



Utrecht University

The Relationship between Education and the
Labor Market in the Current Context of
Sub-Saharan Africa

Masterthesis Maatschappelijke Opvoedingsvraagstukken

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Date	June 24, 2013
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Abstract

This research analyzes the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. The human capital theory is used to examine this relationship. This research used scientific literature, policy documents and interviews with representatives of different sectors. Difficulties in this relationship exist on both the side of education as well as on the side of the labor market. There is a mismatch between the supply of education and the demand of the labor market in the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, attention is paid to skills and the attitude which adolescents must possess when making the transition to the labor market. Further, attention is paid to initiatives that exist to improve this relationship. A case study of the NICHE program sheds light on this relationship and reveals how they link education and training to the demand of the labor market. It can be concluded that improvements in the relationship between education and the labor market are necessary. It is important that sectors collaborate in order to reduce the mismatch.

Keywords: Relationship, Education, Labor Market, Sub-Saharan Africa, Mismatch

Samenvatting

Dit onderzoek analyseert de relatie tussen onderwijs en de arbeidsmarkt voor jongeren in Sub-Saharisch Afrika. De 'human capital' theorie wordt gebruikt om deze relatie te onderzoeken. Dit onderzoek heeft gebruik gemaakt van wetenschappelijke literatuur, beleidsdocumenten en interviews met vertegenwoordigers uit verschillende sectoren. Moeilijkheden in deze relatie bestaan aan zowel de kant van het onderwijs als aan de kant van de arbeidsmarkt. Er is sprake van een mismatch tussen het aanbod van onderwijs en de vraag van de arbeidsmarkt in de huidige context van Sub-Saharisch Afrika. Daarnaast is er aandacht besteed aan vaardigheden en de houding waarover adolescenten moeten beschikken wanneer ze de overgang naar de arbeidsmarkt maken. Verder is er aandacht besteed aan initiatieven die bestaan om deze relatie te verbeteren. Een case studie van het NICHE programma werpt licht op deze relatie en onthult hoe zij onderwijs en training koppelen aan de vraag van de arbeidsmarkt. Geconcludeerd kan worden dat verbeteringen in de relatie tussen onderwijs en de arbeidsmarkt nodig zijn. Het is van belang dat sectoren samenwerken om de mismatch te verkleinen.

Trefwoorden: Relatie, Onderwijs, Arbeidsmarkt, Sub-Saharisch Afrika, Mismatch

1. Introduction

The world population is growing. The number of adolescents is larger than it has ever been and in some parts of the world the youth population is still growing enormously. This is especially the case in Sub-Saharan Africa, where approximately 66 percent of the population is under the age of 25 (UNESCO, 2012). Attention must be paid to this (growing) youth bulge in Sub-Saharan Africa. Researchers assert that adolescents who are unemployed and have nothing to do are increasingly likely to join a rebellion as an alternative way of generating an income (Sommers, 2011). The presence of a large group of adolescents with no job prospects can affect the stability and safety of countries, that are already vulnerable. Furthermore, in recent years the global economic slowdown has intensified; the situation for adolescents in the labor market has become an especially gloomy prospect. Worldwide 73.8 million adolescents are unemployed and these numbers are expected to increase in the next coming years (ILO, 2013). Unemployment for adolescents is a greater risk factor than it is for adults. Adolescents often have little (work) experience compared to adults when seeking employment (Jacob, 2008). UNESCO (2012) reveals that one in eight young people between the ages of 15-24 years old is unemployed. Sub-Saharan Africa suffers, like many other parts of the world, from (youth) unemployment. The economies of the regions in Sub-Saharan Africa have failed to create enough jobs to address the needs of the growing youth population (Page, 2012). Participation rates at the labor market continue to decline, while unemployment rates remain high, threatening to increase.

Research of Pages and Stampini (2009) asserts that there is a relationship between education and the labor market. Education is referenced as a contributing factor to the decline of the unemployment rates. Through education, adolescents develop themselves and acquire skills and knowledge allowing them to participate productively in the labor market. An important transition in the life of adolescents is the one from education to the labor market (Ansell, 2005). According to Creed, Muller and Patton (2003) interventions are needed to prepare adolescents for this transition, so that they develop the necessary social skills, professional knowledge and career development planning abilities. Education also impacts labor market outcomes. Education is important when it comes to finding work and preparing adolescents for the labor market (Oreopoulos & Salvanes, 2009; Fasih, 2008). Adolescents who leave school too early often enter the labor market unprepared. These students experience difficulties in finding employment and are more likely to end up in low-quality jobs. Investing in youth when they are most able to learn

and develop themselves is important, especially because doing so will help move them and their families out of poverty (Garcia & Fares, 2008). Unfortunately, the way education is organized now it is not always sufficient enough to meet the demand of the labor market. Thisse and Zenou (2000) mention that unemployment is a result of the imbalance between the demand of the labor market and the supply of skills produced by education, also called skills mismatch. However, a sufficient match will result in productivity, earnings and work satisfaction of employers (Allen & Weert, 2007). Education does not always equip adolescents with the skills required for the labor market. As a result many adolescents cannot find work or the work they can attain often leaves them living below the poverty line (UNESCO, 2012). In this context, ILO (2013) reveals the term 'skills mismatch'. This is the mismatch between the skills of the employers and the requirements of the labor market. It is the imbalance, also mentioned by Thisse and Zenou (2000), that can lead to unemployment (Fasih, 2008). Many jobs becoming available in today's job market require a degree of competence and skill that adolescents do not possess. The global economy values people who possess basic cognitive skills, but even more valued are people who possess core competencies like critical thinking, problem solving and entrepreneurship (Fasih, 2008). These skills and competences are important in labor markets that are characterized by change and which need to adapt to developments in technology and working methods. This skills mismatch is actually a '21st century skills mismatch', because of the specific skills adolescents must possess in the current labor market. This as a result of globalization and technological changes happening to meet the changing demand of the labor market (Garcia & Fares, 2008). Globalization has its influence worldwide, including in Sub-Saharan Africa. *'Globalization can be defined as a significant reduction of time-scale in the movement of goods, capital and knowledge in a spherical space, in spite of the constant distance between source country and final destination, as a result of technological advances and increasing interdependence and connectivity of world markets'* (Fofack, 2009, p. 3). Due to globalization, there is more competition and more demand for a highly skilled and flexible work force, both in modern companies and small enterprises. Technological changes require the workforce in Sub-Saharan Africa to have a richer cognitive content, a higher skill levels and continuous enhancement of workforce skills (Johanson & Adams, 2004) to compete on a global level. Okoli (2012) asserts that Africa is marginalized in this global competition. Globalization highlights differences and can produce social inequality. Access to knowledge is a requirement for participation in the

global economy. The impact of the new information and communication technology changed the speed of production and the use of the knowledge economy (Okoli, 2012). Sub-Saharan Africa must go along with these changes to remain standing. Education is an important factor for sustainable development and the progress of human welfare. According to Okoli (2012) education is the key for countries to become high-level technology nations. Education is a productive investment, not only for an individual, but also for a whole country (Okoli, 2012). Adolescents should possess the right skills that are relevant and adaptable to the demand of the constantly evolving labor markets (Atchoarena, Philipps & Holmes, 2007). The relationship between education and the labor market is really important in this globalized world, especially for the growing youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa. The aim of this research is to describe the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. This research focuses on whether and what difficulties exist in the relationship between education and the labor market. Additionally, attention is paid to skills that are relevant for adolescents to facilitate the transition to the labor market and which initiatives exist to improve the relationship between education and the labor market. Attention is also paid to the role of the Dutch education policy. The aim of the case study is to analyze in what way the NICHE program pays attention to the relationship between education and the labor market. The research question that arises is: *How is the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa described in the scientific literature, which attempts exist to improve this relationship, how is this relationship elaborated in the Dutch policy and how does a case study shed light on this relationship?*

