study is on the financial and business services industry. This industry was chosen because it is one of the industries that had their ISC established first in 2010. It is believed that stakeholders in this industry have participated in many skills development activities organised by NTA, such as meetings and workshops, and they are in position to provide evidence of their experience with NTA. The financial and business services industry includes business operations such as insurance and banking as well as business sectors such as accounting and auditing firms, state agents, human resource development, marketing and advertisement.

All ISC's functions are coordinated through the Council and Industry Engagement Division (CIED) at NTA specifically established to provide a secretariat role to the Board committees. The division has a task to organise stakeholders' activities such as ISC meetings, forums, workshops and meetings for consultative purposes.

Apart from the Council and Industry Engagement Division (CIED) that coordinates the ISC activities, six other divisions at NTA also work directly with different stakeholders in different business processes. Through all these divisions, a number of stakeholder activities (meetings and workshops) took place almost on a weekly basis with different focus and purpose.

Evidence in the reports produced indicates regular records of poor attendance by stakeholders especially in 2012 and 2013. This finding is very critical to NTA to understand why stakeholders' commitments and participation is low. This brings us to the discussion that suggests that poor engagement of stakeholders' leads to ineffective outcomes such as this indicated above. For example, Spitzeko, Hansen and Grayson (2011) found the use of workshop and large group meetings to be ineffective. Claiming that, stakeholders in such large groups are usually combined without necessarily considering their individual interest and needs. Although not always ineffective, these types of mechanisms are found best used when the relationship between stakeholders and the organisation has been solidified, and only general understanding is solicited.

It is advisable that stakeholders choose their methods of participation wisely. Pillay (2010) in his study of stakeholder engagement in renewable energy indicated that participation is necessary and essential to build trust; increase public awareness

and stakeholder buy in. Hence this study is organised to assess the level of stakeholder engagement used by the NTA with its stakeholders.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

The establishment of the Industry Skills Committee by the NTA Board, covering almost all active industries in Namibia, is an initiative aimed at creating a partnership between the government and the private sector. However, the correct enabling environment is yet to be realised that would attract the commitment of stakeholders to skilling the youth and their employees. The question that we need to ask ourselves is whether stakeholder engagement practices are suitable for developing a sustainable skills development system that is preferred by stakeholders. It is believed that stakeholder engagement can determine the type of relationship that exists between the organisation and its stakeholders. Hence, this study attempts to investigate how the NTA engages with its stakeholders and how stakeholders perceive such engagement.

## 1.4 Research Objectives

The present study shows a number of researchers have conducted research in the field of stakeholder engagement in different sectors. Scholars such Ihugba (2012) and Pillay (2010), have explored stakeholder engagement in the Nigerian tobacco industry and renewable energy sector in South Africa respectively. Findings from such studies are informative for current practice. However, little has been done to investigate stakeholder engagement in the sector of skills development. This study, therefore explores stakeholder engagement in skills development, taking into account the responsibility of NTA as per the mandate of the VET Act, (Act 1, of 2008).

Therefore the objective of this study is to assess the stakeholder engagement practices of NTA in achieving a sustainable partnership with stakeholders in skills development in Namibia.

## 1.5 Research question

The main research question of this study is,

**Can stakeholder engagement theory be used to improve stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia?**

Sub-Research Questions

a) What level of stakeholder engagement is used by NTA to engage stakeholders in skills development activities?

b) What are the challenges of stakeholder engagement faced by NTA and stakeholders?

c) What are the recommended changes required to improve stakeholder engagement in skills development?

## 1.6 Limitation of Research

Although the stakeholder engagement for NTA is applied to stakeholders from different industries in Namibia, the study was limited to the financial and business services industry. This industry was chosen on the basis of being one of the long serviced industries by the NTA since the establishment of the ISC in 2010. It is believed that stakeholders within this industry should have been involved in quite a number of skills development activities and should then possess better experience to share with the researcher. The study also included some of the staff members from operational, National Training Fund and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

departments at the NTA to provide the internal perspective of stakeholder engagement practices

## 1.7 Thesis Outline

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter provides the orientation to the research problem and the general background that provides the context of the study. It also contains the motivation of the study and then briefly introduces the methodology used to collect data.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter presents the critical review of the current research on the researched problem under review and provides knowledge required to address the key issues surrounding the problem under study.

**Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter includes the research design and the detailed account of how the research question was used to collect data and all the techniques used to extract the intelligence out of the data collected.

**Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions**

This chapter provides the presentation of data collected in relation to the research questionnaires used.

**Chapter 5: Discussion**

This chapter provides the discussion and the meaning of findings drawn from the data and the theories that informed the research, in relation to the research question.

**Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter contains the summary of the research findings with emphasis on the contribution made to the body of knowledge and recommendations for further study.

# 2. Literature Review

## 2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature used highlighting key issues underpinning the two variables of the study. Firstly, the chapter explored the concept of stakeholder followed by the discussion of identifying and prioritising stakeholders in general terms depending on their needs and interest in the organisation. The literature review further focuses on stakeholder engagement processes and how it affects the relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders.

The second part of the chapter considers the concept of skills development and limitations experienced in the stakeholder engagement process. The third section highlights the link between stakeholder engagement and skills development, outlining the indicators of a successful skills development system. This together forms a conceptual framework of stakeholders' engagement in skills development.

## 2.2 Theoretical Concept

The theoretical framework of concepts for this study includes stakeholders, stakeholder engagement theory and skills development. It starts with the rationale of stakeholder theory and the stakeholder model used to understand stakeholders' practices.

Freeman's (1984) work constitutes a base for the development of stakeholder theory when he defines the term stakeholder as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives" (p. 86). For the researcher, Freeman's definition of stakeholder forms the foundation of the discussion of what stakeholder entails and subsequent theories have used Freeman's view to expand the field. Freeman's definition still enjoys the recognition in the field

of stakeholder research as it is found to be comprehensive and accommodating of both internal (employees) and external stakeholders (customer), including those who in some cases do not consider themselves stakeholders (business community/community activist/parents/).

Hill and Jones (1992) add another angle to Freeman's definition. Their argument is that stakeholders are those people who have legitimate claim on an organisation. Carroll (1993) agrees with Hill and Jones but adds that it also includes those who have exact influence over the organisation. Clarkson (1995) tries to narrow this claim to some form of risk. Thus for him a stakeholder should have some form of capital, either financial or human put at risk by an organisation's activities. Ihugba (2012) contributes to the theory of stakeholders through explaining why an organisation should always put into consideration the fact that it exists in a society with others who have claims to available resources.

Another term that is closely used with the concept of stakeholder engagement is 'legitimacy', defined as the "generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (Suchman, 1995 p.574.). It is a socially constructed system that is culturally and societally oriented (Ihugba, 2012), that is, it is transient and can easily be lost, "that is not a physical thing that can be displayed like an award but a negative or positive goodwill attracted by how the immediate society perceives the organisation" (Ihugba, 2012; Nasi et al., 1997; Suchman, 1995). Hence, every institution, culture, organisation creates a perception of legitimacy peculiar to it (Ruef & Scott, 1998; Ihugba, 2012).

This study advances the line of researchers that has demonstrated the benefits of having certain legitimacy with their stakeholders (Ihugba, 2012). It forms the benefit of this study in understanding how to establish the enabling environment that is conducive to stakeholders, and that attracts their commitment and good relationship with the organisation. According to Suchman (1995), "Legitimacy does not only affect people's behaviours towards an organisation, but also the understanding, thus, audiences perceive the legitimate organisation not only as more worthy, but also as more meaningful, more predictable, and more trustworthy" (p. 575).

King III report advocates for organisations to become corporate citizens by responding to society's needs where they operate (Institute of Directors, 2002). In a social corporate environment, the relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders should be mutually beneficial. Organisations are required to reach an agreement with stakeholders, based on mutual respect, dialogue and collaboration, to minimise conflict with available resources (Ihugba, 2012). Proactive organisations that recognise these varied claims and interests have therefore proven to maximise their engagement with their stakeholders in order to acquire the ethical right to access available resources.

In the context of this study, stakeholders are referred to as all individuals and groups who have interest in skills development both from the supply side and the demand side. Coupled with the concept of stakeholder is the issue of identifying who the stakeholder is, which forms part of the next section.

### 2.2.1 Identifying and Prioritising the Stakeholder.

Stakeholder theory provides a suitable theoretical framework to identify and prioritise stakeholders. However, this is still considered the most difficult part of

doing stakeholder engagement (Gray, 2006). Most organisations, when approached with a question of how operational the stakeholder engagement is, in most cases, say that the process is carried out successfully. And surprisingly, some of these organisations do not even know 70% of their stakeholders (Reed, 2008). In brief the process of stakeholder analysis requires the following:

(i) Identifying individuals and groups that can be affected by decision making and;

(ii) Prioritising these individuals and groups in the decision making process (Reed, 2008).

The main challenge faced by organisations is to identify stakeholders they are responsible for, taking into consideration the process of consultation and assessment of individual interest and influence. At this stage the organisation/management predict areas of possible conflict and identify the kind of relationships to be established. Clarkson (1995) argues that the risk prevails that some stakeholder may be left out as a consequence of not being identified due to the complexity of the process.

Reed (2008) contributed to the arguments that the process of identifying stakeholders should not be treated as a static activity, but rather an iterative one where new stakeholders are continuously added to the list as the process unfolds. As the organisation begins with the stakeholder engagement process, details and information of new stakeholders will continuously unfold (Reed, 2008).

Once the organisation has identified its stakeholders, it becomes necessary to prioritise and classify them accordingly (Pillay, 2010). Clarkson (1995); Greenwood (2007); Wheeler & Sillanpaa (1997) and other scholars advised organisations to classify their stakeholders into two categories of primary and secondary groups. Primary groups are those stakeholders and individuals who are seen as essential to the

existence of the organisation and most often are those that have some formal contract with the organisation, including owners, employees, customers and suppliers (Ayuso, Rodriguez, & Ricart, 2006; Clarkson, 1995; Podnar & Jancic, 2006). Secondary stakeholders are classified as the group that play an important role in giving the organisation credibility and acceptance for its activities and include non-governmental organisations (NGOs), communities, governments and competition (Ayuso, Rodriguez, & Ricart, (2006; Clarkson, 1995; Podnar & Jancic, 2006). Figure 2.1 shows the umbrella of key stakeholders for a larger organisation/firm in an ideal situation that needs to be considered.

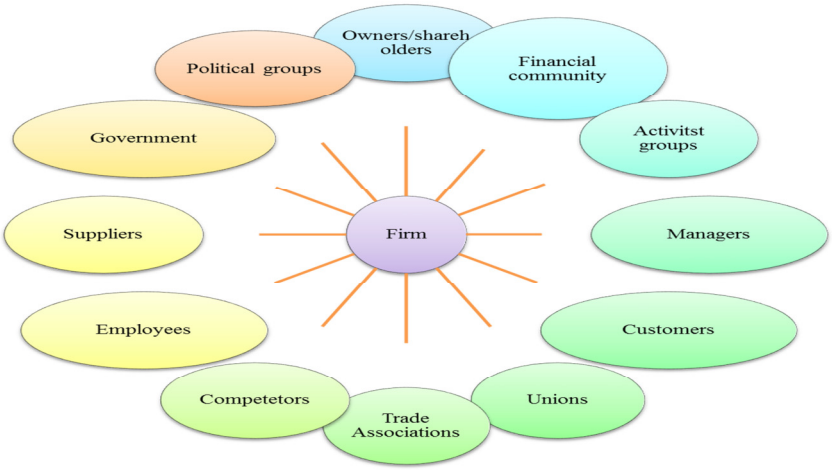


**Figure 2.1 Stakeholders of a Large Organisation**
Source: Adapted from R.E. Freeman, Strategic Management: A stakeholder Approach, Pitman, 1984. Copyright 1984 by R. Edward Freeman.

Many organisations, although not all, pose a challenge of engaging a wide range of stakeholder groups, with different or perhaps conflicting expectation (Johnson, Whittington & Scholes, 2011). However, in order for the organisation to succeed its management and operations, the team needs to understand their stakeholder mapping (who the stakeholder groups are, what their issues are, and what motivates them to have an interest). With reference to the above diagram, it should be understood that not all stakeholder groups indicated are engaged in skills development.

### 2.2.2 Stakeholder Mapping.

Stakeholder mapping involves the identification of stakeholders' expectation and power in understanding their political priorities (Johnson et al., 2011). Stakeholder mapping is of crucial importance to all organisations to successfully achieve their plans and should be considered during the identification period. According to Johnson et al. (2011) stakeholder mapping underlines two important issues:

- The *interest* each stakeholder has in imposing its expectations on the organisation's purposes and choice of strategies.
- The *power* each stakeholder has to influence strategy.

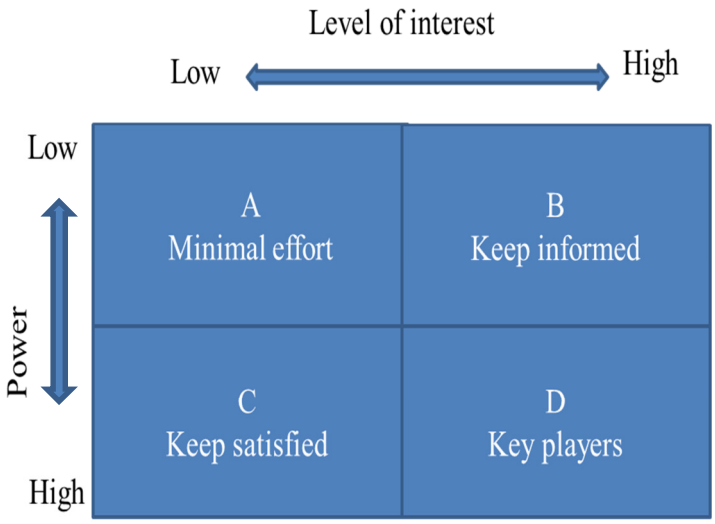


**Figure 2.2 Stakeholder Mapping: The Power/Interest Matrix**
*Source*: Cited in Johnson et al. (2011) and adapted from A. Mendelow, Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Information Systems, Cambridge, MA, 1986.

The matrix above assists to classify stakeholders into four categories, in relations to the power they hold and the degree of their interest in supporting or opposing a particular strategy or plan of the organisation. Segment D includes major shareholders, investors or particular individuals or agency with a lot of power. This group is critical that they have accepted the plan before implementation. Segment C in

general is a fairly passive group of individuals and agencies that need to be satisfied because of their power to influence. Once they are not satisfied, they may put pressure on the management, and a "disastrous situation can arise when their level of interest is underrated and they reposition to segment D and frustrate the adoption of a new strategy" (Johnson et al., 2011. p142). Segment B has high interest but little power to influence decisions themselves. They are very important to consider addressing their expectations and needs in the sense that they can influence the attitudes of more powerful key players to act against the plan. Segment A has low interest; at the same time not much power to influence strategy. However, it is important to keep them informed with the aim of raising their interest to participate.

### 2.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement.

Stakeholder engagement emphasises the need for engagement to be far reaching, inclusive and balanced (Amaeshi & Crane, 2006). "It is the process of seeking stakeholder views on their relationship with an organisation in a way that may realistically be expected to elicit [these views]", (The Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability [ISEA] 1999, P.91). It is defined have as the process of involving individuals and groups that are affected by the activities of the company in a positive way (Greenwood, 2007; Sloan, 2009).

Adriof and Waddock (2002, p. 42) added an aspect of trust. To him, stakeholder engagement is defined as "trust based collaborations between individuals and/or social institutions with different objectives that can only be achieved together". To Gable and Shireman (2005, p. 9) stakeholder is relationship based. He described it as "a process of relationship management that seeks to enhance understanding and alignment between the company and their stakeholders". The above definitions

alluded to two basic elements of stakeholder engagement that is; there are always two parties involved in stakeholder engagement the "business and its stakeholders", and that both parties have something to bring to the table and, something to benefit from (Ihugba, 2012). Engagement in particular is the act of managing the relationship between two parties (the organisation and its stakeholders in order to enhance the effectiveness of the decisions, strategies and behaviour (Pillay 2010; O'Riordan & Fairbrass, 2008).

The engagement referred to in this study includes both external and internal stakeholders. Employees are the key internal stakeholders within an organisation. Macleod and Clarke's (2009) research on "employee's engagement" is very useful to this study. They indicated that only organisations that truly engage and inspire their employees produce world class levels of innovation, productivity and performance. Moreover, Literature in this field demonstrates a measurable and significant win for an individual who is well trained and equipped with the required skills. The individuals' psychological well-being is maximised when they understand their work and are fully involved in the planning process.

Spitzeko, Hansen and Grayson (2011) in their research, confirmed that many stakeholder engagement techniques have limited impact. For example, formal stakeholder dialogue forums such as workshops, where different stakeholders have been invited, do not go beyond mere exchanges of different stakeholders' view. Furthermore, stakeholder engagement through these fora usually consists of a very large number and broad mix of stakeholders, which may not develop a constructive working relationship due to the lack of trust or the complexity of issues discussed. To this effect, however, many organisations have adopted the use of multichannel

approaches, in view of maximising the possibility of potential stakeholder participation.

It is still debatable whether stakeholder input received through large meetings and workshops does in fact lead to certain impacts on the corporate operation and decision making, as the fundamental link between the two remains unclear (Ihugba, 2012). The use of advisory bodies becomes eminent. Australia makes use of Stakeholders Advisory Boards (SABs) as instruments that can enhance stakeholder engagement in skills development. The SABs are merely consisting of external stakeholders focusing on matters such as the overall corporate responsibility agenda or focused on selected issues such as community engagement, environment, etc. However, the use of SABs has been criticised for having an indirect impact on corporate management only via suggestions and critical feedback (AccountAbility & Utopies, 2007).

Namibia follows the similar approach to Australia and refers to such bodies as Industry Skills Committees (ISCs) (Namibia, 2008). The ISCs form part of the governance structure of the NTA as a regulatory body for skills development in Namibia. Membership to the ISC is made of personnel from different industries and their operation is driven from that of the NTA Board. Several activities have been arranged involving the ISC in view of industry needs representations and creating a link between the NTA and the industries. This has been found to have limitations and criticism has been received on their operations. This is what will lead to the discussion of the next section of levels of engagement.