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Perspectives on the relationship between education and the labor market

Different perspectives exist to reveal the relationship between education and the labor market. Two of the perspectives are discussed below, followed by an analysis of the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The first perspective, that focuses on the relationship between education and the labor market, is the human capital theory. The human capital theory arose in the 1960s in an attempt to explain the relationship between the level of schooling received by an individual and the individual's success in the labor market (Allen & Weert, 2007). Human capital is based on a set

of factors including knowledge, qualifications, abilities and individual qualities, that influence and facilitate the economic, social and personal welfare of people (OECD, 2001; as cited in Nembot Ndeffo, 2010). Human capital is about the personal variables that affect the development of a person's career. Developing human capital is important in creating employability (McArdle, Waters, Briscoe & Hall, 2007). Human capital is helpful in the production of activities, goods and services (Nembot Ndeffo, 2010), which are all key contributors to the productivity of the labor market. One way to invest in human capital is through education. School is a place where adolescents develop their human capital. Human capital makes them more productive in the labor market and reflects in higher earnings (Becker, 1964; as cited in Allen & Weert, 2007). Education can be viewed as an instrument for employability, for the improvement of productivity and for an increase of earnings. Fasih (2008) states that education is a main determinant for good labor market outcomes. Education helps adolescents improve their opportunities for well paid, and more prestigious employment. Investment in education is necessary to develop human capital (Fasih, 2008). Training to develop the desired skills is a way of increasing human capital, that contributes to the economic growth of a country (Ansell, 2005). The World Bank and many governments are inspired by the human capital theory. Education is seen as an economic investment. More and more attention is being paid to the economic aims of education and the development of human capital reacting to a globalized economy (Bell & Stevenson, 2006). Criticism exists on this economic approach of education, because it neglects the context in which education takes place (Ansell, 2005). By focusing only on measurable outcomes it is assumed that schooling does not have impact on for example the informal sector. But this sector is important in Sub-Saharan Africa so attention must not only be paid to the measurable outcomes (Ansell, 2005). Another criticism of the theory is the effect of mismatches between the acquired skills and the skills that are required in the workplace. This has an adverse effect on the productivity and earnings according to Allen and Weert (2007). Another criticism is that some versions of the human capital theory suggest that only individual characteristics affect earnings at the labor market. However, job characteristics are also important (Sattinger, 1993).

The job assignment model is mentioned as a second perspective. This model focuses more on the importance of the role demand plays in the labor market (Allen & Weert, 2007) and focuses on the characteristics of particular jobs. The assignment model originates from the

analysis of determinants of income distribution (Tinbergen, 1951; as cited in Sattinger, 2012). Alternative forms of this model have been developed in recent years. The assignment model of Sattinger (1975, 2012) states that the most competent workers must work at the most complex jobs and that less competent workers must work at the more simple jobs (Allen & Weert, 2007). The right person with the right skills must work at the right place in order to optimize earnings and productivity. If this is not the case a mismatch can occur; a mismatch between the supply and demand of the labor market (Sattinger, 1993). Employees are affected by this mismatch between the requirement of the labor market and their own characteristics (Sattinger, 2012). A criticism of this model is that the supply and demand are not strictly determined but each responds to differences in wage (Sattinger, 1993). These differences in wage reconcile the distribution of jobs and employers by compensating the employees working in a place, that does not match their own characteristics (Sattinger, 2012).

This research examines the relationship between education and the labor market from the perspective of the human capital theory. The human capital theory has existed for some time; however it is a theory that is still used by many researchers. According to Lambrecht and Pawlina (2013) it is the importance of human capital that has increased in the economy. More and more attention is being paid to the role of human capital worldwide. It is also relevant to the amount of money and time that is invested in human capital through education (Lambrecht & Pawlina, 2013). Human capital has become more transferable and mobile over time. Human capital of adolescents is less tied to particular businesses and is more mobile in the world due to globalization (Lambrecht & Pawlina, 2013). The role of human capital and its importance changed and increased over time.

Context Sub-Saharan Africa

A well relationship between education and the labor market is important for adolescents in order to find employment. The focus in this research is on the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa, because the population is growing fast and the unemployment rates are high, especially among adolescents. The numbers of unemployment varies across countries. The youth unemployment rates in South-Africa are two and a half times higher than the rates of unemployment among adults (UNESCO, 2012). In Zimbabwe 43 percent of the population is between 15 and 24 years old, and the unemployment rates of adolescents are three times higher than the unemployment rates of the rest of the population (The World Bank, 2012). The African Development Bank

found that in eight of the twelve investigated Sub-Saharan African countries the unemployment rates among young females were higher than those among young males (Page, 2012).

There is a shortage of jobs especially in the formal sector. Many people end up in jobs in the informal sector or are underemployed (Taylor, 2009). The majority of the young workers in both rural and urban areas end up in self- and informal employment (Page, 2012), that is why it is important to focus on entrepreneurship, a topic that equips adolescents to start their own business (UNESCO, 2012). Another fact is that a lot of adolescents migrate from rural to urban areas in order to find better living conditions and more work opportunities (UNESCO, 2012). As a result of globalization more and more people grow up in urban areas (Ansell, 2005). Urban areas are often better served with school than rural areas, but schools can be overcrowded (Ansell, 2005). Because of the poor education quality and the poor access to education, many adolescents often lack the required skills, knowledge and competences for in the labor market. In Sub-Saharan Africa 36 percent of adolescents, 15-24 years old, never attended school and 28 percent of the adolescents completed primary school. Only eight percent of adolescents completed secondary school. This means that about 95 million of the adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa do not have the opportunity to learn the basic skills for working at the labor market (Page, 2012). Even when adolescents commit to more years of education it is difficult to find appropriate employment. Taylor (2009) asserts that labor markets in African countries are not configured and are sufficiently dynamic to eliminate the pressures of underdevelopment for the large population. Creative and consistent investments are necessary for the labor market to function appropriate in the current economy. According to Page (2012) reforms to the education system in Sub-Saharan Africa are necessary. It is important that one of the reforms focuses on post-primary education. School is one of the most important places where adolescents can develop the required skills and knowledge for the labor market, in order to compete globally. It requires changes be made to the curriculum, to commonplace teaching practices, and when it comes to making the involvement of the private sector necessary (Page, 2012). The relationship between education and the labor market is not always sufficient and improvements are necessary in Sub-Saharan Africa. The supply of education and the demand of the labor market must adapt to each other in order to improve the relationship. This research focuses on the relationship and tries to provide an answer to the main question: *How is the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa described in the scientific literature,*

which attempts exist to improve this relationship, how is this relationship elaborated in the Dutch policy and how does a case study shed light on this relationship?

In order to answer the main question, the sub-questions below follows:

- *Which difficulties are mentioned in the literature and by representatives from different sectors in the relationship between education and the labor market in the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa?*
- *What is mentioned in the (scientific) literature and by the representatives from different sectors about skills and attitude to facilitate the transition to the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa?*
- *Which Dutch initiatives are mentioned by the representatives from different sectors to improve the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa?*

Policy analysis:

- *How well did the Dutch education policy, from 1990 until now, anticipate the relationship between education and the labor market in the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa and how did the Dutch policy staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs evaluate this policy?*

Case study:

- *How well does the NICHE program anticipate the relationship between education and the labor market and is this sufficient enough in the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa?*

3. Method

This research examines the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, due to a lack of time and money, it is not possible to examine the aforementioned research questions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore data is collected through different methodologies. This is a multi-method triangulation; the different methodologies are complementary and enlarge the reliability of the research (Baarda, de Goede & Teunissen, 2009). A qualitative form of research is conducted to answer the different research

questions. This research has a descriptive character, where it elaborates on the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The first research method used in this research is in-depth interviews with representatives from different sectors. This semi-structured interview is used because the relationship between education and the labor market is broad and different topics were deepened in the interviews (Baarda et al., 2009). An interview is a flexible and adaptable way of research, but it is also a time-consuming way of collecting data (Robson, 2002). The most important topics and questions of the interviews were determined before doing the interviews (See Appendix 2 for these questions). The choice for the participants was selectively based on a database of two policy staff at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ten participants were approached via email and all of them replied. Only eight in-depth interviews were held. One of the two participants mentioned that the organization does not have information about Sub-Saharan Africa, only about the situation in the Netherlands. That is why this participant is not included in this research. In the other case two participants of one organization were approached and only one had time for an interview. Additionally, just before the interview started one participant who was impacted by familial circumstances, had to be replaced by another representative of the same organization. The different participants answered the questions from their own point of view, knowledge and experience (See Appendix 3 for a more detailed description of the participants). A second research method used was a qualitative analysis of the policy documents of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The use of these documents has a number of advantages, primarily that it is a faster and cheaper way of collecting data. The research situation is not disturbed and most of the time it allows better access to information (Baarda et al., 2009). A third research method used was a case study of the NICHE program. This is a program that pays attention to the connection of education to the labor market. This case study was used to describe a complex situation and the research phenomenon was studied in practice (Baarda et al., 2009). This case study described the situation of education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Procedure

Using email, the different participants were approached and appointments were made for the interviews. The interviews were conducted orally, as this method allows flexibility (Baarda et al., 2009). Before recording the interviews, permission of the participants was asked, where the

anonymity of the all the participants was guaranteed. All the participants agreed with being recorded during the interview, which was done using an MP3 player. Afterwards all the interviews were transcribed verbatim. The interviews were analyzed using NVivo, this is a method used for qualitative data analysis. Data reduction is used; fragments identified as irrelevant to the research are removed and not used in the analysis. Most of the time fragments are used instead of short sentences (Baarda et al., 2009). The different answers in the interviews are coded and labeled using the research questions and topics that were arranged in advance. All the interviews were coded separately. After doing this, all of the interviews were put together in one document. The different nodes made in NVivo were needed to answer the research questions. To answer the research questions all the answers of the participants were analyzed.

The research question of the Dutch education policy was answered using qualitative analysis of the policy documents. An important source of information was 'Education Matters: Policy review of the Dutch contribution to basic education 1999–2009' (IOB Evaluation, 2011). This research examined to what extent the Dutch policy paid attention to the relationship of education and the labor market. This was done by concrete searching for references of this relationship and terms related to this relationship. Information was also gathered through the interviews with some of the participants, especially the ones working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The participants gave information about the Dutch policy and the programs, which include a relationship between education and the labor market. Attention was also paid to the current situation of the Dutch education policy.

Different documents were analyzed for the case study. Documents of the Nuffic were used to gather information of the NICHE program. Evaluations of the NICHE program, made by other organizations, were also used. The different documents were used to see in what extent the NICHE program pays attention to the needs of the labor market and which role was reserved for education. Attention was briefly paid to the precursor of the NICHE program, in order to examine the effectiveness of the program. Information for this case study was also gathered through the interviews. Three of the participants were involved in the NICHE program and gave information for this case study.

4. Results: Analysis of literature and interviews

This research includes interviews from different representatives. The following section discusses difficulties in the relationship between education and the labor market according to the literature and the representatives. Difficulties exist on both the side of education as well as on the side of the labor market. Some of the representatives mentioned more difficulties than others, but in general the representatives were unanimous. Striking answers from representatives are mentioned explicitly. Further, this section discusses skills and the right attitude, that are important to facilitate the transition to the labor market according to the literature and according to the representatives. It further describes Dutch initiatives mentioned by the representatives, that focus on the improvements of the relationship between education and the labor market.

4.1 Analyze of difficulties in the relationship

Education system

The relationship between education and the labor market is not always sufficient enough; difficulties exist in this relationship. A first and important problem mentioned in the literature is that adolescents are not well prepared for the transition to the labor market. Preparation is important because it helps adolescents find suitable employment (Creed & Hughes, 2013). Adolescents can be prepared through education. Education is an important instrument used in the fight against poverty because it can help individuals access better jobs (Ivanova, 2005). Unfortunately, the access to education is not always good. Four of the representatives mentioned access to education as a significant difficulty. *'On the other side you see that education is really expensive, or it is not in the neighborhood or it is really expensive. It is just not always costless'* (Coordinator NGO program). Education in Sub-Saharan Africa is not available to everybody. Page (2012) mentions that the majority of adolescents do not have the opportunity to go to school. Three of the representatives explained that for individuals originating in Sub-Saharan Africa, the financial status of a student and his family is sometimes more important than the intelligence of the student. Even if adolescents have access to education, the dropout rates remain high. Three of the representatives mentioned that this is a problem in Sub-Saharan Africa. A large part of the adolescents do not finish their secondary education or even their basic education. One of the representatives mentioned that these rates are especially high in the rural areas. *'Why walking every day five kilometers to school, if you see that your brother who finished*

school walks with the cows and nothing else, that makes no sense' (Senior Evaluator). Further mentioned is the overall poor quality of the education system in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the representatives, the quality of education in most of the Sub-Saharan African countries lag behind. Another difficulty mentioned by four representatives is the capacity of schools. In Sub-Saharan Africa, schools are often characterized by overpopulated classrooms and a shortage of essential materials. One of the representatives explained: *'How do you teach in a classroom with a hundred children, who do not have books, chairs to sit on, and no pens to write with?'* (Senior Evaluator). According to all the representatives the quality of education depends on the role of the teacher. Many teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa are not well educated and do not have fundamental experience in the labor market that would allow them to teach the students everything about the jobs. *'That is the problem in the education of teachers in vocational education, most of the time the teachers have not worked in a factory themselves'* (Senior Policy Officer Ministry). The representatives emphasized the importance of teachers having some practical experience, that they can communicate to their students in order to prepare adolescents for the labor market. Three of the representatives suggested that teachers be trained through short internships in the labor market so they can tell the students what it is going to be like, and prepare them for the labor market. One of the representatives mentioned that it takes generations to change this whole system for teachers. *'We know that we talk about generations, because you have to train the teachers in a different way'* (Senior Policy Adviser). New teachers must acquire practical knowledge and skills and this takes some time. Five of the representatives mentioned that there is a strong focus on theory in the education system in Sub-Saharan Africa and that there is not much attention given to practice. This affects the relationship with the labor market because adolescents do not get the practical experience that they need in the labor market. Because of the poor quality of schools, many individuals leave school without a certain level of skills, which are important in making the transition to the labor market (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010).