### 2.3 Levels of Stakeholder Engagement

For the purpose of this study, stakeholder engagement is derived from Arnstein's (1969) early work in which she refers to levels of participation, or access to power, sometimes referred to the ladder of participation as shown in Table 2.2 below. This work was developed by Arnstein in her attempt to describe the degree of participation necessary in public governance to give meaningful changes to people's lives, especially those mostly neglected (Ihugba, 2012). Although this is based on her early work of 1969, which has been reviewed and reconsidered by many theorists, her strong argument towards the power holder and power less or to the situation where the power between the parties is not evenly distributed had made it strong and applicable until now.

In this study, the theory is applied to stakeholder engagement between the NTA and its stakeholders. The NTA being the regulator of VET in Namibia has the power over skills development initiatives and activities taking place in the country and it is necessary to understand its practices, in relation to the levels of participation and engagement with its stakeholders. For the purpose of this study, the levels of participation are referred to as levels of stakeholder engagement.

**Table 2.1**
**Arnstein ladder of participation** (lowest to the highest)

| Levels of participation | Level description | Participation categories |
|---|---|---|
| **Manipulation** | Stakeholders in this level of participation are used as public relation tools. They do not have any input in the decisions made or information fed to them or information they are asked to feed to the public. | Non-participation |
| **Therapy** | This level is described as both arrogant and dishonest. Instead of addressing the grievances or demands of stakeholders, they are subjected to a mass therapy in the supposed aim of curing them of their misconception. | |
| **Informing** | This is the first step toward stakeholder engagement, although it | Tokenism |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | involves one-way information traffic from the organisation to the stakeholders. | |
| **Placation** | This has some forms of high level participation. It is usually reactive to agitation but does give stakeholders some voice. | |
| **Consultation** | This level is higher up the scale but in many cases easily abused. This is a genuine tool for organisational development. The concerns of the stakeholders are considered in decision making and reflected in the result. | |
| **Partnership** | This level is described as when stakeholders actually start to exercise some power over their demands or interests. It is a partnership from the beginning when the distribution of power is negotiated between the power holders and the stakeholders. This is an optimum level for both parties. | Citizen power |
| **Delegated Power** | This level of participation operates in various forms. The two most popular are: | |
| | a. Delegation of specific tasks or projects to the stakeholders | |
| | b. Parallel groups of stakeholders and those with power to decide over a project and the stakeholders retaining the power to veto any decision where differences cannot be resolved by negotiation. | |
| **Citizen Control:** | Here, stakeholders have "that degree of power (or control) which guarantees that participants ... can govern a program ... be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which "outsiders" may change them" (Arnstein,1969, p.14). | |

Adapted from Source, Arnstein (1969)

### 2.3.1 Non-participation (Manipulation and Therapy).

The table above from Arnstein's (1969) work highlights the fundamental point that participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. This is attributed to the fact that it allows the power holders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it is possible for only some of those sides to benefit. The non-participation category demonstrates this imbalance, where the stakeholders are poorly considered. This category began with the level of manipulation where stakeholders are used as public relations tools. An example of manipulation is when people are placed on rubber stamp advisory committee or advisory boards for the purpose of "educating" them or engineering their support

(Arnstein, 1969). Therapy is another level of engagement in this category. At this level, stakeholders are exposed to the arrogant behaviours and dishonest treatment from the power holders to shut them down in order to obey them.

### 2.3.2 Tokenism (Informing, Placation & Consultation).

Tokenism is the second category of stakeholder engagements that consists of three levels, namely, informing, placation and consultation. Informing is considered as the first step to stakeholders' engagements, which keeps the stakeholders informed through a one-way communication channel from the power holders (Ihugba, 2012). At this level, people have little or no power to influence decisions that affect them and little opportunity is given to influence what is communicated to them or the programmes they are designing. By then, the most common tools used in informing were news media, posters, and response to inquiries (Arnstein, 1969). Stakeholders meetings can also be considered falling under the level of informing, whereby a meeting is turned into a vehicle of one-way communication, by the simple device of providing superficial information, discouraging questions, or giving irrelevant answers.

Placation is the second level of 'tokenism' that has some levels of high participation when compared to the level of informing. At placation, the power holder retains the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice. Practical examples are the Board committees established, which are misnamed as they have either limited, no policy making functions or only a limited authority (Arnstein, 1969). At this level, people are found to be participating in as many meetings as possible, and yet they are not well informed of their minimum rights, responsibility, and the options available to them under a number of circumstances.

Consultation is another level under 'tokenism' that is widely used as a means of legitimising decisions already taken by the power holders, providing a thin layer of participation that lend the process moral authority (Cornwall, 2008). Although consultation is perceived to have a high level of engagement, its outcomes are open to being selectively read and used by those with the power to decide. People are primarily perceived as statistical abstractions, and participation is measured by how many people attended the meeting, took brochures home, or have responded to a questionnaire (Cornwall, 2008). What is achieved through such activities as referred to by Arnstein (1969) is that stakeholders have participated, and what power holders achieve is the evidence collected that they have covered/gone through all the stages of consultation as required.

### 2.3.3 Citizen Power (Partnership, Delegated Power & Citizen Control).

Arnstein (1969) felt that real engagement starts within the category of citizen power. At this stage individual stakeholders become responsible and accountable for their actions and decisions. Further, benefits of citizen power, as per Arnstein's (1969) views, include the establishment of a sustainable engagement model that is effective and efficient for the achievement of developmental goal (Arnstein, 1969). This category consists of three levels that of **partnership, delegated power and citizen control.**

In partnership, the power is redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders. It is fair to acknowledge that not all activities can put the stakeholders at the centre of negotiation and not all activities could be placed in the hands of stakeholders. However, the point of departure is that stakeholders' needs and interests should be at the centre of negotiations on all matters affecting them.

Delegated power is the second level of citizen power that encourages stakeholders to take authority over matters that concern them and achieve dominant decisions making authority over a particular plan or programme (Arnstein, 1969).

Citizen control is the last and powerful level of stakeholder engagement in this category that gives stakeholders a high degree of power, which guarantees their power to govern a programme or being in full charge of the policy implementation (Arnstein, 1969). Stakeholders at this level receive full ownership of the programme or initiative and have ultimate right to determine what is right and what is not. Literature has found this level to be difficult to achieve and it has limited situations to apply. Moreover, it is usually abused when stakeholders are given full power to control programmes without full provision of resources required.

Considering the description of these levels, it is clear that the successful engagement of stakeholders require a well thought out purpose that is highly focused with clear aims and objectives. As Gray (2006), emphasised, a poorly defined purpose of stakeholder engagement will be vague and open to different interpretations. With resources available, the organisation has the capacity to be in the level of citizen power that will enhance its effectiveness and positive relationship with its stakeholders. However, it should be acknowledged that some levels within citizen powers could not be applied to all practical processes of engaging stakeholders hence, planning becomes central in this matter. To every organisation, it is critical that the persons responsible for commissioning the stakeholder engagement processes get the required support from the senior levels of the organisation (Ihugba, 2012), making sure that process of stakeholders' activities are in line with the desired goals and purpose of the organisation. Literature has found that too often different purposes

exist within the same organisation, sometimes unspoken or assumed, only coming to light when the process is underway (Ihugba, 2012). This late discovery of purpose can be both damaging and embarrassing at the same time in the eyes of stakeholder.

While opening space for dialogue through meetings is necessary and very important, it is not at all sufficient to ensure effective engagements. Literature has confirmed that in most cases, spaces and opportunities created are often structured and owned by those who provide them, no matter how participatory they may seek to be (Cornwall, 2008). Transferring the ownership to participants is difficult to realise, especially by those who do not understand the value of participation, leading to stakeholders/participants being frustrated and withdrawing their involvement. Moreover, if their involvement is financially rewarding, some participants, especially those who are financially challenged continue attending invitations for financial gain and not necessarily for adding value. To this effect, the NTA needs to re-look into their processes of engaging with stakeholders and find out the satisfaction level of all those involved in programmes and materials development.

## 2.4 Skills Development

The term 'skills development' is increasingly being used and is gradually replacing the term 'Technical and Vocational Education and Training' (TVET) (Department for International Development [DFID], n.d). TVET has been the well-known terms in education and training sector, and with a gradual change in methodologies on how to address skills shortages in the labour market as the use of the term skills development become fundamental. As nations move into a knowledge economy, employee skills become organisations' most valuable asset (Matsumoto, Stapleton, Glass, & Thorpe, 2005).

While skills development systems and initiative vary from country to country, the fundamental goal is to produce a well-trained and skilful workforce that is ready to contribute to the wellness and performance of the company and, to national economic growth. The trained and well-balanced skilful workforce is then brought together to successfully complete the complex range of task within the project or organisation (Matsumoto et, al., 2005). The way individuals develop and acquire skills is of fundamental importance. Initially a person acquires skills through training and the award of qualifications, as the core theoretical fundamental for the work they do (Matsumoto et,al., 2005), these skills are then reinforced through technical experience.

Roble (2012) unpacks the term 'skill development' by differentiating between technical skills (referred to as hard skills) from the soft skills. He defined hard skills as "technical expertise" and knowledge needed for a job, while soft skills are defined as "interpersonal qualities", also known as people skills, and personal attributes that are possessed (Robles, 2012). He further expands his definition by adding that hard skills could be learnt and perfected overtime, while soft skills are difficult to acquire and change (Robles, 2012). This trend poses a huge challenge to employers whose operations are results driven as they would love to see the results upon recruitment. While it is easy to get qualified employees from the institution of higher learning, it is also considered a challenge to get employees with the required soft skills in your business in order to perform on set.

Business executives consider soft skills as a very important attribute in job applicants, (Robles, 2012). Employers want new employees to have both soft skills as well as hard skills, as they complement each other. Gewertz (2007) even refers to soft skills as "applied skills" or "21$^{st}$ century skills". By referring to them as 21$^{st}$ century

skills means that these are the driving forces of productivity in the new era of doing things, and without them employers/businesses may not consider you as an asset to their business.

There has been a striking and continued increase in the number of jobs involving the use of new technology in the world. In UK, by the year 2003, evidence of Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills gap was already recorded, as a result of the increase in the number of employees using computers at work (Giles & Campbell, 2003). The findings also indicate that some of the employees who are working in jobs that require computers felt that the acquisition of ICT skills would improve their performance. This increase in demand has made ICT skills the third most critical employability skill required in today's business operation.

In Australia, Skills Australia (2010) strategy reviewed that with an ageing population, labour shortages are at risk in the future. Hence, the strategy advocates the need to significantly increase the current rate of employment participation because, often, those who fail to obtain work lack basic employability skills. This situation is not unique to Australia. Most nations have identified substantial skills deficits among their older groups. In UK, they were worried that close to two-thirds of adults had not participated in learning since they completed their full-time education and the country felt their aptitude for education needed stimulation again to be able to cope with the new demands and evolved technology (Bosworth, 1999).

The concern of lack of skills is also identified among the new entrants in the job market. Gewertz, (2007) outlined the concern among business executives and professors in the United States of America that, high school graduates do not have the set of skills they need to be successful in colleges or in the work place. In South

Africa, despite the establishment of South African Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), the issue of skills shortages is still a challenge and certainly an obstacle to the attainment of the desired set development goals (Maumbe & Van Wyk, 2011).

Lack of skills and training is considered as significantly contributing to the slow pace of national development goals. Most businesses believe that hiring applicants who have interpersonal skills is instrumental for successful organisations to maintain a competitive advantage (Glenn, 2008) Employers are now faced with a challenge of lack of soft skills among their teams coupled with the rapid advancement of technology. A situation like this requires that employees constantly upgrade their skills to keep up-to-date with industry requirements. The demand has resulted in the growth of on-the-job training programs to help employees to stay up-to-date, hence competitive (Maumbe & Van Wyk, 2011). In contrast to Maumbe's view, Onisk (2011) (as cited in Robles 2012) shares with the readers that many senior executives in business view the concept of training soft skills as simply a motivational seminar that inspires employees but offers little use for the job application or value to the company.

This has been validated to a certain extent by the study of small firms (Engineering and Marine Training Organisation [EMTO], 1999) that revealed that the opportunity cost of training and the impact of days lost to training on production tends to prevent managers in small firms from understanding or funding more training, (Worrall & Cooper, 2001). Interestingly, on the other hand, Senior Managers were frequently found complaining that their newest employees lack the interpersonal skills needed for success in the business world (Klaus, 2010). This provides a picture of how important employers want skilful persons and yet they are not prepared to invest in their employees training.

## 2.5 Challenges to Stakeholder Engagement in Skills Development

Studies have confirmed stakeholder engagement to be one of the driving forces to the success of each organisation operating in the interest of skills development. Having considered the positive implications associated with it, it was also found to have a lot of limitations and challenges.

*Firstly,* Jolly (2002) indicated that the general limitations to most stakeholders are that skills development activities are tightly regulated and state directed, making it difficult for the custodian bodies to follow their own decisions.

*Secondly*, it is said that improving the supply of skills is necessary but not a sufficient condition in achieving the high skill vision (Jolly, 2002), if employers do not want those skills. Hence, those responsible with the process have to be sure that those skills are demanded by employers themselves.

*Thirdly,* individual employers and employees need to be convinced that quality training and development of their workforce would raise their company productivity and competitiveness (Jolly, 2002). Equally important is the need to convince the young people that training is exciting and worthwhile and would increase their earning potential (Jolly, 2002).

*Fourthly,* sometimes respondents who are engaged in the process have limited knowledge about the vision of the organisation, and do not recognise that they have a need for skill development possibly because they are not fully aware of skills that might be needed to optimise their company performance (Skinner, Saunders & Beresforld, 2004). In some cases, if vacancies are the way to determine skills needs, some employers choose not to report vacancies if they feel that there is no hope of filling it (Skinner at. el,. 2004).

*Fifthly,* while industry has a considerable say in the VET system, employer's engagement with the system is not compulsory (Stanwick, 2009). This may reduce commitment for some employers who do not commit to employees' skills development.

## 2.6 Recommendations for stakeholder engagement in Skills Development

At the heart of national skills development rests the need for a strong stakeholder engagement practice that is guided by clear principles of understanding the needs and vision of the organisation. For a sustainable result there needs to be a comprehensive skills development system in which both the state and the private sector participate as partners (Department for International Development [DFID], n.d). The process of engagement has to take note of the fact that industries differ, hence there is need for necessary ingredients that ensure a truly win-win scenario does exist (Skinner et al., (2004). Table 2.4 below shows indicators used to measure the success of skills development intervention as adapted from the DFID (n.d) guiding practice paper.

**Table 2.2 Indicators for a Successful Skills Development System**

| Type of Project | Indicators | Sources of evidence |
|---|---|---|
| Systemic reform | • Tripartite partnership exists involving government, employer and employee representatives during and beyond life of project. | • Policy and strategy documents endorsed by all three bodies.<br>• Each partner has a clear and active role in skills development implementation. |
| | • Increased percentage of population enrolled in formal skills development programmes. | • Data provided by public and private providers to regional and central bodies. |
| | • Disadvantaged groups represented within enrolment data in line with their presence in the population at large. | • Data provided by public and private providers to regional and central bodies. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | • Labour market data used in policy-making decisions. | • Labour market information system regularly produces up-to-date data for educational planners. |
| | • TVET qualifications in demand by employers and students. | • Employers pay a premium to attract skilled workers.<br>• Levels of unemployment are lower amongst skilled workers than unskilled.<br>• Training providers are operating at full capacity. |
| | • Numbers of skilled workers are commensurate with demand. | • Low levels of hard-to-fill vacancies and skill shortages notified to LMIS body. |
| | • Skilled graduates find relevant work within six months. | • Results of tracer studies conducted by skills training providers. |
| Institutional reform | Industry involvement in governance of training institutions. | • Employer representation on training providers boards.<br>• Public-private partnerships in the delivery and quality assurance of training.<br>• Employers actively involved in programme design. |
| | • Teachers and trainers are familiar with industry standards. | • In-service training programmes for teachers with industry involvement. |
| | • Skilled graduates find relevant work within six months. | • Results of tracer studies conducted by institutions. |
| | • Employers and students value skills training provision. | • High levels of employer demand for graduates.<br>• Demand for up-skilling courses from workers and employers.<br>• Low drop-out rates. |
| Immediate impact | • Numbers of target populations are in skilled employment or self-employment.<br>• Wages have increased significantly | • Data from training providers' tracer studies. |

Adapted from the DFID (n.d) guiding practice paper

## 2.7 Conceptual Framework

The framework of this study consists of key components of the study that feature the principles of stakeholder engagement by Arnstein's (1996) early work. As indicated in this chapter, good stakeholder engagement involves the consideration of stakeholder needs and expectations. Arnstein (ibid) reveals eight levels of stakeholder engagement ranging from manipulation, therapy, informing, placation, consultation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control. These levels of engagement form the basis of this study on which stakeholder satisfaction is sought.

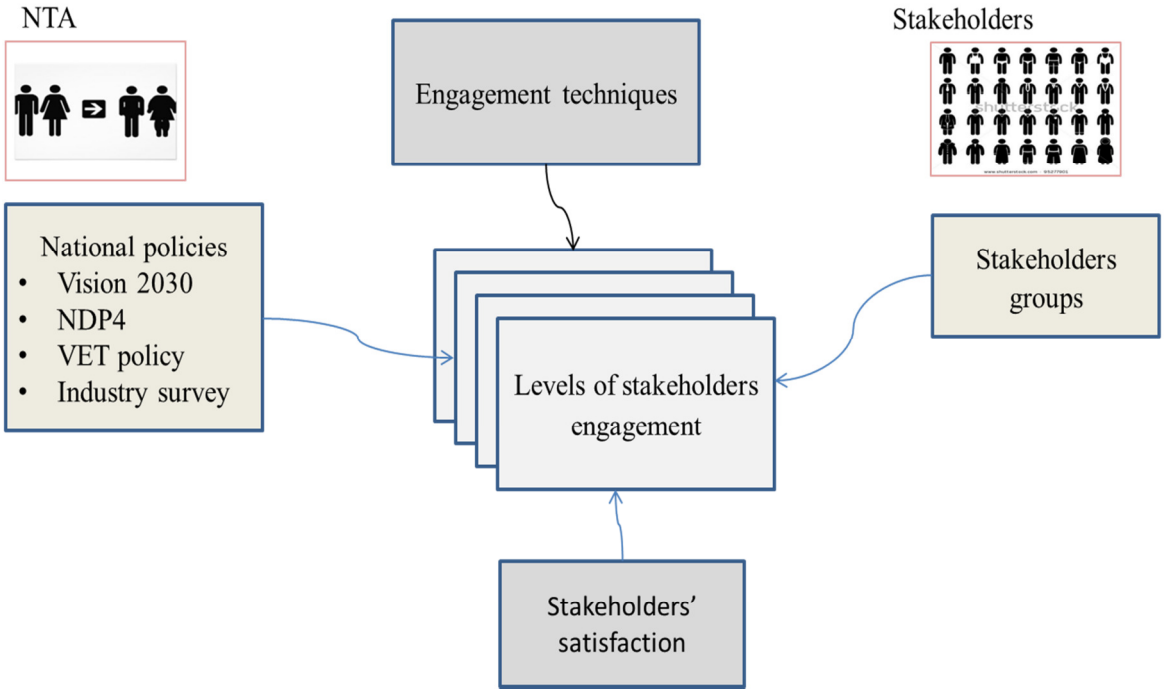


**Figure 2.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The diagram above illustrates the key component of stakeholder engagement as described by the study. Tracing back to the definition of stakeholders by Freeman (1984), stakeholders are defined with a broad spectrum that is accommodating of all person affected by the operation of the organisation. With this in mind, it is very

useful to the organisation such as the NTA to recognise the impact and influence it has on a number of people.