In the interviews special attention was given to the role of vocational education. The representatives mentioned vocational education as the place to acquire skills and knowledge for making the transition to the labor market. However not many adolescents follow this form of education. All representatives mentioned that this is because of the image of vocational education. *'Parents do not want to send their children to vocational education, because it is only*

secondary education. A child must go to the university and not to vocational education. That is the same as in the Netherlands' (Senior Policy Officer Ministry). Further, the representatives mentioned that vocational education is an expensive form of education and it does not guarantee success in the labor market. Other authors mention that the set up for vocational education and training is not adequate enough. This must change in order to reduce the mismatch in the supply and demand (Sekwati & Narayana, 2011). Thus, improvements are necessary on the side of education, especially improvements in the quality of education.

Labor market

Beside improvements to the education system, improvements to the labor market are also necessary. A notable difficulty is the growing youth bulge in Sub-Saharan Africa and the fact that there are not enough jobs available for these adolescents (Page, 2012). One representative mentioned: *'This means that every year many young people enter the labor market, but the labor market is not tailored to this youth bulge'* (Senior Evaluator). Additionally, many businesses do not have confidence in the education systems. According to two representatives, businesses are skeptical of the quality of education because graduates do not possess the required skills, knowledge and attitude. That is why the labor market prefers to train the students themselves with the right skills, knowledge and attitude for their own business. However, a difficulty with this is that they educate the students narrowly, for their specific business purposes only. Another difficulty mentioned by two of the representatives is that the labor market does not always take the time for students, for example by providing a quality internship *'Because time is money'* (Senior Policy Officer NGO). Furthermore, the formal labor market is very small in most Sub-Saharan African countries, and many adolescents are forced to find work in the informal sector. The representatives mentioned that the problem with the informal sector is that they often do not want to organize themselves so it is difficult to become involved. Fasih (2008) asserts that the labor market demands individuals be capable of independently thinking, communicating and utilizing entrepreneurial skills. Almeida, Behrman and Robalino (2012) assert that employers are looking for employees who possess behavioral skills, like teamwork, creativity, diligence and entrepreneurship. Research indicates that the private sector sees different skills, such as teamwork, communication and problem solving as the key to tapping into the current economy. Still, the private sector feels that adolescents do not learn these necessary skills in school (Jayaram, 2012).

Skills mismatch

A problem with education is that it is often not linked to getting a job, but rather focuses on the individual's need instead of the requirements of the labor market (Ivanova, 2005). The idea of an education-job gap is becoming more and more widespread. This education-job gap means that education does not meet the needs of the informal sector, the labor market (Kuepie, Nordman & Roubaud, 2009). Education and the labor market are not always well connected to each other. Economists assert that this is an imbalance between the demand for and the supply of human capital (Handel, 2003). The skills of the workers lag behind those that employers in the current economy seek. The representatives recognized this mismatch for the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa. *'The biggest problem is the link between the needs of the labor market and what education provides'* (Senior Policy Officer Ministry). Two forms of mismatch are mentioned. Firstly, the qualitative mismatch on the side of education. *'Education is irrelevant, the requested skills are not taught'* (Education expert). When graduates enter the labor market they often do not possess the requested skills for the labor market. Further training is necessary to be employable. Next to this is the quantitative mismatch, in which case there is a great demand for graduates in a particular sector but not enough people are attracted to those jobs; a shortcoming of employees in these sectors will emerge. Attention must be paid to those sectors in order to attract employees. The Economic Commission for Africa (2005) reveals that the skills mismatch is driven by the change in the demands of the labor market and the inability of the education systems to adapt to these changes. The public sector in Sub-Saharan Africa played an important role for employment. The role of the public sector is declining in most of the African countries and there is more demand for employment in the private sector. However, this private sector demands different skills, that adolescents do not possess. The education and training systems in Africa do not adapt sufficiently or quickly enough to these changes where a skills mismatch occurs (Economic Commission for Africa, 2005).

Six of the representatives mentioned that it is important that the labor market and the education system in Sub-Saharan Africa work together and actively communicate with each other in order to improve this mismatch. Schools and the labor market often do not communicate with each other about their expectations. More contact between these two is recommended. Five of the representatives mentioned that it is important to involve the labor market in Sub-Saharan Africa in the development of the curriculum, so that students can learn the skills, knowledge and

attitude demanded by the labor market. It is important to invest in the education systems of Sub-Saharan Africa, to meet the demands of the labor market. Private sector involvement in education and training is important for the development of skills (Dunbar, 2013). Even though adolescents follow multiple levels of education, they are still not well prepared for the transition to the labor market. The education systems must change and be restructured to teach adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa the skills they need for the labor market (Page, 2012). Fasih (2008) mentions that improvements in basic and post basic education must be made to meet the demands of the labor market. Skills requested include critical thinking, problem solving and behavioral skills. The curriculum of the education system must adapt to develop skills demanded by the labor market. Page (2012) mentions that a more market-oriented approach of training is needed, allowing employers to shape the training in a manner that is meets the demand of the labor market.

4.2 Skills and attitude to facilitate the transition to the labor market

Education prepares adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa for the world of work. It is relevant to know which aspects facilitate the transition to the labor market. This research focused on skills and attitude to facilitate this transition. According to the representatives it is important that adolescents possess knowledge, different skills and the right attitude. A problem mentioned by the representatives is that most of the adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa lack practical skills to make the transition to the labor market. The following section describes what skills are necessary to possess in order to facilitate the transition to the labor market.

Skills

According to the Education For All Global Monitoring Report: Youth and skills: Putting education to Work of UNESCO (2012) three forms of skills are important for adolescents to possess: the Foundation skills, the Technical and Vocational skills and the Transferable skills (UNESCO, 2012). The different skills are complementary to each other. Foundation skills, include the basic skills like numeracy and literacy. These skills are important for getting work that pays enough to meet daily needs (UNESCO, 2012). The World Bank also mentions these basic skills: literacy (the ability to read and write) and numeracy (the ability to solve simple math tasks and sums). The affect of an individual's ability to utilize these skills on the individual's personal income is positive, these skills affect the economic situation of people in a good way

(Fasih, 2008). Research in the United States reveals that literacy plays an important role in increasing the probability of employment (Rivera-Batiz, 1992). In the research of McIntosh and Vignoles (2001) better math skills are associated with higher employment. Furthermore, it is mentioned that basic skills are crucial to functioning successfully in modern work places (Lundetræ, Gabrielsen & Mykletun, 2010). Foundation skills can be learned through primary and lower-secondary education or through second-change education for those who missed out on formal education (UNESCO, 2012). Three of the eight representatives mentioned specifically the importance of basic skills like reading skills, writing skills and mathematical skills in order to be successful in the labor market. According to the representatives are these skills are the basis of the skills required to make the transition to the labor market.

The Technical and Vocational skills include the technical know-how many jobs require, from growing vegetables to using a machine, or using a computer. These skills can be acquired, for example, through upper secondary education, internships and work-based training (UNESCO, 2012); adolescents can learn these skills by gaining first-hand experience. The development of technical and vocational education in Africa is important for the development of societies and countries. Technical and vocational education and training is a way of structuring the movement from adolescence to adulthood. It is important that adolescents adapt to the world of work to acquire a job (Nze & Ginestié, 2012). Four of the eight representatives also mentioned technical skills as important for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to them, this includes not only how to use one machine but also how to use different machines, the ability to adapt to different situations and the ability to use different machines than the ones at school. Thus, technical knowledge is important.

The Transferable skills are skills that people need to adapt to different work environments, to improve their opportunities to stay in paid labor. The Transferable skills include different skills like: the ability to solve problems, communicating ideas and information, creativity, leadership, conscientiousness and a demonstration of entrepreneurial capabilities. The Report mentions these skills can be acquired through good education. These skills can be further developed through upper secondary education and training and for example work-based programs. However, employers mention that adolescents lack these transferable skills (UNESCO, 2012).

Other literature mentions '21st century skills' as important skills to facilitate the transition

from education to the labor market. The 21st century skills include skills that are important for people living in the 21st century. Skills that are important in current labor markets, but also in daily life. Research of Duran, Yaussy and Yaussy (2011) mentions the 21st century skills, including: communication, working together in teams, creativity and the ability to solve problems. Other 21st century skills mentioned: innovation, responsibility, global awareness, intercultural skills and mastery of academic knowledge (Duran, Yaussy & Yaussy, 2011). Research of Voogt and Roblin (2010) mentions also the ICT skills as important. The 21st century skills can be summarized in four C's: Creativity, Critical thinking, Communication and Collaboration (OECD, 2012).

Further research reveals the employability skills. These skills include the availability of work and individual work capacity. It concludes knowledge in entrepreneurship, creativity, innovation, interpersonal skills and the possibility to learn (Kearn, 2001; as cited in Mustapha, Syed Mohamad & Seri Bunian, 2012). Six of the eight representatives mentioned it is important that adolescents possess entrepreneurial skills. According to them, these skills are important because they allow adolescents to start their own business and create their own employment in a world with high unemployment rates. One representative mentioned that these entrepreneurial skills are important but it is not possible that every adolescent becomes an entrepreneur because it will create a surplus. Balance is necessary.

Other researchers reveal soft skills. Soft skills can be defined as the non-technical skills, the ability to deal with the emotions of others and of the individual (Thompson, Hurrel & Scholarios, 2013). Important skills in the current labor markets include communication, the ability to solve problems, leadership, working together (in teams) and creativity (DfEE, 2000; as cited in Vincent & Grugulis, 2009). Soft skills are related to interpersonal and intrapersonal skills to cope with different situations and contexts (Hurrel, 2009; as cited in Cullen, Nickson, Warhurst, Commander & Hurrel, 2012). These skills are important in every kind of job, both at the bottom and the top of the labor market (Brown & Hesketh, 2004; as cited in Cullen, et al., 2012). According to Heckman and Kautz (2012) soft skills can produce success and predict success in life. Five of the representatives mentioned the importance of these skills for adolescents.

It is notable that the different terms for skills have agreements in the type of skills included. Communication skills, the ability to solve problems, collaboration, creativity and

critical thinking are often mentioned as important. Four of the representatives mentioned explicitly the communication skills and the ability to work in teams as really important to make the transition to the labor market. It is important that adolescents possess these skills so that they can adapt to different (work) environments (UNESCO, 2012). Adaptability is an important factor to make the transition to the labor market. Savickas and colleagues (2009) reveal that jobs are now much less defined and predictable than previously. Employers have to deal with major challenges in dealing with changes in the workplace, also due to globalization. Adaptability is important for adolescents. Adaptability plays a role in the developmental tasks and the changes individuals encounter and in the coping strategies they use to deal with these changes (Hartung, Porfeli & Vondracek, 2008). Furthermore, adolescents may also use this adaptability not only for the labor market but also for other aspects in life.

Attitude

The different skills also include a certain level of knowledge. Schools can provide individuals with the necessary knowledge (UNESCO, 2012). According to the representatives TVET can provide individuals the practical knowledge for working in a specific sector. Additionally, attitude is also important for employment. Researchers found that a positive attitude affects the employment probability of workers (Mohanty, 2012). A person with a positive attitude sees the brighter side of situations and this attitude brings optimism to life. This seems to increase the employment probability. To improve the employment probability it is necessary to include value education designed to improve the attitude of people (Mohanty, 2010). Education can be an important aspect to learn this attitude. Another research asserts that students with a poor attitude (and self-esteem) are less likely to be employed and often receive lower wages on average (Wadell, 2006). Thus the right attitude is important to help students realize their full potential (Mohanty, 2010). Further perceived attributes of adolescents, like the opportunity to adapt (adaptability) are valued as important in some employment situations. O'Higgins (2001) reveals adaptability a youthful quality. It is important that youth can adapt to different situations. The integration of skills, attitude and knowledge is important for employability and adequate functioning on the job (Baartman & de Bruijn, 2011).

According to the representatives it is also important that adolescents take the initiative. It is mentioned that adolescents must think before they act. Three of the representatives mentioned that education in Sub-Saharan Africa does not challenge adolescents to be creative and to take

the initiative. It is important that adolescents learn how to do this so that they can work properly in the labor market. The attitude of the adolescents is important. According to the representatives adolescents must be motivated and be active instead of passive. Adolescents need to have the curiosity in order to develop themselves and open up for guidance of others. This includes the ability to adapt to different situations, which is really important for adolescents in this globalized world.

4.3 Context

It is important to take the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa into account. Globalization has its influence in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to one of the representatives the labor market responds to globalization. Globalization creates more competition worldwide. *'If you want to distinguish as a company, if you want to participate in the competition, than you (the company) must have an added value, a distinctive service that you offer'* (Education expert). Due to globalization more and other knowledge is necessary for Sub-Saharan Africa to keep up with the rest of the world. According to one of the representatives globalization means connectedness. Hereby technology, ICT, is really important for trade and entrepreneurs to communicate with the rest of the world. According to four representatives migration is an important factor as a result of globalization. *'An aspect of globalization is the movement of people, labor migration'* (Policy Officer NGO). Employees move to other countries and African countries themselves also attract employees from other countries. *'For Ghana is known that the most Ghanaian doctors work in the United States, Canada and Australia'* (Policy Officer NGO). Talented people move out of the country, which is not good for the countries themselves. Beside that people, businesses or even whole sectors can move out of Sub-Saharan Africa to other parts of the world. Sometimes it is less expensive to produce products in Asia instead of in Africa. Globalization affects the context of Sub-Saharan Africa and it is important to take that into account.

4.4 Initiatives to improve the relationship between education and the labor market

Initiatives that focus on the relationship are relevant to improve the transition to the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. The following section discusses some initiatives from the Netherlands mentioned by the representatives. One of these initiatives: the NICHE program is explained in the case study. Three of the representatives mentioned the Job and Business Services, an initiative from the Dutch organization 'Woord en Daad'. The Job and Business

Services is an approach to enhance the link between school and employment (Phlix & Neeb, 2012). This is an employment agency that prepares adolescents for the labor market. The adolescents are supported in finding internships in order to find a job in the future. Managers of the Job and Business Services ensure that these adolescents are accompanied during their internships. Afterwards they help adolescents in finding a job or in starting their own business. *'So it is a kind of employment agency where student and employer can meet. They also have a track and trace system to see where their students end up and they have a huge success rate'* (Coordinator NGO). Together with the private sector market competence needs analyses are done in order to discuss the existing curricula. The private sector is asked to give students opportunities for internships (Phlix & Neeb, 2012). It is important to involve the labor market in the education system and to guide adolescents in order to find employment. Evaluation of this approach reveals that some students do find jobs or start their own business with the aid of the Job and Business Services (Phlix & Neeb, 2012).