Useful policies are in place that inform and provide direction, concerning how NTA stakeholder engagement management should look. The challenges lies in how these policies are put into practice to realise good outputs (skills training) and stakeholder satisfaction.

## 2.8 Summary

This chapter provided a theoretical framework on which the study was based. It served as a basis for subsequent chapters to follow and inform the arguments and findings. The next chapter presents the methodology of this study.

# 3. Research Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research design and methodology employed to conduct this study. The research paradigm is discussed to indicate the theoretical perception underpinning the study and the methodology used to collect and analyse data. This section of the research outlines the research instruments used to collect data before providing an analysis of techniques and methodology used. In an attempt to obtain the validity and authenticity of the data collected, population and sample used for the study are also discussed. Based on the problem statement highlighted in the first chapter, the research design was chosen to provide rich descriptive information necessary to answer the main research question below (also see chapter 1.4).

## 3.2 Research Questions

Can stakeholder engagement models be used to improve stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia?

**Sub-Research Questions Under Study**

a) What level of stakeholder engagement is used by NTA to engage stakeholders in skills development activities?

b) What are the challenges of stakeholder engagement faced by NTA and stakeholders?

c) What are the recommended changes required to improve stakeholder engagement in skills development?

## 3.3 Research Approach

Research approach provides an overall strategy of the study that explains how the research will answer the research questions, and also provides a line of thought

that supports the research objectives of the study (Creswell, 2003). Several variables determine which strategy should be followed. To this effect, the approach was influenced by the research questions and pre-knowledge of the researcher on the topic under investigation.

Initially the research design was developed under the positivism paradigm only. Having said that, the study supposed to follow the quantitative methodology only. However, the structure of the instrument used altered the study to apply a mixed approach as it had additional open-ended questions that investigated additional challenges and recommendations.

Cross-sectional design was used since all data was obtained in a particular situation at a particular point of time, using the questionnaire developed. The study used of self-administered questionnaires to collect data from the identified population. Although the study was designed as quantitative, the open-ended questions on the questionnaire were analysed qualitatively due to the amount of responses received from this section.

To start with the main methodology of the study, the researcher opted to provide a description from Creswell, (2003) when he defined mixed method as part of historical research paradigm that advocates quantifiable and testable data. To this effect, the researcher used a survey tool that provides a numerical description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of population, that are generalised to a specific population (Creswell, 2003). Considering the key factor of the study, that of stakeholder engagement, this approach was favoured for the study to obtain general perspectives of stakeholders about stakeholders' engagement practices.

Although the qualitative approach was not part of the initial approach designed, the instrument used dictated the consideration of qualitative approach to obtain further understanding of human experience with regard to engagement with NTA.

### 3.4 Data Collection Instruments

This study uses a survey questionnaire to collect data. The use of survey is usually associated with the deductive approach and it is a popular and common strategy in business and management research (Creswell, 2003). It is particularly useful for two reasons:

- It allows researchers to gather descriptive information about a population too large for every member to be studied individually,
- It involves a relatively straight forward research strategy: involving asking people questions and analysing their answers

The questionnaire developed consisted of 18 closed and five open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions were designed to provide empirical findings of data that will inform the research discussion in relation to literature referred to in the study. However, the open-ended questions results in additional information that could not be gathered during the initial stage of the research.

For many business and management studies, the use of questionnaires has outperformed other tools/methods of collecting data. Seemingly, because it is less time consuming and due to its set of uniform specific questions asked, it was found to have a high degree of consistency in data collection. Moreover, data collected through a survey questionnaires could be generalised to a bigger group represented in the population.

Two structured questionnaires were developed for two unit respondents; one questionnaire for the NTA staff, and the other one for stakeholders outside the NTA. Both questionnaires contained similar questions, with an exception of question nine, which was only applicable to each in a different way. Considering the nature of operation and time constraints in the business and financial sector, the questionnaire was found suitable to collect data since it does not put respondents under pressure of giving immediate information, as in the case of interviews. Although two questionnaires were used, the researcher finds it fit to refer to it as one, since the questions used were the same.

Both questionnaires consisted of four main sections, starting with the *general information* of i.e., gender, age, qualification and job position. This information was required to gather participant's background necessary for the analysis of data. The first section contained three questions that asked the participants to identify themselves with the division at NTA and the group of stakeholders to which they belong. This was helpful to analyse the response according to stakeholders groups and experience of engagement with the NTA.

The second section consisted of seven questions developed to assess the level of engagement. The questions asked were in relation to frequency and communications. These questions were derived from the description of eight levels stakeholders' engagement is defined by. In the same section, all eight levels of engagement were provided with the description for which the participants had to choose one level that best described their experience with engaging with NTA.

The third section highlighted a number of challenges in stakeholder engagement. This section was informed by research work by Jolly (2002) that highlights challenges

that affect participation in skills and training practices. It was also informed by the NTA strategy for 2009. A number of statements were designed which needed the participants to indicate their level of agreement on a scale of 1 representing 'strongly agree' to a level of 5 that represents 'strongly disagree'. In addition to the statements provided, participants were also asked to state additional challenges they had experienced.

The last section was informed by the success indicators of the skills development system combined with the last category on citizen control by Arnstein (1969). In this section, participants were expected to *suggest changes* required to improve the process of stakeholder engagement in skills development. Similar to the third section, a number of statements were provided and a similar scale of agreement was given for participants to tick next to them. Open questions were added that required participants to add their own recommendations to the process.

This structured questionnaire was distributed to a number of identified respondents. Each questionnaire included a brief explanation of the purpose of the study, the notification of confidentiality and freedom of choice to participate. Some respondents received the questionnaire through their emails and to some, it was hand delivered to individual respondents. Some respondents were contacted during their stakeholders' consultative activities such as meetings, fora as well as through their respective offices to respond to the questionnaire. In the case of the NTA staff and the ISC, the questionnaire was distributed through emails, and each questionnaire was accompanied by the approval letter from the Chief Executive Officer, authorising the staff members and ISC to participate in the study.

The completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher after the meetings, and those sent by emails were received through email or picked from respective offices.

### 3.5 Population and Sampling Procedures

Zikmund (2003) defines the population as "a complete group of entities sharing some common set of characteristics" (p.369). The target population consisted of stakeholders within perimeter of the Namibia Training Authority specifically, stakeholders from the financial and business services industry. This choice was made in consideration of the fact that, stakeholders in this specific industry have been in regular engagement with the NTA since the establishment of the sector ISC in 2010. Furthermore, most of stakeholders from this industry are based in Windhoek, and this made it viable for the researcher to distribute and collect the questionnaires from the respondents. The targeted population of stakeholder groups for this study were the Employers and Employees, Training Providers, Industry Skills Committee members, Assessors and Moderators and the NTA operational staff. Determining the size of this population was a challenge as anyone who had visited the NTA even once could be considered a potential stakeholder. However, the researcher found it fit to use attendance registers and workshop/meeting proceedings to identify the eligible participants.

Stakeholders who did not attend stakeholders' activities from NTA and do not form part of any divisional data base as regular visitors to NTA were excluded from the population. The NTA participating stakeholders were identified through cluster sampling, which assisted to obtain a reasonable number of participants. This exercise gave the researcher an estimate number of about 100 individual stakeholders targeted

for the study, which was reasonably sufficient. Out of 100 targeted, 70 people participated.

Five sub-groups represented by the participating stakeholders were:

1) The first group: seven ISC members representing the population of 10 ISC for the financial and business services industry
2) The second group: 20 participants from the population of 40 employers and employees targeted.
3) The third group: 14 training providers from the population of 15 registered with the NTA or in the process of registrations or have been seeking registration with the NTA.
4) The fourth group: 10 Assessors and members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) out 15 engaged in the process of assessment, moderations and development of learning materials.
5) The fifth group: 19 NTA staff members out of 20 with constant communication with stakeholders from the following department/division.

(i) Public Relation and Stakeholders Engagement Division
(ii) Council and Industry Engagement Division
(iii) National Training Fund Division
(iv) Training Provider Support Division
(v) Assessment and Certification Division
(vi) Product Development Division
(vii) Transformation

**Table: 3.1 Sampling Information and Response Rates**

| Sample category | Sampled number | Respondents | % respondents |
|---|---|---|---|
| ISC members | 10 | 7 | 70% |
| Employers | 40 | 20 | 50% |
| Training providers | 15 | 14 | 93% |
| Assessors, Moderators and TWG | 15 | 10 | 67% |
| NTA staff | 20 | 19 | 95% |
| **Total** | **100** | **70** | **70%** |

## 3.6 Pilot Survey

The questionnaire was first piloted among six participants from almost all respondent groups. The purpose of the pilot was to identify the uncertainties before the questionnaire was administered to the target population. None of the participants expressed difficulties in responding to the questionnaire, however, some of the respondents expressed that the questionnaires was too long but yet very good. This initial expression plus that from the Supervisor gave the researcher confidence to roll out the questionnaire to the large group. As part of instrument validation process, changes emanating from this process were incorporated in the final version of the questionnaire.

## 3.7 Statistical Techniques

This section present the techniques used to analyse and interpret the statistical data. The quantitative data collected through section A to C was analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The scores obtained for each respondent were captured into Microsoft Excel spread-sheets first and later imported into SPSS software to obtain descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The analysis started with the demographic data of the population, the descriptive statistical analysis that showed the frequencies and percentages, and the inferential statistics.

The inferential statistics helped the researcher to know whether the information obtained from a limited number of research participants can be generalised to a population (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Results of the correlation analysis administered to the data of intervals scale were analysed followed by the reliability test of the instrument used.

### 3.8 The Qualitative Content Analysis Techniques

The study made use of the Qualitative Content Analyser (QCA), RELEASE v 4 (Starter Version) Vn 10 Oct 2013 designed by Prof Andy by the way to analyse the data gathered through open-ended items on the questionnaire. The data was first taken from the questionnaires, saved in word document and later transposed into the QCA software depending on their level of importance and contribution to the study. The response was organised into chunks and then arranged into functioning categories in relation to the key variables of the study. In chapter 5 of the study, the results of the QCA analysis and that of the SPSS were linked and discussed together.

The participating groups of stakeholders were coded as follow in the QCA.

- Employers/employees (INDU)
- Industry Skills Committee (ISC)
- Training Provider (TP)
- Assessors/Moderators (A/M)

### 3.9 NTA staff members (NTA) Ethical Considerations

The researcher took note of the ethical consideration as a crucial aspect of conducting research. The researcher formally requested authorisation to conduct the research within the organisation. A letter was written to the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the NTA (appendix B) to allow the researcher to engage some of the

operational staff members as well as the ISC for financial and business services to participate in the study. Other individual participants from different employment set-ups were approached on their individual basis to provide consent of their participation.

Through the research instrument all concerned groups were briefed about the purpose of the study and the benefit thereof. Participants were informed that their names will not reflect anywhere in the study. All this was done before they agreed to participate. Through this process, participants had opportunity to make an informed decision of whether to participate or not.

### 3.10 Summary

In summary, the study followed a mixed approach as dictated by the results obtained through open-ended questions. The mixed approach in this case has no influence on the methods of collecting and but lather on the analysing section. Five groups of key respondent categories were selected to participate in the study with the aim of obtaining a broad perspective of the process. With this in mind, the researcher is convinced that the research design has yield the desired outcome of the study. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

# 4. Results

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and analysis of data based on the major findings and conclusions from the research survey. The data was gathered through a survey questionnaire administered to 100 participants during the data collection process. The key objective of the data collected was to understand the stakeholders' experience of their engagement with NTA in skills development. The closed and open-ended questions used for data collection were considered appropriate to allow respondents to freely express themselves with total anonymity, without fear of discrimination and, also to create generalised conclusions from the findings thereafter. The questions contained in the questionnaire were informed by the research questions as outlined in chapter 3. A descriptive statistic was used to summarise quantitative data and construct descriptions of analysis and drive meaning out of the numeric data entered into SPSS. The qualitative data obtained was organised with assistance from the QCA. This has helped the researcher to understand the data collected and interpret the result findings.

## 4.2 Description of the Population

The questionnaire was distributed to a population of 100 participants and among them, 70 successfully completed and returned it, resulting in the response rate of 70%. The respondents were grouped into five categories as explained in section 3.5 in chapter 3.

### 4.2.1 Demographic Data.

The demographic data analysis was collected from across four variables of sex, age groups, levels of education, positions of the respondents in their respective

businesses, and the period of working for/engaging with NTA. Table 4.1 below illustrates the frequencies across all six variables identified.

**Table 4.1**
**Demographic Information**

**Sex (Q1)**

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | 28 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| Male | 42 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 70 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Age group (Q2)**

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21-30 years | 6 | 8.6 | 8.6 | 8.6 |
| 31-40 years | 29 | 41.4 | 41.4 | 50.0 |
| 41-50 years | 19 | 27.1 | 27.1 | 77.1 |
| 51 years and above | 16 | 22.9 | 22.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 70 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Level of education (Q3)**

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| School Certificate | 3 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| Diploma | 8 | 11.4 | 11.6 | 15.9 |
| Degree | 13 | 18.6 | 18.8 | 34.8 |
| Post graduate | 36 | 51.4 | 52.2 | 87.0 |
| Professional | 9 | 12.9 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 98.6 | 100.0 | |
| System | 1 | 1.4 | | |
| | 70 | 100.0 | | |

**Position (Q4)**

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Business Owner | 6 | 8.6 | 8.6 | 8.6 |
| Executive Management | 14 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 28.6 |
| Senior Management | 8 | 11.4 | 11.4 | 40.0 |
| Middle Management | 15 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 61.4 |
| Non-Supervisory staff | 12 | 17.1 | 17.1 | 78.6 |
| NTA Operational staff | 12 | 17.1 | 17.1 | 95.7 |
| NTA Administrative | 3 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 70 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Years of working for/with the NTA (Q5)**

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent | Mean | Sdt Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| More than 1 year | 14 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 2.91 | 1.520 |
| 2 years | 20 | 28.6 | 28.6 | 48.6 | | |
| 3-4 years | 15 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 70.0 | | |
| 5 years or more | 21 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 100.0 | | |

It is evident from table 4.1 that a higher percentage of male respondents (59.7%) participated than female respondents (40.3%). The study segregated the participants into five different age groups as shown in Table 4.1 (Q2) above. The analysis indicates a greater number of people, aged 31-40 to be involved in skills development activities in Namibia, making up 40.3% of total participants. This is a good sign towards national development. Most of the participants engaged in the survey were either direct beneficiaries of skills development activities or services or are responsible for coordinating skills development activities in their organisation. The lowest age group recorded in the survey is 21-30 with a rating of 9%, followed by the participants above 50 years rating at 16% of participants. This is not a concern at all.

Table 4.1 (Q3) also shows the frequency of participation by level of education, indicating a majority of postgraduate holders at 52.2%. On the other hand, 16.4% of the respondents hold first-degree qualifications, giving a clear indication of highly educated people who form the chain of skills development in the financial and business services sector. The results obtained confirmed the arguments from the ISC in 2011 that the finance and business sectors have no problems with the supply side of skills but rather with the competence of its existing employees who need up-skilling. The level of professional came third with 13.4% of respondents, followed by diploma holders with 11.9% and high school certificate holders at 4.5%.

The analysis in Table 4.1 (Q4) also captured the position of the participants indicating with whom NTA engages in skills development activities. It is clearly visible from the illustration that the engagement is not necessarily position based as the percentage is evenly distributed to different positions with little concentration observed to those in management positions. The highest percentage is observed with those at middle management level.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the perimeter of the study focused on stakeholders who have been in engagement with the NTA for a period of one year or more. Question 5 attempts to identify this trend by asking the respondents to indicate how long they have been in consultation with the NTA. Table 4.1 (Q5) reveals the findings to this question.

As illustrated in Table 4.1 (Q5) above, a large number of stakeholders have been engaged in NTA skills development activities for quite a long time. It makes one wonder why a large group of stakeholders still needs to be convinced of the importance of skills development in Namibia. Evidence shows that most people have been in contact with NTA for more than two years. Despite NTA being a young institution with six years of independent operation from the government, more than 28% of respondents indicated that they have been in consultation with NTA for five years or more. The finance and business industry is one of the young industries in VET; hence 28% is a relatively significant number to be in contact with NTA for a period of five years or more. The figures also show a great number of people (20%) that have just started engaging with NTA. This shows yet another positive sign of NTA's strategy of continuously reaching out to as many people as possible in the country.

## 4.3 Descriptive Statistic Analysis

Descriptive statistics is one of the social science data analysis categories of interest. As the name suggests descriptive statistics provide a description of such things as a characteristic of the sample (Burton, 2000). Descriptive statistics is considered together with the other data analysis category of 'inferential statistics'. This category allows the researcher to infer or make sense of the descriptive data collected. Both categories have been used for data analysis in this section. Given the above explanation, the tables and figures below show the detail. With reference to the research survey tool used to collect data, the tool was divided into four sections (A-D) to enable the researcher to collect the varied information required. The section below provides the detailed analysis of the data collected, from Q6 to Q13, for the survey.

**Table 4.2**
**Summary of NTA Divisions Engaged in Stakeholder Engagement (Q6)**

| Divisions at NTA | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Assessment Division | 29 | 41.4 |
| Product Development | 26 | 37.1 |
| VTP Transformation | 17 | 24.3 |
| Public Relation and Stakeholder Engagement | 8 | 11.4 |
| Council and Industry Engagement | 22 | 31.4 |
| National Training Fund | 12 | 17.1 |
| Vocational Training Provider Support | 27 | 38.6 |
| Projects | 6 | 8.6 |
| Total | 70 | 100.0 |

Information presented in Table 4.2 indicates that most respondents engaged with Assessment and Certifications (AC), Vocational Training Providers Support (VTPS), Product Development (PD) and, Council and Industry Engagement (CIED divisions.

The Public Relations and Stakeholder Engagement (PRSE) earmarked for stakeholder engagement received the lowest (11.4) response. In practice, this division mostly deals with stakeholders at a broader level, while those who provide services to NTA do that directly with specific divisions. Table 4.3 below shows the list of participating stakeholder groups as identified for the study.

**Table 4.3**
**Participation by Stakeholder Groups (Q7)**

| Stakeholder groups | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Employers/employees | 20 | 28.6 | 28.6 | 28.6 |
| | ISC | 7 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 38.6 |
| | Training providers | 13 | 18.6 | 18.6 | 57.1 |
| | Assessors/moderators | 11 | 15.7 | 15.7 | 72.9 |
| | NTA staff | 19 | 27.1 | 27.1 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 70 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.3 shows the participating stakeholder groups as they identify themselves. Additionally, to the above question, the participating NTA staff also indicated a number of stakeholders that they personally felt their division has not been engaging with. Table 4.4 in Appendix C has reference. It highlights a number of stakeholders that were missed in the engagement processes. For example, the Public Relation and Stakeholders Engagement Division indicated missing consultation with ISC, which is supposed not to be the case. The above findings confirm the argument by Clarkson (1995) when he shared that, due to the complexity of identifying stakeholders, many stakeholders always fall victim to not being engaged especially if management did not prioritise the exercise.

### 4.3.1 Levels of Stakeholder Engagement (Q8).

Stakeholder engagement as described in the literature review as the act of managing the relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders, measured

against the level of participation in decisions, strategies and behaviour of the organisation. Arnstein (1969) described eight levels of stakeholder engagement, against which the engagement under investigation is measured. Participants were asked to describe the level of stakeholder engagement experienced with NTA, alongside the eight levels of stakeholder engagement in Table 2.2 of the literature review. Full descriptions of all levels were provided to the participants to help them understand the differences. Figure 4.1 illustrates the responses to this question.

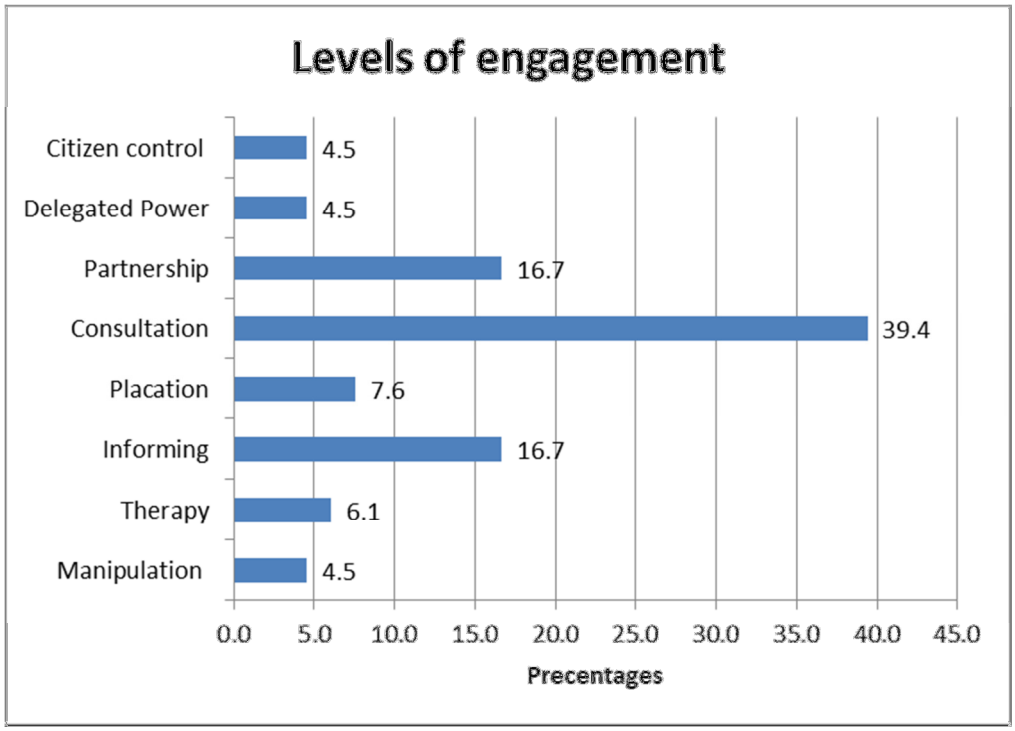


**Figure 4.1 Levels of Stakeholder Engagement by NTA**

The result shows that the highest level of engagement is consultation with 39%, followed by informing and partnership, both scoring 16%. Placation is considered the third level observed by most stakeholders, scoring 8% overall. Therapy at 6% is the fourth level identified by stakeholders experienced in the NTA engagement process. The last three levels are manipulation, delegated power and citizen control, all on

4.5% of the responses received. Table 4.4 below shows the relationship between the stakeholder groups and the levels of engagement obtained from the data analysis.

**Table 4.4**
**Stakeholders Groups against the Levels of Stakeholder Engagement**

| | | Level of engagement | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Manipulation | Therapy | Informing | Placation | Consultation | Partership | Delegated pow | Citizen control | undecided | Total |
| stakeholder groups | Employers/ employees | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 20 |
| | ISC | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| | TP | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 13 |
| | Assessors/ moderators | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 11 |
| | NTA staff | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 19 |
| Total | | 3 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 26 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 70 |

The table above shows the perception of different stakeholder groups towards the levels of engagement. Employers and employees consider their experience with NTA to fall under the level of consultation with a considerable number opting for informing and partnership. The ISC consider the level of informing as the most common level of engagement observed in NTA. This observation is confirmed during a number of ISCs meetings where ISC members expressed their concern with regard to their operations and the communication between the committees with NTA as well as the NTA Board (F & B ISC meeting Feb, July 2013). The Financial and Business Services ISC in particular is one of the ISCs that has expressed itself strongly against poor communication processes and procedures that limit ISC access to the highest authority.

Moreover, most training providers and assessors also found the engagement to be more consultative than any other level of engagement, although manipulation, therapy and placation became evidently observed. Findings from the participating

NTA staff also consider their engagement and that of others to be consultative, matching well with the assessment of external stakeholders. Overall, the level of consultation is ranked the highest almost by all the stakeholder groups, except the ISC, who consider informing as the highest level of engagement with NTA.

Question 9 was only applicable to external stakeholders, asking them to indicate their rates of response to NTA's invitations to stakeholder consultative activities, with the view to assessing the stakeholders' commitment towards skills development and to assess their interest in NTA initiatives. The responses indicate that out of 51 respondents from various groups of stakeholders who received invitations to various activities only 17.4% attended 100% of stakeholders' activities, with 24.6% attending 75% of activities, 20.3% attending 50%, and only 1.4% of the respondents indicated not having attended any activities, and thus ending up with a 0% percentage of non-participation as shown in Figure 4.2 below.

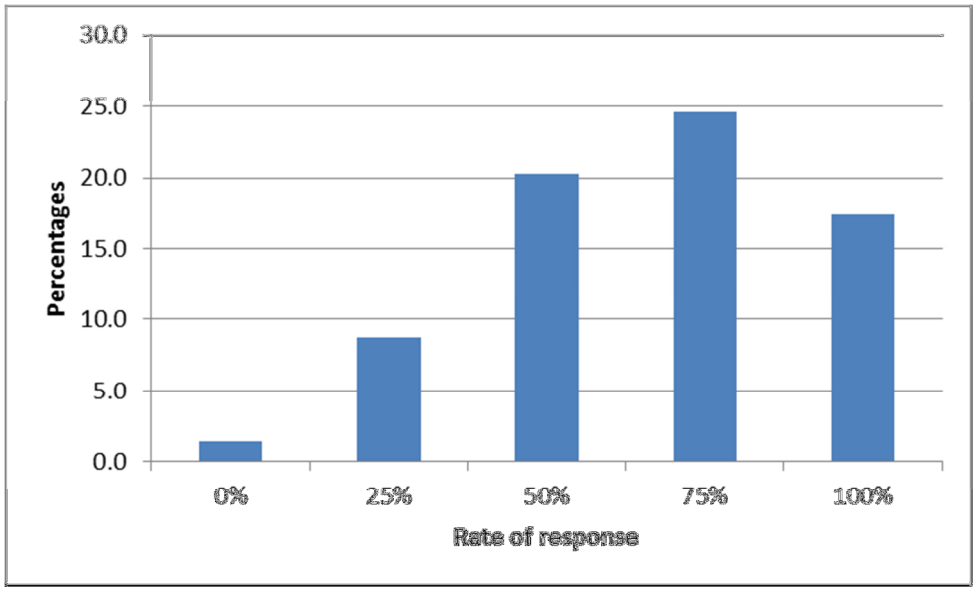


**Figure 4.2 Rates of Response to NTA Invitations**

Question 10 asks respondent to indicate the mode of communication used when the NTA communicates with stakeholders. The data collected shows that the most

common method used for communication is email with 91.5%. Email was followed by general meetings with 45% and telephone usage at 42% as shown in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5**
**Methods of Communication used by NTA with Stakeholders**

| Modes of Communications | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Telephones | 30 | 42.9 |
| One on one meeting | 24 | 34.3 |
| Email | 64 | 91.4 |
| Fax | 16 | 22.9 |
| Site visit | 20 | 28.6 |
| General meetings/workshop/conferences | 32 | 45.7 |
| Public media such as TV and Radio | 9 | 12.9 |
| Industry Representative Bodies | 8 | 11.4 |
| Industry Skills Committees (ISC) | 23 | 32.9 |
| Website interactions | 4 | 5.7 |
| Printed media | 22 | 31.4 |

Question (10J) asks the participating NTA staff to indicate how often they communicate with stakeholders. Most of them indicated that they communicate with stakeholders on a daily basis, and in many cases when the need arises.

**Table 4.6**
**How often NTA Staff Communicate with Stakeholders**

| How often communication takes place | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| On a daily basis | 10 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 87.1 |
| Weekly basis | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 88.6 |
| Monthly basis | 3 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 92.9 |
| When need arise | 5 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 100.0 |

Respondents were also asked to indicate the common issues communicated to stakeholders in Question 11. Responses to this question show that the common issues communicated to stakeholders fall under the category of input request for decision making, followed by the verifications of final products at 65.7% and 44.3% respectively. Appreciation of good work and service delivered scored the lowest among the communication from NTA, with 5.7% of the total percentage.

**Table 4.7**
**Communications to Stakeholders**

| Communication to Stakeholders | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Personal/NTA interest | 29 | 41.4 |
| Information to clear misconception | 20 | 28.6 |
| Appreciation | 4 | 5.7 |
| Request for our inputs in decision making | 46 | 65.7 |
| Verification of final products | 31 | 44.3 |
| Instructions and meetings invitations | 6 | 8.6 |

In comparison to the above, respondents were also requested to indicate common issues mostly communicated to NTA (Q12) from the side of stakeholders. Table 4.8 below illustrates the response from all respondents.

**Table 4.8**
**Communication from Stakeholders (Q12)**

| Communication from Stakeholders | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Apology | 2 | 2.9 |
| Complains | 11 | 15.7 |
| Personal/business interest | 16 | 22.9 |
| Service and products | 24 | 34.3 |
| Employees training needs | 22 | 31.4 |
| Business/organisational plans | 13 | 18.6 |
| Questions and clarifications | 11 | 15.7 |

Results in Table 4.8 indicate two categories of issues that dominate the communication from the stakeholders to NTA. These are the organisational services, products and employees' training needs, which made up 34.8% and 31.9% respectively. Business and personal interests also featured strongly with 23.2%. Respondents were also asked to identify the strongest motivators (Q13) for participating in skills development activities organised by NTA.

**Table 4.9**
**Motivating Factor**

| Motivating factor | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Personal interest | 12 | 17.1 | 17.9 | 17.9 |
| | To fulfil obligation | 9 | 12.9 | 13.4 | 31.3 |
| | recognition by NTA | 3 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 35.8 |
| | Interest in training | 25 | 35.7 | 37.3 | 73.1 |
| | Sector Skills development | 18 | 25.7 | 26.9 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 67 | 95.7 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 3 | 4.3 | | |
| Total | | 70 | 100.0 | | |

The result indicates interest in training as the strongest motivator for participation in engagement activities organised by the NTA. Table 4.9 above shows the results in percentages, followed by interest in sector skills development and stakeholder personal interest.

### 4.3.2 Level of Satisfaction among Stakeholders.

The level of satisfaction among the participants was measured against the level of engagement as defined by Arnstein (1969) in the literature review. This was done to test the correlation between the levels of stakeholder engagement experienced against the level of satisfaction among stakeholders. The level of satisfaction was investigated using a two-tailed Pearson analysis, and the results obtained are presented in the table below.

**Table 4.10**
**Level of Satisfaction against the Levels of Engagement**

| | | **Levels of Stakeholders Engagement** |
|---|---|---|
| **Stakeholder Satisfaction** | Pearson Correlation | -.346** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.005 |
| | N | 65 |

Table 4.10 shows the correlation results of the mean scores of the levels of engagement with the overall satisfaction level of stakeholders with the engagement

process from the NTA. The results obtained show a very weak correlation towards the level of satisfaction among the participating stakeholders at r = -.346. What the above results communicate is that, stakeholders are not satisfied with the level of engagement from the NTA. This is a negative result for the NTA that requires urgent attention from the highest authority.

### 4.3.3 Descriptive Mean Score of Challenges and Suggested Changes.

The data presented here reflect how respondents view the process of stakeholder engagement as the determining factor behind the success of a sustainable skills development system. Furthermore, it presents how those very participants view their relationship with NTA in association with the challenges experienced and whether or not such challenges emanate from the level of stakeholder engagement experienced.

The questions to this subsection requested participants to agree or disagree to the items describing challenges that reflect their experience and to further agree or disagree to suggested changes in a similar way. In this way, participants indicate 1= for strongly agree, 2= for agree, 3= for undecided, 4= for disagree and 5= for strongly disagree.

For the sake of interpretation of the data presented (challenges and recommendations), the researcher made use of key words (referred to as attributes) that described the statements provided in the questionnaire. The description is provided in Table 4.11 in Appendix C.

Further the researcher tried to define the mean scores of the attributes used to measure the frequency of scores carried out by the participants. The mean scores indicate whether or not a given item was scored towards the degree of agreement or disagreement by the participating stakeholders in this study.

To make the analysis possible throughout the study, the following pattern was used to describe the mean scores obtained for all attributes under study: *1-1.99 = highest mean score*, this means that such an attribute defines the challenges or the suggested changes exceptionally well as a representative of the practical experience, experienced by the participating stakeholders, where urgent attention is required from any of the accountable groups (NTA, ISC or stakeholders). A *2-2.99 = high mean score*, indicates where participating stakeholders have shown a high degree of agreement towards the given challenge experienced or a suggestion for change that needs to be considered. A *3-3.99 = satisfactory mean score* shows that participating stakeholders were not clear about what an item entails or perhaps reserved their comments for whatever reason known to themselves. *4-4.99 = low mean score*, is associated with the practices with which the participating stakeholders have no problem and see no urgent need to recommend changes towards such practice. *5 = lowest mean score,* is attributed to the items which were found perfect and positively experienced and, participating stakeholders felt strongly the need to maintain them. Table 4.11 to 4.16 below provides the mean score for each attribute referred to in the study.

#### *4.3.3.1* ***Participation Mean Score on Identified Challenges with NTA***.

As earlier discussed, Table 4.11 below indicates the mean scores of each of the attributes used to measure challenges associated with the NTA. It should be deduced from the table that all the attributes considered have received a high mean score of two (2) that means agree.

**Table 4.11**
**Participants Mean Score on the Challenges Associated with NTA**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Challenges experienced with NTA** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** |
| Bureaucracy | 68 | 1 | 5 | 2.37 |
| Delay in payment | 63 | 1 | 5 | 2.56 |
| Use of Feedback & inputs | 65 | 1 | 5 | 2.58 |
| Coordination | 62 | 1 | 5 | 2.71 |
| Poor Communications | 65 | 1 | 5 | 2.80 |
| Regulation | 67 | 1 | 5 | 2.88 |

Table 4.11 indicates that complicated '***bureaucracy***' in NTA processes received the greatest score than other attributes, averaging a high mean score of 2.37. This was supported by '***delay in payment***' experienced in the payment of service providers that scooped the second position with the mean score of 2.56. The ***'use of feedback and inputs'*** from stakeholders followed with the mean score of 2.58. '***Coordination***' of stakeholders' activities is another challenge experienced with NTA, receiving a high mean score of 2.71. This is followed by '***poor communication***'; which signifies the delay experienced in sending invitations to stakeholders, with a high mean score of 2.80. The lowest score, though still considered high, is tight '***regulation***' of activities by the state and the NTA that received a highest mean scored of 2.88.

#### *4.3.3.2 Participation Mean Score on Challenges with ISC.*

Table 4.12 below indicates the mean scores of all the attributes as appropriate measures of the challenges associated with ISC. The results show a high agreement towards the identified challenges when all the scores range between 2 and 2.99.

**Table 4.12**
**Participants Scores on the Challenges Associated with ISC**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Challenges experienced with ISC** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** |
| Limited understanding | 66 | 1 | 5 | 2.21 |
| Linkages | 65 | 1 | 5 | 2.32 |
| Roles and Responsibility | 65 | 1 | 5 | 2.51 |
| Communications | 66 | 1 | 5 | 2.74 |

The uppermost mean score when compared to others is observed with '***limited understanding'*** of ISC role by the industry, with the high mean score of 2.21 (agreed). Similarly to the above challenge, '***linkages'*** between the ISC and the industry is also described as a challenge experienced by participating stakeholders, receiving the mean score of 2.32. The third challenge, though still significant, is the '***limited understanding'*** of the roles and responsibility of the ISC by members themselves, with the mean score of 2.51, followed by lack of '***communication***' between the ISCs and their stakeholders with the mean score of 2.74.

#### *4.3.3.3 Participation Mean Score on Challenges with Stakeholders.*

Table 4.13 below indicates the mean scores of each challenge identified with a greater association with stakeholders. It could be inferred from the table that participating stakeholders agreed to all challenges as contributing factors to stakeholder engagement having received a mean score from 2-2.99 (high mean score).