Another initiative is Learn4Work from Edukans. Learn4Work tries to facilitate the transition from education to the labor market. This program focuses on the improvement of the quality of vocational education and an improved access to vocational education in Africa. *'Education, vocational training and the labor market are inextricably linked to each other, are connected to each other. Education prepares students for the labor market, but you cannot train people without knowing wherefore you train them. So there has to be feedback in terms of what you need on many different levels'* (Coordinator NGO). The program uses a demand-driven strategy. The skills demanded by the labor market are leading in the projects. The demand of the local private labor market is the starting point of the interventions (Learn4Work, 2012). (See Appendix 4 for the demand-driven strategy of Learn4Work). An evaluation report of Learn4Work1 shows that conducting a labor market survey, to summarize the needs of the labor market, is important to improve the quality of the relationship between education and the labor market. It resulted in an increased number of graduates finding employment (Spoelder & Zanen, 2011). Learn4Work works on improving the connection of education to the labor market although they recognize this was sometimes difficult during Learn4Work1. The follow up, Learn4Work2, has an increased focus on the involvement of the private sector.

Three of the representatives also mentioned a qualification framework that exists in a lot of the Sub-Saharan African countries. The goal of these frameworks is to work demand-driven,

searching for the demand of the labor market and involving the labor market. Together with the labor market competence profiles are made. The National Qualifications Frameworks are an instrument for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies (Tuck, 2007). This framework provides an overview of the existing and the new qualifications: the learning outcomes. It describes what someone should know and be able to do. This can be learned in school but also through internships (Tuck, 2007). (See appendix 5 for the Qualification Framework Learning Outcomes Based). The foundations of this quality framework are labor market surveys. Together with different representatives of the labor market job profiles are defined, descriptions of various jobs are made. This is the occupational standard. The occupational standard is the basis for the qualification standard. *'The occupational standard describes the function of someone who has experience in the world of work, most of the time with four or five year of experience'* (Education Expert). The qualification standard is a translation of the profile for someone who starts in the world of work, often without experience. It is about what the labor market expects of somebody's knowledge at the end of a learning process. *'What requirements can the labor market make and what is feasible for education, what is realistic to do in education?'* (Education Expert). These standards are important for deciding the final curriculum of education. Through education adolescents can be prepared for the demand of the labor market; this is the teaching and learning part. According to one of the representatives it is important to acknowledge prior learning and acquired competences of the adolescents; competences and knowledge that are acquired through for example work experience, but through the informal way. *'It is the recognition or accreditation of prior learning'* (Education Expert). Many African countries already use these kinds of frameworks. These frameworks are interesting because they take the demand of the labor market into account and try to adapt the education system and its curricula.

5. Analysis of the Dutch education policy

The previous sections described parts of the Dutch education policy and initiatives that focus on the relationship between education and the labor market. The following section discusses more explicit how the Dutch education policy anticipated on the relationship between education and the labor market from 1990 until now. Education has been an important aspect of the Dutch education policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The following section also discusses briefly

how the Dutch policy staff evaluates this policy.

Education is a human right which is laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DCO/OO), 2000). Since the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 international attention was paid to basic education. The focus was on the social and developmental functions of education and on the economic function of education (IOB Evaluation, 2011). Before 1990 the focus of the Dutch policy mainly was on higher and vocational education. After the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 more attention was paid to basic education. Basic education is defined as follows: *'Basic education meets people's learning needs and enables them to acquire the basic knowledge and the essential skills and values they need for their personal and social development, and to play a useful role in society'* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DCO/OO), 2000). Dutch attention to education started with the policy document: Education and Development cooperation in the 1990s. For a number of years education was a really important aspect in the Dutch development cooperation. Since the letter of Rosental and Knapen (2010), during Rutte 1, education was not a spearhead anymore. Four 'new' spearheads were created: Water, Food security, Security and (international) Legal Order and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights. Education was no longer a priority in the Dutch policy. However, education can serve the four spearheads. An example is education for farmers in order to create food security. For education is not a priority in the current policy, programs that focus on education are phased out. In the four spearheads attention is also paid to private sector development (Rosental & Knapen, 2012).

Till 2010 the Dutch education policy mainly focused on basic education and basic skills. The relationship between education and the labor market is not clearly mentioned in the documents that are studied. However the IOB Evaluation (2011) mentioned that in many developing countries the returns to primary education are falling due to the low quality of education and changes in the demand of skills for the labor market. The Dutch policy mainly focused on basic education. Further the IOB Evaluation (2011) asserts that basic education alone is not enough for adolescents to be successful in the labor market. The economic benefits of only primary education are few (IOB Evaluation, 2011). The labor market asserted that students who only finished primary school are not suitable for employment, because they do not possess the cognitive and basic life skills that are needed for the labor market (IOB Evaluation, 2011). This

has to deal with the quality of education and learning. Problems exist in the motivation and standards of teachers, the curriculum and education management (IOB, Evaluation, 2011). The labor market requires secondary education on top of basic education. The IOB Evaluation (2011) revealed that basic education alone is not sufficient enough. It is noteworthy that the focus of the Dutch education policy still was on basic education.

Two of the representatives mentioned the role of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) as leading for the Dutch education policy. The focus of MDG goal number two is on universal primary education: *'Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality'* (UNESCO, 2012). From this MDG the focus of the Dutch policy was primary on basic education. One representative mentioned it is a defect to focus only on basic education. According to this representative the MDG's do not take into account what is after basic education. The MDG's do not focus on secondary or tertiary education, but mainly on basic education. This is the same for the Dutch education policy. Strikingly, basic education alone is not enough to meet the demands of the labor market.

According to one of the representatives more attention in the Dutch policy is paid to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and skills development since 2005. TVET focuses also on the relationship between education and the labor market. Skills development is important to enable participation in the labor market, because it provides knowledge, competences and attitudes for the students (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). One of the representatives mentioned that the Dutch education policy does not focus explicitly on the labor market, but that the policy used the term 'manpower'. *'And it is not manpower to sit still, right? It is to do something'* (Policy Officer NGO). Thus, there is some focus on this relationship in the education policy, but it is not always mentioned explicitly. It is noteworthy that although the focus is not explicitly in the policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has supported and still supports different programs that focus on this relationship. For example through the NICHE program and Learn4Work. These programs do not focus on basic education only but on the demands of the labor market in order to prepare adolescents for the world of work.

In the current policy education is not a spearhead anymore. Programs that focus on education are phased out (Ploumen, 2013). Thus, in the current policy there is no role for education and the relationship with the labor market. Attention for education is only possible in

order to serve one of the current spearheads. According to the representatives renewed attention should be paid to education because it is an important basis for almost anything in life. However the role of the education policy now is not as it was before. Other ways must be found to pay attention to this important subject, for example with the help of other donor countries and the developing countries themselves.