**Table 4.13**
**Participants Mean Scores on Challenges Associated with Stakeholders**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Challenges experienced with stakeholders** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** |
| Mismatch | 66 | 1 | 5 | 2.27 |
| Knowledge of NTA mandate | 68 | 1 | 5 | 2.46 |
| Poor Attendance | 65 | 1 | 4 | 2.48 |
| Confidence in CBET | 67 | 1 | 5 | 2.54 |
| Valid N (list-wise) | 63 | | | |

The highest score of all is observed with the gap ('***mismatch'***) between stakeholders' needs and the NTA activities, scoring a mean score of 2.27 (agreement). This is followed by little '***knowledge of 'NTA mandate***' among the stakeholders, with the mean score of 2.46 and '***poor attendance***' at 2.48 (mild agreement). The lowest mean score (in terms of agreement), though still testifies a high score, is the '***confidence in CBET***' graduates by employers that happened to have a mean score of 2.54 (mild agreement).

**Table 4.14**
**Overall Agreements on the Impact of the above Challenges on Skills Development**

| | | Coordination | Bureaucracy | Communication | Regulation | Use of feedback & inputs | Delay | Limited knowledge | Linkages | Communication | Roles & Responsibility | Confidentin CBET | Mismatch | Poor Attendnace | Knowledge of NTA mandate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact on the ability | Pearson Correla | .143 | .297* | .513** | .295* | .464** | .173 | .320* | .378** | .254* | .276* | .267* | .399** | .428** | .306* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .284 | .018 | .000 | .020 | .000 | .195 | .012 | .003 | .048 | .033 | .036 | .001 | .001 | .015 |
| | N | 58 | 63 | 60 | 62 | 60 | 58 | 61 | 60 | 61 | 60 | 62 | 61 | 60 | 63 |

It is evident from Table 4.14 that most of the above challenges have no significant impact on the ability of stakeholders to actively participate and contribute to the process of skills development. From the NTA, the most challenges that waive the interest of participation are communication (correlation r = .513) and consideration of stakeholders' inputs (r = .464). With regard to ISC, the challenges that impact the

participation of stakeholders are linkages between the ISC and stakeholders (r = .378) followed by limited understanding of the ISC by the industry (r = .320). Poor attendance of stakeholders (r = .428) and mismatch between NTA programmes and the industry training needs (r = .399) were the biggest challenges that impacted the participation in skills development. Overall, challenges associated with the NTA itself have a high significant impact to the ability of stakeholders to participate in skills development activities.

#### *4.3.3.4* Participation Mean Score on Suggested Changes to NTA.

Similarly to the sub sections presented above, Table 4.15 below comprised another set of attributes with their mean score values as an indication of the participating stakeholders' scores on the suggested changes to NTA. These changes, likewise, serve as a measure of the degree of agreement with one (1), being strongly agree and five (5), being strongly disagree with the recommended changes. From the results below, it is evident that all the mean scores obtained are considered to be very high (between 1 and 1.99).

**Table 4.15**
**Participants Mean Scores on the Suggested Changes Associated with NTA**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Suggested changes to NTA** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** |
| Consideration | 69 | 1 | 4 | 1.43 |
| Engagement strategy | 68 | 1 | 5 | 1.44 |
| Involvement | 69 | 1 | 4 | 1.46 |
| Stakeholder analysis | 69 | 1 | 4 | 1.52 |
| Staff training | 69 | 1 | 5 | 1.58 |
| Responsiveness | 67 | 1 | 5 | 1.61 |
| Regular meeting | 69 | 1 | 11 | 1.71 |
| Valid N (list-wise) | 65 | | | |

The item with the highest mean score is the suggestion for the NTA to be '***considerate***' with stakeholders' decisions and inputs, with the highest mean score of

1.43. This attribute is followed by the need to develop a stakeholder '***engagement strategy';*** this is the second most favoured recommendation with a mean score of 1.44. The changes occupying the third and fourth positions are '***involvement***' with the need for NTA to engage stakeholders in the planning process and the suggestion for the NTA to commission a thorough '***stakeholder analysis'*** with the mean scores of 1.46 and 1.52 respectively. Another suggested change that is equally important and yet showing a high mean value is the recommendation for NTA to '***train staff'*** members on the value of stakeholder contribution to skills development with the mean score of 1.58. '***Responsiveness***' to stakeholders' needs is another suggested change required from the NTA, with the mean score of 1.61. Finally, but still significantly, this is followed by '***regular meetings'*** with stakeholders with the mean score of 1.71.

#### *4.3.3.5* Participation Mean Score on Suggested Changes to ISC.

Table 4.16 indicates the mean scores of the attributes that serve as appropriate suggested changes needed to improve the process of stakeholder engagement in skills development. The relationship among the mean score of all attributes signifies the degree of agreement showing it plainly when all the scores are within the value of 1-1.99, which is the highest score of strongly agreed.

**Table 4.16**
**Participants Mean Scores on the Recommended Changes Associated with ISC**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Suggested changes to ISC** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** |
| Regular update | 69 | 1 | 4 | 1.41 |
| Demonstrate knowledge | 68 | 1 | 4 | 1.44 |
| Influence Decisions | 68 | 1 | 4 | 1.85 |
| Independent Bodies | 67 | 1 | 5 | 2.13 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 67 | | | |

The highest mean score (in terms of agreement) is observed with '***regular updates'*** of stakeholders with a mean score of 1.41. The second attribute is the need for the ISC to '***demonstrate knowledge'*** of the sector they represent with 1.44 mean score. This is followed by the recommendation for the ISC to strongly '***influence decisions'*** made for their industry with the mean score of 1.85. The recommendations for the ISC to function as '***independent bodies'*** from the NTA received a mean score of 2.13 and this may be considered low when compared to others.

#### *4.3.3.6 Participation Mean Score on Suggested Changes to Stakeholders.*

Table 4.17 also forms part of the suggested changes, specifically, with regard to other stakeholders who do not include the NTA staff members and the ISC. It is evident from the table below that all attributes have been considered as key by all participating stakeholders, receiving a highest mean score between 1-1.99 (very strong agreement) across all attributes.

**Table 4.17**
**Participants Mean Scores on the Recommended Changes Associated with Stakeholders**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Suggested changes to stakeholders** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** |
| Commitment to training | 69 | 1 | 5 | 1.36 |
| Power to influence | 69 | 1 | 4 | 1.48 |
| Industry bodies | 69 | 1 | 4 | 1.49 |
| Regular Attendance | 70 | 1 | 4 | 1.54 |
| Advise on Governance | 69 | 1 | 5 | 1.93 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 69 | | | |

The highest mean score of all is observed with the need for employers to '***commit to training'*** of their staff, scoring a mean score of 1.36 (very strong agreement). The second highest change suggested is for stakeholders to understand their '***power to influence',*** and their role in the process of skills development, with the

mean value of 1.48. Further suggestions that followed in order of their position are the suggestion for stakeholders to use '***industry bodies'*** with the mean value of 1.49; '***regular attendance***' to stakeholders fora to provide inputs with the mean value of 1.54; and the least recommended attribute is for the employers to '***advise on governance'*** of training institutions with 1.93 mean value.

Overall, participating stakeholders believe that the above suggested changes would have a positive impact on the process of stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia as shown in Table 4.18 below.

**Table 4.18**
**Overall Positive Impacts of Suggested Changes on Skills Development**

| | | Regular meetings | Stakeholder analysis | Consideration | Staff training | Responsiveness | Responsiveness | Engagement strategy | Regular update | Independence bodies | Influence Decision | Demonstrate Knowledge | Use of industry Bodies | Regular Attendance | Commitment to training | Power to influence | Advice on Governance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Positive impact | Pearson Correlation | .240 | .323** | .528** | .475** | .430** | .421** | .373** | .687** | .235 | .368** | .439** | .526** | .415** | .396** | .450** | .323** |
| | Sig. (2- | .052 | .008 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .002 | .000 | .062 | .003 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .001 | .000 | .008 |
| | N | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 64 | 66 | 65 | 66 | 64 | 65 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 66 | 66 | 66 |

As seen in Table 4.18 above, most suggested changes would have a positive impact on the process of skills development in Namibia. The table shows that regular updates of stakeholders by the ISC is considered to have a highest positive impact on skills development, with a positive correlation (r = .687). This is followed by the consideration or recognition of stakeholders' inputs by the NTA and the use of industry bodies by the stakeholders with the positive correlation of r = .528 and r = .526 respectively. The low correlation although with a positive contribution is the suggestion for regular meetings with stakeholders by NTA and the ISC to function as independent bodies from the NTA which received r = .240 and r = .235 respectively.

## 4.4 Reliability of Instrument

Reliability is defined as the "degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measuring" (Gray, Mills & Airasian, 2009). The higher the reliability of the test result, the higher the confidence in the results obtained, hoping that the instrument would consistently provide similar results if the test is re-administered to the same group of people by a different researcher at a different point in time.

### 4.4.1 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient Scores.

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients was calculated to assess the reliability of the instruments for this research. The Cronbach Alpha is interpreted as a coefficient Alpha and its value ranges from 0.00 to 1.00. A perfect reliable test would have a reliability coefficient of 1.00, which is not easily obtainable. Hence, any coefficient that is closer to 1.00 is acceptable to have minor errors while the coefficient less than 0.6 is considered poor and not acceptable.

**Table: 4.19**
**Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient of Key Factors**

| Case processing Summary: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.733 Valid N: 67 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NO=70 | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
| NTA Challenges | 9.7597 | 5.511 | .403 | .715 |
| ISC Challenges | 9.8920 | 4.784 | .531 | .677 |
| Stakeholder Challenges | 9.9542 | 5.235 | .479 | .693 |
| NTA Changes | 10.8301 | 5.350 | .572 | .670 |
| ISC Changes | 10.6644 | 5.675 | .396 | .716 |
| Stakeholder changes | 10.7478 | 5.560 | .449 | .702 |

The results in Table 4.19 indicate a reasonably good alpha test result of 0.733, suggesting that the instrument is a reliable measure of the above key factors. Therefore, for this research, the instrument is a reliable measure of challenges and recommendations to stakeholder engagement.

### 4.4.2 Validity of Measurement.

Validity is defined as the "ability of a scale or measuring instrument to measure what it is intended to measure" (Zikmund, 2003, p. 302). Both validity and reliability are important for judging the suitability of test results (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). The validity of the measurements has been considered in a number of factors to allow generalisation of results to the whole population. The researcher has considered all key stakeholder groups in skills development as key participants in the study. Five groups of stakeholders were considered as defined in section 3.4 and section 4.3.2 of the study. The research has applied the same treatment to all stakeholder groups, using the same instrument in both cases, during the piloting phase and the data collection phase.

The results obtained from the pilot correlate with the main findings of the study, and this has increased the researcher's confidence in extrapolating the findings to the whole population of NTA stakeholders, specifically in the finance and business services sector. The correlation test among the attributes shows a significant, yet low correlation that indicates the validity of the instrument.

## 4.5 Results of the Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis is conducted to determine the association between two or more variables listed as groups and the strength of that association. Yang (2010, p.71) in his description states that the "correlation of two variables can be studied with

regard to its presence (whether there is a relationship), strength (how strong the relationship is) and sign (whether the relationship is positive or negative").

The association of two continuous variables can be considered regular or irregular depending on whether the values of two variables go in the same direction or opposite directions. The numerical method for analysing such regularities is the correlation coefficient (usually presented by r), which takes a value in the range of -1 to +1 (Yang, 2010). The value of -1 shows a perfect negative relationship whereas +1 shows a perfect positive relationship; while the value of zero (0) shows that there is no relationship at all between the variables.

The relationship between the challenges identified was investigated using a two-tailed Pearson analysis. Three factors: NTA challenges, ISC challenges and stakeholders' challenges were defined as the mean value of attributes measured and further analysed to provide the correlation coefficients among them. Similarly, the analysis was also carried out for the three factors on the recommendations for changes to NTA, ISC and stakeholder. The correlation analysis showed low significant correlation of some attributes towards the main variables. Analysis of some attributes was discontinued, as they did not show a significant contribution towards the key variables.

**Table 4.20**
**Correlation Coefficient of NTA Challenge**

| | | Coordination | Bureaucracy | Communication | Regulation | Use of feedback and input | Delay in payment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NTA challenges | Pearson Correlation | .501** | .667** | .695** | .632** | .709** | .482** |
| | Sig. (2 tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 62 | 68 | 65 | 67 | 65 | 63 |

From Table 4.20, it is clear that all attributes measuring challenges associated with NTA contribute significantly as challenges that affect the relationship between the NTA and the stakeholders in the process of skills development. The highest relationship to the key factor (NTA challenges) is the ***'use of feedback and input***' showing a high and positive correlation of r = .709, p = .000 and a mean value of 2.58. This is followed by '***communication***' to stakeholders (2.80) with the value of r = .695, p = .000, '***bureaucracy***' (2.37) at r = .667, p = .000 and coordination at r = .501, p = .000. The weak correlation coefficient is found with '***delay in payment'*** for service providers (2.56) at r = .482, p = .000. Although delay shows a weak correlation in comparison to others, the researcher found it fit to keep it due to its high mean score obtained and its high degree of differences from others.

**Table: 4.21**
**Correlation Coefficient of Challenges with the ISC**

| | | Limited knowledge | Communication | Roles & Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ISC challenges | Pearson Correlation | .790** | .751** | .782** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 66 | 66 | 65 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.21 attests that all three attributes contribute significantly as challenges experienced with the ISC showing a significant value of p = .000. Strong correlation is seen with '***limited knowledge***' of ISC roles by the industry with the highest correlation (r = .790) and a high mean score of 2.21. This is followed by limited understanding of ISC '***roles and responsibility'*** by members themselves with the value of r = .782 and the mean value of 2.51. The last attribute, though still with a high correlation of r = .751 and the mean value of 2.74, is the poor '***communication***'

between the ISC and the stakeholders. "Linkages' was removed from further analysis as it was found with a high collinearity with limited understanding.

**Table 4.22**
**Correlation Coefficient of Challenges with Stakeholders**

| | | Confidence in CBET | Mismatch | Poor Attendance | Knowledge of NTA mandate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stakeholder challenges | Pearson Correlation | .733** | .702** | .703** | .616** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 67 | 66 | 65 | 68 |

Table 4.22 shows a significant contribution of all four attributes to the determined factor of stakeholder challenge at $p < .05$, giving a high degree of reliability of the results. The greatest correlation is seen with the '***confidence in CBET'*** graduates by employers at r = .733, however, this attribute was found to have a lowest mean of 2.54 in comparison to other attributes. This is followed by ***poor attendance*** (r = .703) with a mean of 2.48, ***mismatch*** (r = .702) and ***knowledge of NTA mandate*** being the last with r = .616.

**Table: 4.23**
**Correlation Coefficient of Suggested Changes to NTA**

| | | Regular meetings | Stakeholder analysis | Consideration | Staff training | Engagement strategy |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NTA change | Pearson Correlation | .716** | .684** | .695** | .784** | .745** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 69 | 69 | 69 | 69 | 68 |

Table 4.23 shows a greatest significant contribution with '***staff training'*** with the correlation of r = .784, and the mean score of 1.58. Other attributes in order of position are '***consideration***' with the correlation of r = .695 and the highest mean value of 1.43, '***stakeholders analysis'*** at r = .684 and the highest mean value of 1.52. Two attributes ('***involvement'*** and '***responsiveness***') were removed from further analysis due to a high degree of similarity with consideration.

**Table 4.24**
**Correlation Coefficient of Suggested Changes to ISC**

| | | Regular update | Independent bodies | Influence decisions | Demonstrate knowledge |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Change ISC | Pearson Correlation | .682** | .724** | .791** | .676** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 69 | 67 | 68 | 68 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As seen in Table 4.24 above, the highest correlation of r = .791 is seen with '***influence decisions',*** which has a mean value of 1.85 and ranked third in relation to other attributes. This is followed by the recommendation for the ISC to function as '***independent bodies'*** from the NTA, with a significant contribution of r = .724 but the lowest mean value of 2.13. Further recommendations such as '***regular update'*** of industries by the ISC and '***demonstrate of knowledge'*** of the sector the ISC represents also scored a high correlation of r = .682 and r = .676 with the mean value of 1.41 and 1.44 respectively.

**Table 4.25**
**Correlation Coefficient of Suggested Changes to Stakeholders**

| | | Regular attendance | Commitment to training | Governance in TP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stakeholder change | Pearson Correlation | .772** | .843** | .817** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 70 | 69 | 69 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.25 illustrates the greatest and yet significant (p = .000) contribution among all attributes, with '***commitment to training***' scooping the highest correlation value of r = .843. Similarly, the same attribute also received the highest mean score of 1.36 (very strong agreement) demonstrating the highest contribution towards positive impact to skills development. Another significant contribution is found with the recommendation for employers to advise on '***governance of training institutions',*** with the correlation of r = .817 but with the lowest mean score of 1.93 in relation to

others. The last, though still contributing significantly with r = .772 and the mean score of 1.54 (Very strong agreement), is the suggestion for ***'regular attendance'*** by stakeholders to stakeholders fora in order to provide their inputs in decision making. As observed in Table 4.25, two attributes (***power to influence*** and ***use of industry bodies***) were removed from further analysis due to high collinearity among attributes.

## 4.6 Presentation of Open-Ended Items

The research questionnaire consists of five open-ended questions as part of the last section. The additional questions asked the respondents to state additional challenges and recommendations in a case where a participating stakeholder wanted to express herself further in line with what was provided. As alluded to in chapter 3, the data was captured into the Qualitative Content Analysis tool (QCA), that assists to arrange them in manageable chunks and then classified into different key categories of the study as presented below.

### 4.6.1 Challenges and Recommendations to NTA.

Findings from the open-ended sections demonstrate huge support of the quantitative data obtained through closed questions. The challenges identified by the study were emphasised with further expression and comments from the participating stakeholders. Challenges such as bureaucracy, delay in payment, use of feedback and input, coordination, poor communication and regulation received additional attention from participating stakeholders as having limitations to the process of stakeholder engagements. These comments are found in statements such as:

"Poor communications between the Board and the ISCs" [NTA12]

"To get the right people to answer the questions consistency is lacking" (TP9).

"Assessment results take too long before the trainees receive their results" (A/M4).

"Rewarding system for assessors and moderators is too slow and causes many not to participate" (A/M3).

"There is no mechanism put in place to give feedback to the stakeholders as a whole except those who attend meetings or are involved in ISCs" ( INDU15).

"Uncertainty about levy details and commencement date tends to frustrate employers and damage the reputation of the NTA stakeholder engagement and partnership" (INDU14).