6. Case study

The Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education (NICHE) is a program of the Nuffic. NICHE focuses at strengthening institutional capacity in developing countries for providing post-secondary education and training (Nuffic, 2010). NICHE focuses on the four spearheads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Water, Food security, Security and (international) Legal Order and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights. The aim of the NICHE program is to link education and training to the demands of the local labor market (Nuffic, 2010). *'A NICHE project is always a collaborative between a requesting party in one of the partner countries and a Dutch institution'* (Senior Policy Officer Ministry). Knowledge and experience of Dutch organizations is used in combination with national and regional expertise (Phlix & Neeb, 2012). According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012) this is a strength of the program. NICHE supports at different levels. For example through staff development, curriculum development, strengthening the connection with the labor market and mainstreaming ICT in TVET (Nuffic, 2010). The TVET systems in Africa differ between countries. Notable is that the quality of training in most of the TVET systems is low. There is often more emphasis on theory than on skills development in training (Konayuma, 2008). Further the TVET programs often do not meet the demands of the labor market, they are not demand-driven (African Union, 2007). Therefore NICHE focuses on linkages between the demand of the labor market and the supply of the TVET institutions (Nuffic, 2010). (See Appendix 6 for steps taken by the NICHE program when interventions are planned in TVET). The NICHE program works from a demand-driven perspective in the Dutch partner countries. In that way NICHE anticipates on the relationship between education and the labor market. NICHE is a relevant and effective instrument for strengthening TVET in a specific sector (Phlix & Neeb, 2012). Factors that lead to the success of the NICHE program are the involvement of the private sector, the collaboration with the Dutch embassies and the presence of a national strategy for TVET and for higher education (Phlix &

Neeb, 2012). A remark of the NICHE program is that it only focuses on post-secondary education. In many of the Sub-Sahara African countries the access to secondary education is low (Phlix & Neeb, 2012), so attention must be paid to all forms of education.

An example of a NICHE project that focuses on this relationship is 'Development of a Technical-Professional Training System for the Management of Services and Infrastructure of Water and Sanitation' in Mozambique. This project focuses on the spearhead Water and Sanitation and the Nuffic awarded this tender to CINOP. *'Cinop is the implementer of this program. We do this often in a consortium, a group of organizations' (Consultant NGO)*. This project aims to strengthen the capacity to deliver graduates and services for the water sector in Mozambique. The focus of the project is to deliver graduates with the required skills, knowledge and competence for the water sector. These graduates learn practical, theoretical and gender skills through the education programs (NICHE, 2012). The program trains students and delivers graduates in order to meet the demands of the sector, in this case the water sector. It tries to enhance the employability of the graduates in order to achieve a higher degree of financial independence (CINOP, 2012).

The precursor of the NICHE program is NPT (The Netherlands Programme for the Institutional Strengthening of Post-secondary Education and Training). NPT used the 'business incubator' to strengthen the link of education to the labor market in order to create employment in Sub-Saharan Africa. The business incubator is a facility especially for micro-firms to help them survive and grow during the first phases, when the firms are the most vulnerable (Gondwe & Walenkamp, 2011). This business incubator is especially for entrepreneurs starting their own business. It provides assistance, access to equipment and finance and different technical support services. Different incubator services exist; for example internet services, learning presentation skills, a link to venture capital and training programs for the starting companies (Al-Mubarak & Busler, 2011), access to computers, access to training rooms and access to office space (Gondwe & Walenkamp, 2011). *'The business incubator is for students so that they can start, plus advice and guidance to start their own business' (Senior Policy Officer NGO)*. The students receive start capital and guidance from professionals, for example from their teachers, in order to improve the transition to the labor market. The NICHE program focuses on the relationship between education and the labor market through training and education that meets the demands

of the labor market and through increasing labor market responsiveness of the education programs (CINOP, 2012). Different NICHE programs are active in Sub-Saharan Africa.

7. Discussion

This research examines the relationship between education and the labor market for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. The literature and the representatives reveal that this relationship is not always sufficient enough. In this research difficulties on both the side of education and on the side of the labor market are mentioned.

As indicated in the introduction of this research it is important to focus on the growing youth population and the imbalance between the supply of education and the demand of the labor market (Thisse & Zenou, 2000) in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is difficult for adolescents to make the transition to the labor market because of the ‘skills mismatch 21st century’. Adolescents are not well prepared for the labor market and do not possess the required skills for labor markets in the 21st century. According to both the literature and the representatives this mismatch plays an important role in the relationship. Further, the labor market in Sub-Saharan Africa must keep standing in a globalized world with a lot of competition. Employees with the right skills are needed to compete with other companies (Johanson & Adams, 2004). The role of globalization is huge worldwide, including in Sub-Saharan Africa. This research reveals the importance to take the impact of globalization into account when analyzing the relationship between education and the labor market. An important question is whether it is good to focus excessively on skills for the 21st century; like problem solving and presentation skills, what is done by some researchers. It is important to possess the presentation skills but it must not be the only yardstick to what future employers are measured. It is also important that someone is good in a specific field of work. It is possible that other important aspects are forgotten, when there is too much focus on skills for the labor market and economy. However these skills are really important for the current economy, thus attention should be paid to all aspects of this topic.

The results of this research confirm that improvements in the relationship are necessary. In addition to the literature the representatives reveal the importance of collaboration between education and the labor market. Schools and businesses must collaborate to set a curriculum that meets the demands of the labor market. This is one of the most important aspects in improving the relationship between education and the labor market. It is not clearly mentioned in the

literature but according to the representatives more emphasize should be paid to collaboration between the education and the labor market.

This research and in particular the representatives confirm the importance of getting practical experience for adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. This experience is really important in preparing them for the labor market. Adolescents often have little or lack (work)experience (Jacob, 2008). Internships are mentioned as an example to acquire this practical experience in the work field. It is important that the labor market gives opportunities for internships. This research confirms that not only changes in education are necessary but also in the labor market. The labor market must give students the opportunity to obtain practical experience. The labor market can also train students themselves. Hereby it is important that students are trained broadly. This research argues that it is important to pay attention to skills, knowledge and attitude not for one specific business but in order to prepare adolescents for different businesses in the labor market. After finishing a training adolescents must have the opportunity to work for different business and not for one specific business. On the other hand it is quite understandable that the labor market does not want to train students too broad, because they can lose skilled and trained labor to competing businesses.

Additionally, Sub-Saharan Africa is a part of the world with many different countries. Thus, the relationship must be seen within the current context of the countries. Not every country is the same and not every country experiences the exact same problems in the relationship between education and the labor market. For future research it is recommended to address the issues of one specific country. However in general it can be said that many of the Sub-Saharan African countries do face the same difficulties in this relationship. Striking is the situation in South-Africa. This county has a larger formal sector and according to the representatives education and internship are often better organized than in other Sub-Saharan African countries. This research addresses the importance to pay attention to the current context of each country, in order to give an appropriate impression of the situation.

Unfortunately, education is not a spearhead anymore; there is no money available for this important issue. Although there is no money available, attention can be paid to education through the other spearheads of the Dutch policy. It is important that the policy staff and embassies are (more) aware of this. In the countries themselves it is important to focus more on the Qualification Frameworks, because they pay attention to the demand of the labor market in order

to set a school curriculum. These frameworks are appropriate to use when improving the relationship between education and the labor market for the current context of Sub-Saharan Africa.

A limitation of this research is that it only takes into account the knowledge of different representatives from the Netherlands. Future research must involve the knowledge of various representatives of the labor market in Sub-Saharan Africa and different people from the education sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is important in order to create a total overview of all the different aspects that are important in this relationship. Another limitation is that the research does not take into account the differences between the formal and informal education systems. The informal education systems are often not clearly organized so it is difficult to include them. For future research it is interesting to take both the formal and the informal education systems into account. Due to the limited scope of this research differences between males and females are not described. It is recommended that future research focuses on these differences.