"Lack of feedback from NTA senior officials to lower ranking official, employees are not aware of all the activities taking place at the NTA" (NTA4).

"Ineffective communication between NTA and stakeholders" (A/M8).

Similarly, participating stakeholders confirm the challenge of regulation as indicated in the previous section, highlighting that regulation related to registration of training providers as complicated to follow. References made to this challenge are illustrated in the statements below;

"Relax the rules of registration of training providers. No need for such strict rules" (INDU15).

"Too slow registration of urgent needed Training providers" (A/M2).

Participating stakeholders also had a chance to suggest changes in addition to what has been identified from the literature. Key changes identified were expressed in statements such as:

"Develop a communication strategy for both the (internal and external) stakeholders …concentrate on the NTA mission and vision" (NTA9).

"Capacitate and populate NTA with knowledgeable individuals in the areas of training development and management" (NTA15).

"Make use of HR Training & Development Consultants/Officers/practitioners for more interaction" (INDU2).

"NTA to give staff training" (NTA2).

"NTA should have stakeholders recommendations/feedback data available to all staff members to remind everyone of areas of improvement" (A/M5).

"NTA needs to have stakeholders' satisfaction survey to be able to take stock of its (NTA) response to industry demand" (A/M5).

The comments above testify to the levels of stakeholder engagement by Arnstein's (1969) theory. Her focus being on the distribution of power could be applied to the comments received from stakeholders. Stressing the need for change towards the satisfaction of those on the receiving end, the stakeholders.

### 4.6.2 Challenges and Recommendations to ISC.

The use of open-ended questions revealed that participating stakeholders are not satisfied with the operation of the ISC as representatives of the various industries. The open-ended questions gave them an opportunity to freely express themselves in terms of what they viewed the role of the ISC should be in the process of skills development, describing their current practice as passive and unknown. Challenges identified through close-ended questions such as limited knowledge, role and responsibility of the ISC and poor communication received high support from this section, as illustrated below:

"ISC is not functional and does not contribute much to training" [TP3].

"No idea because I am not aware of the ISCs TORs" [NTA16].

The above results confirm the challenges identified in the quantitative section, with a number of recommendations demanding extra commitment and visibility of ISC work. Participating stakeholders' comments on suggested changes are such as:

"Feedback to the industry after every meeting, forum or conferences attended and invite industries to submit issues to be discussed at ISC meetings" (INDU10), (NTA12).

"ISC should facilitate workshops for their sector members to inform them of the work that is being done for skills development and to seek recommendations from them on the way forward" (INDU14).

"They have to be visible, have to visit training providers' regularly and have to have education/vocational knowledge" (TP10), (A/M9).

"ISC should form 'ISC forum' where they should meet annually to strengthen their relationship with the industry and discuss challenges and ways of how to approach different programmes presented to them by the NTA" (A/M3).

"ISC should use the opportunity available to interact with people from their industries to educate them about the role of NTA" (NTA4).

"ISC should be seen as providers of intelligence data/information in the industry" (INDU20).

"Training should be geared towards industry with more critical skills needs" (INDU20).

"I think we should have a more practical approach where we go to companies as a group and see what is happening there. We can return to the office and have a

better discussion then. I would like to see what we have done, it must be visible" (ISC3).

"ISC to be fully oriented on their roles and increase the frequency of their meetings" (INDU8).

"Invite industries to submit issues to be discussed on ISC meetings" (INDU10).

"ISC must operate like SETA's in SA" (ISC1).

"The ISC, as custodian of training in their sectors, should know the needs of their sectors, i.e. scarce skills, upgrading needs, training provision needs, and communicate regularly with all employers and come with firm proposals to the NTA on their respective needs" (INDU14).

In summary, the above participating stakeholders strongly recommend the ISC to demonstrate knowledge of the sector they represent by teaming up with their industries and receive regular updates on the key training needs of their sector. In this way they would be able to understand their sectors very well and be resourceful for critical intelligence to NTA. Support for these claims includes statements such as:

Through these free expressions, it became clear that stakeholders both within the NTA and those outside the NTA find the ISC are not committed enough to their activities. Hence a number of respondents call for more commitment and doubling of efforts from ISCs.

The participants went further to recommend that ISC should be taken through capacity development programmes that will assist in sharpening them and improve their effectiveness (NTA15). Further analysis of data collected revealed strongly that most stakeholders do not understand the roles and responsibility of the ISC. This is also expressed as a challenge in section 4.4.2 of the study, which, in itself, defeats the

purpose of establishing the ISC and that of the NTA at large. Some respondents have made the effort to question the effectiveness of the composition and nomination process, thinking that perhaps processes followed by NTA to seek nominations need to be improved. Evidence of such claims is found in statements such as;

> "ISC should be represented by subject experts (captains of the industry) that will add value to the exercise, instead of the VTP's graduates that have limited industry experience" (TP8).
>
> "Their composition to [should] be wide enough to include interest of emerging urban areas" (TP5).
>
> "Make it more known by stakeholders and what are their roles and responsibilities" (TP6).
>
> "Let's get the right people for ISC, not white elephant" (TP7).
>
> "Consider including training providers, as they will bring insight on the feasibility of developing certain skills and demands for certain skills for the informal sector…which other members of the ISC might not have" (INDU11).

Very useful recommendations were also received from the ISC themselves indicating their own dissatisfaction towards their operation. Some of them described their operation as being "too theoretical" proposing a more practical approach of visiting companies to familiarise themselves with the situations. The findings above revealed that, stakeholder are willing to work closely with the ISC, hence recommendations require them to be pro-active and be available for the industry community.

### 4.6.3 Challenges and Recommendations to Stakeholders.

The researcher thought it appropriate to ask the participating stakeholders to express their experienced challenges. This allowed respondents to self-reflect and share how they view their participation and contribution to skills development. This was also a good opportunity for the participating NTA staff members to express their daily experience with stakeholders. Similar to the above section, numerous challenges were raised in support of those identified through closed questions, plus additional challenges and recommendations for improvement.

The challenges experienced are observed in the negative expression of participants such as:

> "Lack of support for national programmes by the stakeholders from the industry mainly spoon feeding expected from the NTA by the former government VTCs" (NTA9).
>
> "Not every stakeholder is involved in skills development, moreover, even materials developed and designed are moderated by few individuals used, while they are not even experts" (A/M6).

It was expressed that little is known about the NTA by stakeholders, a situation that leads to some of the stakeholders feeling threatened by the NTA activities or, in some cases, engaging in unnecessary demands that are outside the scope of NTA mandate as indicated in the statements below:

> "NTA should run training not institutions or centre" (A/M9).
>
> "NTA should be decentralised to have offices at the VTCs etc. so that industry engagement is not Windhoek based" (INDU13).

"It should refrain from interference in smoothly running and well-performing utilities and should rather support them better" (TP10).

"Training should start in government-all levels. Officials should work faster, take responsible decisions and be accountable" (A/M2).

"Stakeholders need to be receptive of NTA proposals rather than having a negative perception. If they are not involved, changes cannot be significant" (NTA1).

The results also support the claims of lack of confidence in CBET system that the NTA is advocating to improve VET in Namibia. Participants seem not to be impressed by the introduction of CBET due to a number of reasons expressed in negative statements such as

"CBET is being implemented with the old hangover of NTTC system" (TP8).

"There is a need for CBET blue print and complete mind change in order to realise CBET implementation" (TP8).

"The unit standards are not ideal for our Namibian situation and our post-apartheid era" (TP10).

Furthermore, the participating stakeholders also expressed themselves in providing recommendations to the challenges listed above.

"Stressing the need for employers to commit to training of their staff, urging the employers to upgrade training employees and develop their potential" (A/M2).

An additional recommendation was made with regard to commitment to training;

"the government must develop a skills development act where all employers who are expected to contribute to a levy must be forced to develop their

employees as part of their contribution to skills development in Namibia" (A/M5).

The results also stressed full participation of stakeholders in skills development activities to improve VET in Namibia. This is supported by statements such as:

"Stakeholders must provide constructive criticism and advice to both NTA and ISC, make use of HR Training & Development Consultants/Officers/practitioners for more interaction" (INDU2).

"Stakeholders should be aware that they are part and parcel of NTA and skills development improvement must be a priority to them" (NTA17).

Furthermore, the study also received a number of key suggestions that would be useful for consideration. This was mentioned in response to the negative reaction observed to an NTA proposal (NTA1), which did not recognise the value of their inputs and contribution. Hence, the engagement becomes ineffective as most stakeholders do not attend activities but rather criticise without any contribution. Such suggestions are visible in participating stakeholders' comments such as;

"There is a need for stakeholders to understand the mandate and functions of the NTA in engaging and communicating with NTA on a regular basis" (NTA18).

"Needs to be receptive of NTA proposal rather than having negative perceptions if they are not involved, changes cannot be significant" (NTA1).

It is recommended that the ultimate objectives of NTA's establishment should be understood by all stakeholders to assist with stakeholders' commitment to training and recognition of VET's relevance to national development. As part of national development, the participation of stakeholders, especially the employers, will enhance the development of trainees' entrepreneurial skills so that they can be Small and

Medium Enterprises (SMEs) after graduation (NTA7). The recommendations for stakeholders' commitment are evident in the statements such as:

> "Stakeholders need to understand the mandate and functions of the NTA in engaging and communicating with NTA" (NTA18).
>
> "Forums for stakeholders should be established for them to meet like three times a year to discuss issues" (A/M7).
>
> "Stakeholders to establish a stakeholder forum, with its own Secretariats to manage and respond to the skills development programmes" (NTA15).
>
> "ISCs need to have close corporation with training providers" (NTA3).
>
> "Stakeholders should be given time to go into the industry and have an experience of what is happening so as to train trainees according to the new trends" (A/M8).
>
> "Stakeholders must have ownership of CBET because at the end of the day it is them who will benefit" (TP2).
>
> "Stakeholders should allow trainees from training providers to do job attachments with their institutions, so that they should be current with new changes in the industry" (A/M4).

As part of the skills development process, participants recommend that every company assess their training needs based on their business objectives and develop training plans to address the needs of their employees. In addition, large companies should have a career path for employees that outline clearly a roadmap for promotional opportunities. This will help employers to identify the skills gaps and implement an effective training and development programme for their employees (INDU14).

## 4.7 Limitations Observed

Possible limitations of this study could be associated with the population of stakeholder groups that participated. The sample chosen was from the same industry and since the researcher knew the participants, this might have influenced the participants' response in one way or another. It should also be understood that the NTA deals with stakeholders from all industry sectors in Namibia. Having limited the study to one specific industry may not be a perfect representation of all industries as different industries have different structures in place that allows them to engage with the NTA differently. Hence, a similar study could also be done in one or two other industries for verification of these findings.

The sample for the study consisted of both internal and external stakeholders of the NTA. However, the study could not establish the difference at this stage. It is also appropriate to mention that stakeholder groups in skills development are numerous, and not all groups participated in the study. Despite these limitations highlighted above, this study has contributed significantly to the body of knowledge in relation to stakeholder engagement in skills development, especially in the Namibian context and in Africa at large.

## 4.8 Summary

This chapter presents the descriptive statistics and reliability analysis to provide further insight into the results. The study found 'consultation' to be the best level of engagement to describe the engagement practice by NTA. A number of challenges have been identified that signify the overall dissatisfaction among stakeholders towards the level of engagement in skills development. These include bureaucracy, delay in payment, use of feedback and inputs, coordination, communication, limited

knowledge, ISC roles and responsibility, mismatch, poor knowledge of NTA mandate and poor attendance among others.

A number of suggested changes emanate from the study that, if well implemented, could have a positive impact on stakeholder engagement and management. These include: stakeholder consideration, development of stakeholder engagement strategy, stakeholder analysis, staff training, and regular updates by ISC, understanding of the sector and being influential, commitment from stakeholders, regular attendance and proper governance in training institutions.

The reliability and validity of the measurements tested were positive, increasing the confidence in generalising the results to the population of NTA stakeholders at large. Profoundly, this leads to the discussion of the findings of the survey in the next chapter.

# 5. Discussion

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the discussion of the data analysis and inferences associated with the study results. The data analysis is discussed in light of the literature reviewed (chapter 2) of the study and implications and limitations are identified. The chapter provides insight into the data obtained from chapter 4 and its interpretation in response to the research questions.

## 5.2 Reliability of the Findings

The researcher thought it appropriate to begin with the discussion of the reliability of the findings before embarking on a detailed discussion of the data. It is worth reporting that the research found the average Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the key section to be 0.733, which is above the minimum acceptable standards. Since the test was conducted on the key variables, the results qualify the survey tool to be considered a reliable measure of the study undertaken.

## 5.3 Discussion of Main Results

This study discussed stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia in relation to activities organised by the NTA. It discloses the level of engagement experienced by most stakeholders to be that of consultation. A number of challenges have been identified and these result in low levels of stakeholder satisfaction. Seventy stakeholders participated in the study and the findings are discussed under the following questions.

### 5.3.1 What levels of stakeholder engagement are used by NTA to engage stakeholders in skills development activities?

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation (Table 2.2) forms the basis of discussion in this section. Her idea that was originally developed in 1969, retains considerable contemporary relevance to the field of stakeholder engagement, hence the researcher found it fit to use it to understand the satisfaction of stakeholder engagement with NTA.

The study found the level of stakeholder engagement is best described as consultation. Consultation is the highest (fifth) level described by participating stakeholders in the study, scoring 39% of the total participation. As shown in Table 4.4 in Chapter 4, nearly all stakeholder groups scored consultation the highest, except the ISC which selected informing (the third level on the table). As discussed in Chapter two, consultation is the fifth level of stakeholder engagement and the last level of tokenism on Arnstein's ladder of participation. Results of this study have indicated that this level of stakeholder engagement has a minimum degree of stakeholder involvement in decision-making. Overall, Table 4.10 in Chapter 4 indicates the low level of satisfaction among stakeholders in their engagement with the NTA, with a negative correlation of r =.-346. In skills development, partnership is a level of engagement advocated by the VET Act as explained in Chapter 1. The VET Act states; "to establish and maintain a sustainable partnership between government, the private sector and civil society" (Namibia, 2008. P.5.). However, Figure 4.1 and Table 4.4 show only a few of participating stakeholders conforming to this.

### 5.3.2 What are the challenges of stakeholder engagement faced by stakeholders and NTA?

This section attempts to identify the key challenges in stakeholder engagement in skills development. The research question allowed respondents to classify challenges they have experienced with NTA, ISC members and other stakeholders in general. Results from this classification are consistent with the level of stakeholders' engagement identified in above mentioned section.

#### *5.3.2.1 Stakeholder Engagement with the NTA.*

The results in Chapter 4, Table 4.11 up to Table 4.13 of the study presented a number of challenges faced by participating stakeholders. The study identified the following as major challenges.

**a) Bureaucracy**

Bureaucracy is the biggest challenge experienced by stakeholders. To give a brief description, bureaucracy is "characterised by highly routine operating tasks achieved through specialisation, very formalised rules and regulations, tasks grouped into functional department…and decision-making that follows the chain of command" (Robbins and Judge, 2011). It occurs where people are obsessed with following rules, blocking room for innovation and flexibility. Table 4.11 shows complicated bureaucracy within the NTA operations as the biggest challenge which participating stakeholders have experienced. It obtained the mean value of 2.37 (strong agreement) and the correlation of r = .667. Participating stakeholders also expressed themselves through open-ended questions, indicating how difficult it is to talk to the right people at the operational level as well as at the governance level (NTA12 & TP9) in NTA. The situation is perceived to be too rigid with very slow processes, particularly the

release of assessment marks to candidates and registration of training providers (A/M4 & A/M2).

**b) Delay in Payment**

Delay in payment is another challenge experienced by service providers in Table 4.11, with mean score of 2.56 and a correlation of r = .482. Participating stakeholders found the rewarding system for assessors and moderators to be too slow discouraging participation A/M3).

**c) Use of Feedback and Inputs**

Table 4.11 indicates the ineffective use of feedback and input mechanisms in communicating with industry and meetings to be the key challenge experienced by stakeholders. This challenge received a high mean score of 2.58 and the correlation of r = .709, a scenario that signifies that a number of stakeholders are not happy with the way their inputs are handled by NTA. With the level of consultation as defined by Arnstein (1969) in Chapter 2, it is clear that there is no guarantee that inputs and feedback from stakeholders will be part of the final product.

This study has also noted that people may exclude themselves to avoid wasting time because they have been consulted many times in the past with clear results (Cornwall, 2008).

**d) Coordination**

As per the results of the study, coordination of stakeholders' activities is another challenge stakeholders experienced with NTA, receiving a mean score of 2.71 and a correlation of r = .501 as shown in Table 4.1. Participating stakeholders expressed disappointment with lack of mechanisms to facilitate the coordination of stakeholders' activities. As observed in Table 4.2 each division has its own direct consultation with

stakeholders, which outperforms the public relations and stakeholder engagement division at the NTA in providing feedback to stakeholders (INDU15). This reveals that there is a lack of coordination of organisational activities at NTA. To remain responsive to stakeholders, every institution should have internal collaboration to effectively feedback information.

**e) Poor Communication**

Communication with stakeholders has been identified as another key challenge. As presented in Table 4.11, the mean value score and correlation of this attribute is 2.80 and r = .695 respectively. It signifies a high performance as a measure of high score value. This communication is attributed to both internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders expressed difficulty to receive feedback from NTA Managers (NTA4). Significantly, ISC members serving as standing committees of the NTA Board also pronounced poor communication from NTA. The ISC members described the level of stakeholders' engagement as an "informing" exercise. This is demonstrated in Table 4.4.

**f) Regulations**

As classified in Table 4.11, the study revealed regulation as a challenge experienced in stakeholders engagement scoring low mean score of 2.88 close to undecided and a high correlation of r =. 632. NTA is a custodian and regulatory body for vocational education and training in Namibia. The organisation has an obligatory responsibility to ensure quality training provision in Namibia. The VET Act. 1 of 2008 (VET, 2008) mandates the NTA to make regulations relating to the registration and accreditation of vocational education and providers and programmes. This mandate includes the procedures, criteria and conditions applicable to their

registration and accreditation (VET, 2008). It is believed that although it is vital to have regulations in place that guide certain critical operations such as the registration of training providers, the process of registration by NTA is considered complicated and slow (A/M2). References were made to the process of registration of training providers, which is found to have limitations for training providers keen to be registered to respond to national training demands (INDU15 & A/M2).