Despite the limitations, this research leads to a clear message that improvements are necessary in the relationship between education and the labor market in Sub-Saharan Africa. Greater consciousness and collaboration between education and the labor market is necessary in order to facilitate the transition to the labor market for adolescents in the current context. The supply of education and the demand of the labor market must match to each other in order to attain an effective transition. Further research on this complex but interesting relationship is necessary in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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Appendices

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Appendix 1. List of Abbreviations

EFA	Education For All
IOB	Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NICHE	The Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education
NPT	The Netherlands Programme for the Institutional Strengthening of Post-secondary Education and Training
Nuffic	Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Appendix 2. Interview Questionnaire

Difficulties in the connection

- What relationship do you see between education and the labor market?
- Are there difficulties in the connection of education to the labor market? Which problems do you see?
- What is the cause of these problems according to you? Are these problems on the side of education or at the side of the labor market?
- What is the role of globalization and changing economies in this relationship? Does it contribute to the problems mentioned?
- Is there attention paid to the demands of the labor market? In which way?
- What steps need to be taken to improve the relationship between education and the labor market?

Skills

- What skills must adolescents possess to be prepared for the labor market according to you?
- Do adolescents learn these skills at school?
- Are these skills different than the skills that adolescents needed to have twenty years ago?
- What other competences, beside skills, must adolescents have to make the transition to the labor market?
- To what extent is there according to you in a skills mismatch Sub-Saharan Africa?

Initiatives

- What initiatives do you know that pay attention to an improvement of the connection of education to the labor market in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Policy

- Has there been attention for the relationship between education and the labor market in the Dutch education policy? What trends do you see?

Appendix 3. Description Representatives

Representatives from different sectors are interviewed. Beneath is a short description given of these different representatives.

N=8

Male= 3

Female= 5

Participant 1. Senior Policy Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the area of education (female).

Participant 2. Senior Policy Adviser at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the area of education (male).

Participant 3. Senior Evaluator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (male).

Participant 4. Coordinator of a program with a NGO (female).

Participant 5. Consultant at a NGO (female).

Participant 6. Senior Policy Officer at a NGO (female).

Participant 7. Policy Officer at a NGO (male).

Participant 8. Expert in the area of education and employment (female).

Appendix 4. Demand-driven strategy Learn4Work

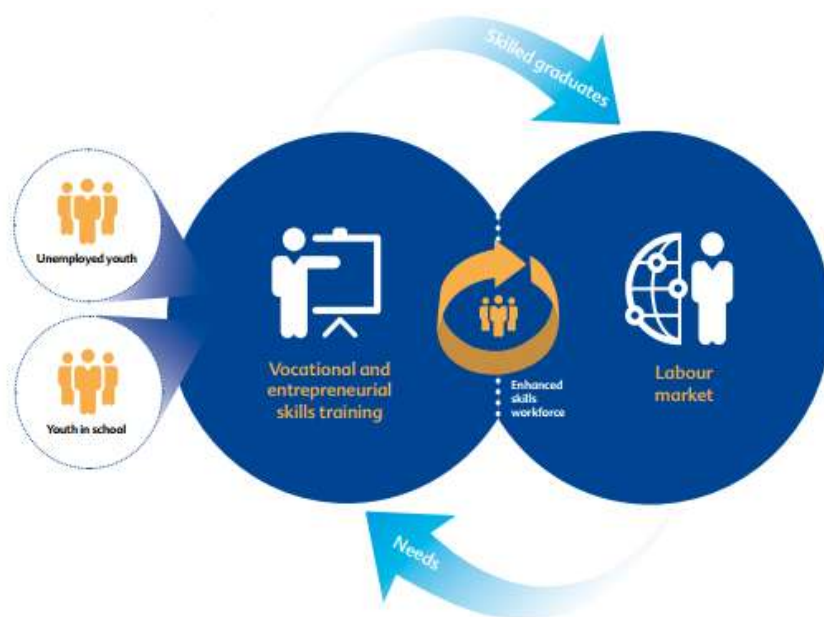


Figure 1. The demand-driven strategy of Learn4Work (Learn4Work, 2013).

Appendix 5. Qualification Framework

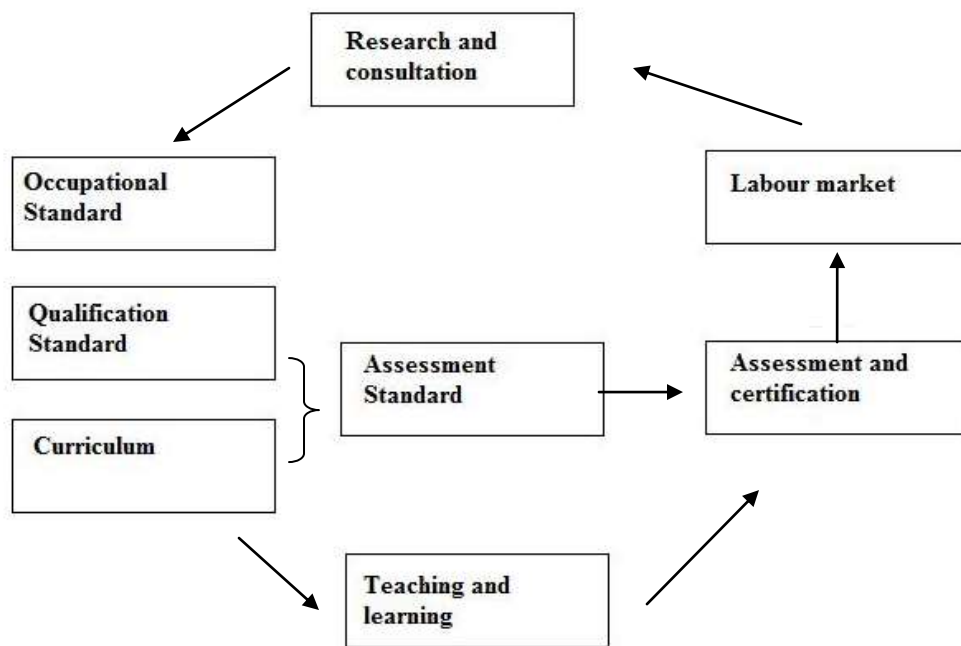


Figure 2. Qualification Framework Learning Outcomes Based (Vogel, 2013).

Appendix 6. Steps taken when planning interventions in TVET.

Table 1

The Process Followed when Planning Interventions in TVET (Nuffic, 2010).

Steps	Emphasis
Step 1: Needs identification	<p>TVET is top priority in discussion between embassy, national authorities and Nuffic regarding NICHE plans.</p> <p>Focus is exclusively on support to formal TVET at post-secondary level.</p>
Step 2: Demand articulation	<p>Project outlines contribute directly or indirectly to TVET capacity building in support of selected sectors.</p>
Step 3: Matching demand and supply	<p>Dutch TVET related institutions (mainly HBO/MBO) are encouraged to submit bids.</p> <p>Bids assessed critically on their potential to ensure sustainable linkages with the world of work</p>
Step 4: Project implementation	<p>Project implementation involves close collaboration with and consultation of the labour market and relevant stakeholders.</p>
Step 5: Monitoring and evaluation	<p>Nuffic reports on: the number of TVET projects; their achievements in terms of new programmes, number of graduates, percentage of employability of graduates (male/female), linkage with employers, etc.</p>