#### *5.3.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement with Industry Skills Committee (ISC).*

In relation to ISC, the study found several challenges that affect active participation of stakeholders in skills development. The following are identified challenges with regards to stakeholders' engagement with ISC; limited knowledge, ISC roles and responsibilities, and communication between ISCs and industries. A high mean score observed between 2.21 and 2.74 implies that these challenges have a significant impact on the process of stakeholder engagement. Despite that, ISCs were established to assist the Board to meet the requirements for key industry sectors as per the VET Act 1 of 2008 (VET, 2008). The study noted the absence of stakeholder engagement in the ISC as a hindrance to the achievement of these objectives.

**(a) Limited understanding**

Table 4.12 revealed that apart from ISCs being established, most stakeholders including ISCs and the NTA staffs has limited understanding of the empirical role and responsibility of establishing ISCs. This is evident in the high mean score 2.21 and correlation of r =.790 in favour of limited knowledge of ISC activities among stakeholders. The study also observed many stakeholders chose not to agree nor disagree with some matters associated with the ISCs. This scenario is well confirmed

when some respondents mentioned that they do not understand the ISC operations (NTA16).

**(b) Roles and Responsibilities**

With reference to the background of the study in Chapter 1, the role of the ISCs in the establishment of skills development is very important. As standing committees of the NTA Board, they are expected to advise the Board with industry intelligence (Namibia, 2008) and future training needs. In contrast to the above, Table 4.12 and 4.21 demonstrate this as a challenge among the ISCs themselves, showing a mean score of 2.51 and r =.782.

**(c) Communication with Stakeholders**

Communication with stakeholders is a cross-cutting challenge with NTA and ISCs. In chapter 4, Table 4.11 shows the communication between the NTA and the stakeholders, while Table 4.12 shows the communication between the ISCs and the stakeholders. In both cases communication is referred to as a challenge. In table 4.12, the mean score from the participating stakeholders is 2.74, with the correlation of r =.7.51.

***5.3.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement in VET system.***

Participating stakeholders identified the following challenges as the main contributors to poor outcomes to skills development activities:

**(a) Mismatch**

Mismatch in this case refers to the imbalance between what the stakeholder needs and what the NTA does. There is a relationship between mismatch and other mentioned challenges, leading to strong agreement among participating stakeholders. Table 4.13 shows the results to this effect, scoring a mean score of 2.27 among others

and a correlation of r =.702. The establishment of the NTA as a custodian of skills development is merely to close the gap between supply and demand of skills (VET, 2008) however, if this mismatch is allowed to continue unaddressed, stakeholder participation will become a bigger challenge.

**(b) Knowledge of NTA Mandate**

The study also shows that stakeholder lack an understanding of the NTA mandate. This was agreed with a mean score of 2.46 and the correlation of r = .616. Such evidence is prominent in the open-ended responses such as:

"NTA should run training not institutions or centre" (A/M9).

"It should refrain from interference in smoothly running and well-performing utilities and should rather support them better" (TP10).

With reference to the background of the study, NTA has a responsibility to ensure quality standards prevail in all spheres of VET training. This is done through critical analysis of institutional arrangements and practices of training. However, some stakeholders find this process disturbing and out with the NTA responsibility.

**(c) Poor Attendance**

The result from the study show poor attendance of industry forums by stakeholders with a mean score and correlation of 2.48 and r = .703 respectively. As shown in figure 4.2 in Chapter 4, most stakeholders do not respond (75% or less) to invitations sent to them, with only 17.4% confirming to have attended all the activities. This could be the major reason why most stakeholders are not aware of programmes and activities developed for their industries. A situation that is detrimental to the achievement of partnership and has high potential for the mismatch explained above.

Participating stakeholders also express challenges emanating from poor attendance of stakeholders such as, lack of support for national programme by stakeholders, lack of experts to moderate study material, ineffective communication between NTA and stakeholders and lack of entrepreneurial skills development (NTA9, A/M6, A/M8 & NTA7).

**(d) Confidence in CBET**

Lack of confidence in CBET graduates by employers was found to have a greater correlation to challenges experienced with stakeholders, with a high mean score 2.54 and correlation of r = .733. This in itself means that participating stakeholders agreed to this as a potential threat that may affect the anticipated future of skills development in Namibia. A situation that may lead to CBET graduates from training institutions struggling to find employment for which they are trained. Not that there is no employment, but because employers feel that they are not properly trained. This evidence is of high importance on the agenda of skills development programmes, secondary sources such as newspapers and Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) news have also reported on this issue. For example, the local newspapers (New Era and Namibian 23 Oct) reported VET Trainers stating that their own CBET products are "half cooked", and not ready for the labour market. Statements like these are detrimental to the establishment of the NTA mandate and may contribute significantly to low confidence in CBET system.

### 5.3.3 What are the recommended changes required to improve stakeholder engagement in skills development?

The purpose of this question is to allow participating stakeholders to indicate changes that could improve the process of stakeholder engagement in skills

development. The suggested changes were those within the ambit of the NTA, taking into consideration the role played by the NTA as a corporate entity, ISC as the key mediating body and the stakeholders in general. All recommendations have been defined to suit sustainable practices of partnership. In consideration of the participants' scores, the mean score shows a highest value, ranging from 1.36-2.13 across all attributes under study. Chapter 4 alluded to a number of changes suggested by the participating stakeholders as key to the achievement of a better stakeholder engagement practice at NTA. The Two Pair Pearson correlation was used to determine those with significant contribution as shown in Table 4.23, 24 and 25 in Chapter 4.

#### *5.3.3.1 Recommendations to NTA.*

##### *(a)* Consideration

Consideration of stakeholders' inputs and views is found to be the key attribute to maintain a strong partnership with stakeholders, with the highest participation mean score of 1.43 and correlation of r = .695. This requires the NTA to enhance inclusiveness of their decisions and inputs and place the needs and interests of stakeholders at the centre of negotiations, if it is to strive towards partnership levels of stakeholder engagement. With reference to the above discussion, the study also suggests NTA to reconsider its business processes to enhance responsiveness to stakeholders, and an improved coordination of stakeholder activities within the organisation.

It is common that little thought goes into the timing and duration of participatory activities leading to self-exclusion of invited participants and ignorance. Self-exclusion can be associated with lack of confidence (Cornwall, 2008), or a feeling among people that they have nothing to contribute. The above results testify the

position of NTA to that effect, a situation that may lead to a number of stakeholders withdrawing their participation.

### *(b)* Engagement Strategy

Another strong and yet significant recommendation with the mean value of 1.44 and correlation of r =.745 worth discussing is the need to develop a stakeholder engagement strategy. The exercise would enable proper arrangement and coordination of stakeholder activities from all divisions at NTA, as demonstrated in Table 4.23. The stakeholder engagement outlines the broad arrangement and approaches used to generate effective communication and interaction between the organisation and its stakeholders. Table 4.4 on Appendix C revealed that a number of stakeholders have not been included in the engagement process, either knowingly or unknowingly (this has not been established by the study). However, the underlying point is the need for proper mechanisms to guide the operation of different stakeholder activity groups and to avoid duplication of effort and wastage of resources.

### *(c)* Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis (mapping) assists the company to identify its stakeholders' degrees of interest and power to influence (Johnson et al., 2011). Table 4.15 shows the agreement from the participating stakeholders with the mean score of 1.52 which is significant, and a correlation of r =.684. This is attributed to the fact that an organisation without proper stakeholder mapping is likely to fail in almost all its key initiatives because it may not necessarily know who to talk to, at what stage and why (Johnson, et al., 2011).

### *(d)* Staff Training

Training and Development is aimed to provide staff with the skills to undertake changes themselves (Burnes, 2009). The result in Table 4.15 shows a strong recommendation of staff training with a mean score of 1.58 and correlation strength of r =.784. This was supported by additional comments suggesting for the NTA needs to engage staff in professional training and to employ HR Training and Development (NTA2, TP3, INDU2).

Evidently, many times changes fail in many organisations because staff members are not prepared to change their attitudes and behaviours towards demands (Burnes, 2009). NTA, as a young organisation, has to go through a number of changes in response to the labour market demands and stakeholders emerging needs. It is, however, advisable that staff members are prepared beforehand to appreciate new developments and willingly contribute to the process without pressure. Clearly, a number of challenges expressed in Chapter 4 section 4.4 have a greater association with limited knowledge among the NTA staff in interpreting the role played by stakeholders to achieve the NTA mandate. And this explains how critical it is for the NTA to invest in staff development.

### *(e)* Regular Meetings

Adriof's and Waddock's (2002) definition of stakeholder engagement best fits this suggestion in terms of trust enrichment and collaboration among individuals and/or social institutions with different objectives that can only be achieved together. Table 4.6 indicates meetings (one-on-one, general meetings/workshops/conferences & ISC meetings) to have been used more often for communication with stakeholders. Although Clarkson (1995) criticises the use of large group meetings and workshops,

as merely for information sharing, the NTA seems to be heavily reliant on this method to engage stakeholders. This could also have contributed to stakeholders describing the NTA engagement as consultative as opposed to partnership.

Table 4.15 provides the mean score value from the participating stakeholders as 1.71, with a correlation agreement of r =.716. This refers to productive meetings where stakeholders are considered partners, but not necessarily as listeners and contributors.

***(f)*** **Lenient**

The open-ended questions reveal additional recommendations for the NTA to consider. Lenient in this context refers to the implementation of the regulations just introduced by the NTA (registration of training providers and collection training levy). Stakeholders are asking for the NTA to relax the requirement during the early years of implementation (INDU14). This is guided by the thinking that, both the NTA and the stakeholders (training providers and employers) may need time to understand the processes first (INDU14).

#### *5.3.3.2 Recommendation to ISC.*

Four main changes have been suggested to improve the operations and effectiveness of the ISC. These suggestions include regular updates, demonstrate knowledge, influence decisions, and become independent bodies. The relationship among the mean score of all attributes signifies the degree of agreement of participating stakeholders. For this section, it is evident that all the suggested changes will have a positive impact to the process of stakeholder engagement and to that of skills development in general, as they have all scored within the value of (1 - 1.99) highest score/strongly agreed.

***(a)*** **Regular Updates**

The highest mean score (in terms of agreement) is observed with regular updates of stakeholders with a mean score of 1.41 and a correlation of r = .682. The study finds it fit for the ISC to meet stakeholders in their industry on a regular basis and provide them with updated feedback on issues that affect them. In this case, stakeholders would remain updated and prepared for any new development coming their way. Through regular updates, it is believed that ISC together with captains of their industries would closely monitor the quality of training offered and gain trust and recognition by the stakeholders they represent. The above sentiment is expressed in statements such as:

"Feedback to the industry after every meeting, forum or conferences attended and invite industries to submit issues to be discussed on ISC meetings" (INDU10), (NTA12).

***(b)*** **Demonstrate Knowledge**

The second attribute is the need for the ISC to demonstrate knowledge of the sector they represent with 1.44 mean score and a correlation of r =.676. Although each ISC is comprised of a number of sub sectors, individual members on the ISC represent a specific sector/subsector on its own. Hence, it is very critical that each member should possess sufficient broad knowledge of the sub/sector they represent.

***(c)*** **Influence Decisions**

The suggestion for the ISC to strongly influence decisions made for their industry, is of significant importance, with the mean score of 1.85 and r = .791. It is evident from the results in Table 4.16 that different stakeholders recognise the major role the ISC could play in the process of skills development in Namibia. Extraordinary

demands are received from the open ended section for the ISC to double their efforts and meet with their counterparts to make strong and influential contributions to training. It is clear that participants want the ISC to serve as a source of "intelligence" to NTA.

> "ISC should be seen as providers of intelligence data/information in the industry" (INDU20).
>
> "ISC to be fully oriented on their roles and increase the frequency of their meetings" (INDU8).
>
> "Invite industries to submit issues to be discussed on ISC meetings" (INDU10).
>
> "ISC must operate like SETA's in SA" (ISC1).
>
> "The ISC, as custodian of training in their sectors, should know the needs of their sectors, i.e. scarce skills, upgrading needs, training provision needs, and communicate regularly with all employers and come with firm proposals to the NTA on their respective needs" (INDU14).

The above recommendations cannot be achieved if ISCs act solely as representatives of themselves on the committee. Hence, strong collaboration is required between the ISC and the stakeholders they represent. Some of the respondents even went further suggesting feedback from the ISC meetings to be shared with stakeholders after every meeting to allow possible flow of information between ISC and their stakeholders/industry (INDU10).

***(d)*** **Independent Bodies**

The recommendations for the ISC to function as independent bodies from the NTA received a mean score of 2.13, making it to be the lowest suggestion among others. Although lowest in order of preference, it is still considered high in terms of

correlation agreement, with a score of r =.724. The idea behind this arrangement is that, the ISCs will be more practical in their approach, more involved with the industry, and exercise their full power over decisions that require changes in the industry they represent. It is found fit that once the ISC become independent from the NTA, they will act more as industry voices to NTA, instead of the current arrangement whereby the NTA chooses what it deems necessary to share with the ISC and the industry at large.

Some of the suggestions above correspond well if the ISC would have a high degree of autonomy from the NTA with a dedicated team to provide the required services. The current arrangement uses NTA officials to manage the ISCs operations and act as a medium of communication between the NTA and the committees. This arrangement is not effective at all given that the mediators are junior officials with little influence in decision-making.

***(e)*** **ISC Forums**

An additional suggestion emanating from the study includes the establishment of an "annual ISC forum" to allow different ISCs to share their accomplishment and best practices among themselves (A/M3), that could be of assistance especially to new members of the committees. It is observed that some ISCs have accomplished a lot and some have done very little despite being in operation for more than three years. This could be attributed to all the challenges as identified in section 5.3.2.2 above. Through the ISC forum, members of the committee could share best practices among themselves that would strengthen their relationship with their industry, discuss challenges, and find ways of approaching different programmes/issues presented to them by the NTA.

All respondents groups thought it important that stakeholders, including the NTA staff, see the need for ISCs to expand their scope and work closely with industries they represent. Through this partnership, the ISC will be able to facilitate the relationship between the industry employers/the business community/training providers with the NTA.

#### *5.3.3.3 Recommendations to Stakeholders.*

Stakeholders' participation is of critical importance to skills development to ensure that training provided is the training required. Below are the recommendations emanating from the study for changes to stakeholders.

**(a) Commitments to Training**

The need for stakeholders/employers to commit to training their employees received maximum support from the study, scoring a highest mean score of 1.36 and a highest correlation of r = .843. Macleod and Clarke (2009) indicated that there is a measurable, significant benefit for an individual who is well-trained and equipped with the required skills in terms of productivity and performance, since such individual's psychological well-being is maximised. It is suggested that companies or employers should assess their training needs in conjunction with their business objectives and develop a training plan on how to address their employees training needs (INDU14). With the introduction of the training levy in Namibia, in 2014, this would be of outmost importance to employers to receive the 50% rebate of their annual contribution.

**(b) Regular Attendance**

The second highest change recommended is regular attendance of stakeholders to meetings with the mean value of 1.54 and significant correlation of r =. 772. It is

through such platforms that stakeholders could exercise their power to influence decisions with regards to skills development in their sector. Stakeholders, being the recipient of training benefits, are also considered well placed to determine what is fit for their industry. Hence, stakeholders should take advantage of opportunities to advise NTA on what they need changed in the system. The use of 'professional bodies' cannot be over emphasised, as most communications from NTA are frequently communicated to them for proper distribution.

**(c) Advise on Governance**

The least recommended attribute for the employers is to advise on governance of training institutions with a mean score of 1.93. As the study results indicate, participation of employers in the governance structure of training institutions is of outmost importance. The success of skills development systems is achieved when industry is fully involved in governance of training institutions as representatives on their Board of Trustees. This is an indication of a private-public partnership in the delivery and quality assurance of training (DFID, n.d).

**(d) Document Study**

Document study is another recommendations emanating from the open-ended analysis. Stakeholders recommend that all stakeholders familiarise themselves with relevant documentation and publications from the NTA. The ISC should facilitate the process; and through such a process, interact and educate their colleagues with new developments. This should include training providers as well, to ensure training programmes are relevant and up to date.

Overall, the results obtained strongly signify a positive impact the above suggested changes have on the achievement of a sustainable skills development system that promotes tripartite partnership.

# 6. Recommendations and Conclusion

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the main findings for the study and explains its contribution to the body of knowledge. The chapter assesses the research objectives and makes recommendations for the process of stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia. Finally, the chapter discusses the limitations of the study and provides recommendations concerning management practice.

## 6.2 Summary of Key Findings

Preceding studies of the status of skills development confirmed a critical shortage of skills in Namibia. Government has done its part through the provision of financial resources and regulations to the education and skills development sector. It is now up to the NTA, as custodian of skills development in Namibia to fulfil its mandate and spearhead the engagement process, which established a tripartite partnership.

Evidence from developed countries shows that the government and its departments alone cannot gain the achievement of a sustainable national skills development system. It can be achieved through partnerships with key stakeholders both from the public and private sectors. This evidence made it appropriate to use Arnstein's theory (1969) to assist in understanding the characteristic of a ‘partnership’ that is emphasised throughout the study.

Findings of this research confirmed the large number of stakeholders that participate in skills development with NTA. Stakeholders such as, employers and employees from the private sector, industry representative bodies, training providers

and government agencies and departments have been a part and parcel of the process since the establishment of NTA.

Taking Arnstein theory into consideration, the study found the level of engagement experienced by most stakeholders best described as 'consultation'. 'Consultation' is the next level below 'partnership' when compared to the levels of engagement defined by Arnstein (1969) on her ladder of participation. However, the policy and regulation that inform the operation of NTA recommended for 'partnership'. Partnership as defined by Arnstein's theory instils a high level of consideration and recognition of stakeholder participation. The characteristic of different levels of engagement have been used to understand the level of engagement with NTA, hence the recommendation is made that will improve the situation, leading to the application of partnership levels. With partnership, stakeholders are valued as key parts at all stages of negotiation and some of them will have the power to influence the outcome of negotiation. Johnson et al., (2011) in their presentation of stakeholder mapping assist organisations to classify stakeholders in four categories, in relation to the power and degree of interest in a particular issue. This will assist an organisation to determine the level of partnership to establish with different stakeholder groups.

Overall, stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction with the level of stakeholder engagement with NTA. The above challenges have contributed significantly to this status leading to self-exclusion of stakeholders from NTA/stakeholders activities. To this effect, a number of suggestions have been put forth to remedy the situation. Namely; recognition of stakeholders' inputs, development of a stakeholder engagement strategy, stakeholder analysis (mapping), training NTA staff and

organising regular updates of industry through ISC, commitment to training by stakeholders, and attendance to stakeholders' activities.

Considering the vital role the ISCs are supposed to play in the process of skills development in Namibia, the study suggests the ISCs to become practical and influential in their endeavours. This is achieved if the NTA ensures potential representatives are appointed on the Committees.

It became apparent through the study that stakeholders have relaxed their participation, leading to programme development with little input from the stakeholders. It is therefore significant and necessary that the NTA embarks on a national campaign to understand stakeholders' needs and commit itself to deliver such needs. This should as well include school leavers, parents and the business community to understand their role and the value of VET, both economically and for social development of the livelihood of the Namibian people.

### 6.3 Recommendations for Practice

There is no doubt that stakeholder engagement is fundamental to the creation of an enabling environment suitable to both the organisations and stakeholders. The VET Act, Act 1 of 2008 that established the NTA requires it to establish a sustainable partnership between government, the private sector and civil society to resource the provision of vocational education and training in Namibia (Namibia, 2008). This study recommends that it is very crucial for NTA as a custodian of skills development in Namibia to partner with other stakeholders. Partnership is crucial in a way that it will lead to the establishment of skills formation programmes that will be informed by the current trends and future requirements of all Namibian industries.

It is publically known that, the government of the Republic of Namibia continues to invest a lot of money in education and training with the aim of producing a high quality and skilled labour force for all industries. However, as indicated in Chapter 1, the output of education does not reflect the investment at all levels of education and training. The NTA, by obligation of its mandate, has to ensure that VET standards in Namibia have improved and, significantly contribute to the desired high quality systems. This in turn will capacitate the labour force to meet the current and future labour market demands for skills and innovations by Vision 2030.

This investigative study highlights a number of implications for the practice of effective stakeholder engagement outlined below:

a) In an era where organisations are increasingly relying on the commitments of various stakeholders groups in order to create value, the NTA is recommended to conduct a thorough stakeholder mapping exercise and to prioritise stakeholders into two categories mainly; primary and secondary stakeholders as explained in chapter 2 (literature review) sections 2.2.1 & 2.2.2 of this study.

b) It is evident from the study findings that the key areas that need improvement are those surrounding the recognition of stakeholders' needs, value and understanding of the NTA mandate by stakeholders. NTA is recommended to train staff members and capacitate them with knowledge of training and development, to learn to appreciate the role played by stakeholders in the achievement of the NTA mandate.

c) The study found that the NTA internal processes are complicated and confusing to stakeholders, leaving them unsure of which division or which focal person to approach regarding their needs. It is therefore recommended that the NTA

should look into its internal processes and carry out a thorough demarcation of responsibilities between divisions to enhance responsiveness to stakeholders. It is believed that this exercise would improve the coordination of stakeholders' activities and, reduce the communication gap within the organisation.

d) The study found that the NTA has a low consideration of stakeholders' needs and interest leading to self–exclusion of stakeholders. It is, highly recommended that development of the stakeholder strategy is a necessity to guide the operation of different activities and ensure creating opportunities for stakeholders' inputs.

e) The study revealed that the mandate of NTA needs to be explained to stakeholders. This slowly leads to the loss of value to the process of VET programmes development. An approach that supposes to eliminate the stigma and inferiority attached to VET. In response there is a need for a vigorous campaign to create awareness among stakeholders on the mandate of the NTA and the benefits it holds for all stakeholders involved. The campaign needs to be well-coordinated reaching out schools to educate the learners and parents about the importance of vocational education and training and, its value to economic and social development and job creation.

f) ISC plays a vital role in transforming vocational education and training in Namibia from a supply to demand driven system where employers understand the benefit and the need to prioritise skills training. It is, therefore, appropriate to recommend the ISC to cultivate a culture of sharing, providing feedback about their progress, and new developments from NTA and solicit inputs for arranged meetings. As industry representatives, the NTA should ensure the ISCs are comprised of experts

and experienced people from the industry with a strong relationship with captains of their specific industry to advise them on how to monitor the quality of training in Namibia. These arrangements will enable the ISC to serve as a source of industry intelligence and gain trust and recognition from the industry they represent.

g) To improve the ISC effectiveness, the study also recommends the establishment of "ISC forum" on an annual basis to allow different ISCs to share their accomplishments and best practices among themselves and pave the way forward. This would serve as motivation to those with little understanding of their operation as ISC members and grow momentum, for self-motivation that will focus their meeting discussions on what matters relevant to them and their industries.

h) The process of skills development is vital and cannot be over emphasised. It is, therefore, recommended that the NTA should work closely with industry bodies like Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), labour unions and research units in the country to consolidate data that informs national and sectorial planning.

i) It is vital that stakeholders participate in stakeholders' activities organised by NTA to ensure proper guidance is provided to NTA on what best describes their industry. It is, therefore, recommended that companies or employers should participate and feel free to demand training and workshops for their staff to understand the need for training assessment that would assist them to identify the staff training needs based on their business objectives and developmental growth. This would help them to develop their employees and in return benefit from the national training levy.

In light of the above, it became obvious that the NTA needed to place stakeholder engagement at the heart of all its activities. This in itself will require proper attentions from the highest authority and, to ensure the recommendations identified are indeed implemented accordingly.

### 6.4 Recommendation for Future Research

The scope of this study was limited to the investigation of stakeholder engagement in light of the levels of stakeholder engagement developed by Arnstein in her early work of 1969. The findings of this research have resulted in a number of opportunities for future research as outlined in the paragraphs below.

The study reveals that stakeholder identification is very crucial and prone to oversight and ignorance by those in authority. Further study is recommended into comprehensive identification of stakeholders in skills development ending with a thorough stakeholder analysis to inform NTA engagement practices.

Many stakeholder engagement techniques fail because they do not meet the needs and interests of participating stakeholders. Future study should investigate the effectiveness of workshops and general meetings to enhance stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia.

Many stakeholders still question the role and responsibility of ISC in the process of skills development in Namibia. Further research could be directed to re-defining the roles and responsibility of ISCs in driving VET in Namibia from a supply driven to a demand driven system. Further challenges experienced are the regulation of registration of training providers that is being questioned by a number of stakeholders, including the internal stakeholders. Further research could be undertaken to ascertain the impact of registration on the provision of quality training in Namibia.

## 6.5 Conclusion

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the process of stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia, specifically considering the involvement of the NTA as the custodian of skills formation in Namibia. The study also explored a number of challenges experienced by both the NTA and its stakeholders and recommended changes that would serve as remedies to the current situation.

The research findings point out that the current stakeholder engagement is inclusive of a number of stakeholders as required by the Act. However, the process is not carried out successfully, as it should be. Identification and prioritising of key stakeholders for different programmes and activities needs serious attention.

Furthermore, the research provides evidence of the level of stakeholder engagement that is found to be consultation. In this regard, it is proposed that the level of stakeholder engagement should be advanced to partnership, where both parties function as key players in determining what is fit for purpose. The current level of stakeholder engagement varies from one activity to another and from one division to another, leaving the process of engagement confusing and not pleasant to most stakeholder groups. It is also advisable to the NTA executive management to ensure proper coordination of stakeholders' activities is developed and implemented accordingly.

A number of challenges were identified by the study ranging from lack of recognition for stakeholders needs, lack of communication with stakeholders and poor involvement of stakeholders in skills development activities. The study also recommends a number of changes required to mitigate the situation. These include the

recognition of stakeholders' inputs and commitment to skills development by all parties involved in the process. Finally, the study highlights the need to develop the stakeholder engagement strategy that is believed to remedy a number of challenges highlighted in the study.

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# 8. APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Research Questionnaire for Stakeholders

**POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA**

**Research Survey: Stakeholders**

Thank you for agreeing to complete my questionnaire. My name is Dalia Sheehamandje-Mwiya a student at the University of Science and Technology, (formerly known the Polytechnic of Namibia). This questionnaire forms part of a Master study in Leadership and Change Management. The focus of the questionnaire is on stakeholder engagement practices in skills development. The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) is the custodian of vocational education and skills development in Namibia and as such its mandate requires a high degree of stakeholder engagement at all levels. As a key stakeholder in this process, you are kindly requested to share your experience.

You have been selected to provide responses to these questions based on your role and position within the industry/business. All information will be treated with highest confidentiality and your anonymity will be guaranteed. The information gathered from your participation in this project will not only contribute to the success of the master study, but also contribute to consolidating stakeholder relationship in skills development in Namibia. The conclusion and the recommendation will be shared with the NTA to improve stakeholder relationship, please be honest with your responses in order for the study to reflect reality. Throughout the process, it is your right to withdraw your participation if you in any way feel threaten or your rights are being violated.

This questionnaire is divided into four sections

- *Section* A asks you and to identify your stakeholder group and indicate the division you engage with within the NTA structure;

*Section* B is for you to indicate the level of stakeholder engagement you have observed;

- In *section* C you may indicate the challenges you have experienced in the process of stakeholder engagement;
- *In section D*, you may suggest changes that you feel will be required to achieve a continuous and strong relationship between NTA and you as a stakeholder.

The questionnaire is expected to take approximately 10 -15 minutes of your time. Thank you once again for taking time to complete the questionnaire. Should you need any clarification regarding this questionnaire, please feel free to contact Dalia Sheehamandje via 0811484887 or 061-2078568 or at daliadarling@yahoo.com or dsheehamandje@nta.com.na .

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Please tick *(✓)* as appropriately on the box next to the option of your choice.

***You are allowed to tick (✓) only one option for questions 1 to 4.***

1. Your gender

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Female | | Male | |

2. Your age group

| **Age group** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15-20 years | | 21-30 years | |
| 31-40 years | | 41-50 years | |
| 51 and above | | | |

3. Your level of education

| **Highest Qualification** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| High School Certificates | | | |
| Diploma | | Post graduate | |
| First degree | | Professional | |

4. Please indicate your position in your business

| **Position** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Business owner | | Executive Management | |
| Senior Management | | Middle Management | |
| Non-Supervisory Official | | | |

**SECTION A: STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT**

***Engagement can be defined as the act of managing the relationship between an organisation and its stakeholders in order to enhance the effectiveness of its decisions, strategies and behavior.***

5. For how long have you been engaging with NTA?

| Less than 1 year | | 1 year | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 years | | 3-4 years | |
| 5 years or more | | | |

*6.* Which division/s at the NTA have you been engaging with**?** ***You are allowed to tick (✓) more than one option.***

| Assessment and Certification (ACD) | | Councils and Industry Engagement (CIED) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Product Development (PD) | | National Training Fund (NTF) | |
| VTCs Transformation | | Vocational Training Provider Support (VTP) | |
| Public Relation and Stakeholder Engagement (PR & SE) | | Other: …… | |

7. To which group of stakeholders do you or your business belong?

| | **Stakeholder group** | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. . | Government Ministries, Agencies, Department, etc. (*please specify*) …… | |
| 2. | Industry Skills Committees (ISCs) | |
| 3. | Employers Industries and the Business Community | |
| 4. | Institutions of Higher Learning | |
| 5. | Donor Funding Institutions | |
| 6. | Private Company Employees | |
| 7. | Industry Bodies/Associations and/Unions | |
| 8. | Assessors & Moderators, Technical Working Group (TWG) | |
| 9. | Vocational Training Providers, Trainers and Trainees | |
| 10 | Others, *Please specify:* …… | |

**SECTION: B**

The following question describes the levels of stakeholder engagement. Please tick next to the description that best fits your experience as a stakeholder of the NTA, in relation to stakeholder engagement in skills development in Namibia. ***You are allowed to tick (√) one option only.***

8. The level of stakeholder engagement in skills development through the Namibia Training Authority is best described as:

| **Levels of engagement** | | **Level description (please tick one only)** |
|---|---|---|
| **Manipulation** | | In this level, stakeholders are used as public relation tools. No input in the decisions made or information fed to them or information they are asked to feed to the public. |
| **Therapy** | | In this level, stakeholders experience arrogance and dishonest |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | treatment from the organisation. Instead of the organisation addressing the grievances or demands of stakeholders, stakeholders are subjected to a mass therapy in the supposed aim of curing them of their misconception. |
| **Informing** | | In this level, stakeholders receive information of what to do or what is happening in the industry, with information traffic from the organization to the stakeholders. |
| **Placation** | | In this level, stakeholders have a high level of participation. Although the organisation mostly reacts to agitation, it does give stakeholders some voice. |
| **Consultation** | | In this level, there is a high degree of stakeholder engagement. The stakeholders concerns are considered in decision making and reflect in the final result. This is a genuine tool for organisational development, but in many cases easily abused. |
| **Partnership** | | In this level, stakeholders exercise some power over their demands or interests. As from the beginning of the engagement process, the distribution of power is negotiated between the power holders (the organisation) and the stakeholders. |
| **Delegated Power** | | In this level, stakeholders are given power over delegated specific tasks or projects to complete. Parallel (equal) power is distributed between the stakeholders and the organisation to decide over a project. During the process, stakeholders retain the power to veto any decision where differences cannot be resolved by negotiation. |
| **Citizen Control:** | | This is the highest level of engagement. In this case, stakeholders have "that degree of power (or control) which guarantees that participants ... can govern a program ... be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which "outsiders" may change them". |

9. How do you rate your response to NTA invitations to attend stakeholders' consultative meetings/activities? (***Please tick (✔) only one option***.

☐ 0 %

☐ 25 %

☐ 50 %

☐ 75 %

☐ 100 %

***10.*** What mode of communication is mostly used by NTA to stakeholders? ***You are allowed to tick (✓) more than once***

| | **Methods** | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Telephone | |
| 2. | One on one meeting | |
| 3. | Email | |
| 4. | Fax | |
| 5. | Site visit | |
| 6. | General meetings/workshop/conferences | |
| 7. | Public media such as TV and Radio | |
| 8. | Industries Representative Bodies | |
| 9. | Industry Skills Committee (ISC) | |
| 10 | Website interaction | |
| 11 | Printed media (newsletter, brochures, flyers, etc.) | |
| 12 | Others, *please specify* ……. | |

**11.** The most common issues the NTA communicates to me or the business are? (***You are allowed to tick (✓) more than one.***)

☐ NTA interest

☐ Information to clear misconceptions

☐ Appreciations

☐ Requests for our inputs in decision making

☐ Verification of final products

☐ Others: ……

**12.** The most common issues I or the business communicates to NTA is **(*Please tick one (✓) as appropriate*)**

☐ Apology

☐ Personal/business interest

☐ Our service and Products

☐ Employees training needs

☐ Our plans

☐ Others: ……..

13. My strongest motivator to take part in the engagement activities organized by the NTA basically is (*Please tick one (✓) as appropriate*)

☐ Personal/business interest

☐ To fulfil my obligation

☐ Recognition by NTA

☐ Interest in training

☐ Sector skills development

☐ Other: ……

14. Overall, I am satisfied with the level of engagement in skills development from NTA.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## SECTION: C

The statements below describe the challenges experienced either by the NTA or the industry in relation to skills development in Namibia. Use the scale below to indicate your position of agreement.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

15. What challenges do you think affects the relationship between NTA and the stakeholders in the process of skills development?

| | **Challenges/ Problems** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **With regards to NTA** | | | | | |
| 1 | Stakeholder activities not properly coordinated in NTA | | | | | |
| 2 | Complicated bureaucracy within the NTA operation | | | | | |
| 3 | Delay in sending invitations to stakeholders from NTA | | | | | |
| 4 | Skills development activities are tightly regulated by the state and the NTA | | | | | |
| 5 | Feedback/input received through industry forums and meetings are not used effectively by the NTA | | | | | |
| 6 | Delay experienced in payments of service providers by the NTA | | | | | |
| | **With regards to Industry Skills Committee (ISC)** | | | | | |
| 7 | There is a limited understanding of ISC role by the industry | | | | | |
| 8 | The link between the ISC and the industry is not clear | | | | | |
| 9 | No communication between ISC and stakeholders | | | | | |
| 1 | ISC are not clear with their roles and responsibility | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **With regards to stakeholders** | | | | | |
| 1 | Employers have no confidence in Competency Based Education Training (CBET) graduates | | | | | |
| 1 | A gap exist between stakeholders needs and NTA program/activities | | | | | |
| 1 | There is poor attendance of industry forums by stakeholders | | | | | |
| 1 | There is little knowledge of NTA mandate among stakeholders | | | | | |

16. Additional challenges/problems

……

……

……

17. Overall, these challenges impact my ability to contribute to skills development

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**SECTION: D**

The question below requires you to indicate/suggest changes required to manage stakeholder relationship in the process of skills development. Use the scale below to indicate your position of agreement.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

18. What changes in stakeholder engagement are needed to improve stakeholder relationship in skills development?

| **Suggested Changes** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **With regards to NTA** | | | | | |
| 1. NTA to meet stakeholders regularly to increase commitment to training | | | | | |
| 2. NTA should conduct a thoroughly stakeholder analysis to understand stakeholders roles | | | | | |
| 3. NTA should take stakeholders decisions and inputs seriously to maintain a strong partnership with stakeholders | | | | | |
| 4. NTA should train all staff on the value of stakeholders in skills development | | | | | |
| 5. NTA to speed up internal processes to respond to stakeholders needs | | | | | |
| 6. NTA should engage stakeholders in planning processes of skills development activities | | | | | |
| 7. A need to develop a stakeholder engagement strategy by NTA | | | | | |
| **With regards to ISC** | | | | | |
| 8. ISC should update the industry on a regular basis | | | | | |
| 9. ISC should be independent bodies from the NTA | | | | | |
| 10. ISC should strongly influence the decisions made with regards to the industry | | | | | |
| 11. ISC should demonstrate knowledge of their sector they represent | | | | | |
| **With regards to your stakeholder group** | | | | | |
| 12. Stakeholders should use industry bodies and liaise with each other's | | | | | |
| 13. Stakeholders should attend to stakeholders forums to provide their inputs | | | | | |
| 14. Employers should commit to employees training needs | | | | | |
| 15. Stakeholders should understand their power to influence decisions made with regards to skills development in the country | | | | | |
| 16. Employers should advise on governance of training institutions | | | | | |

19. Overall, these changes would have a positive impact on skills development.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

20. What additional recommendations do you have to NTA in improving skills development in Namibia?

……

……

21. What additional recommendations do you have to ISC in improving skills development in Namibia?

……

……

22. What additional recommendations do you have to stakeholders in improving skills development in Namibia?

……

……

23. Any other comments?

……

……

**APPENDIX B: Permission from the Acting Chief Executive Officer**

**APPENDIX C: Tables and Figures**