A FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECTS: A NAMIBIAN PERSPECTIVE

by

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DATE: 14 APRIL 2026

DECLARATION

I, Joyce Ester Amakali, student number 22584935, declare that the thesis titled: "**A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects: A Namibian Perspective**" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used have been acknowledged by means of references. I also declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality. I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other institution of higher learning.

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This doctoral journey has been immensely enriching. However, it was not without challenges, and through it all, I was constantly reminded of the words of God that say, “How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather silver!” Proverbs 16:16. The Lord’s constant love and guidance have been present through this journey, a reminder that “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion” Philippians 1:6. Thank you, Jehovah Nissi, for giving me victory!

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents. To my beloved late mother, Selma Amakali, who lovingly called me “Juffrou” from the time I was a little girl. She spoke into my life long before I understood the power of her words. Although she passed away when I was young, her hope for my future remained my guiding light. Today, as I stand proudly as an educator extraordinaire, I honour her vision and the foundation laid in my heart. May her memory continue to inspire every step I take in this calling. I love and miss you deeply.

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ABSTRACT

Namibia is experiencing a nationwide contraction in Commerce education enrolment, with fewer schools offering the subject and declining learner intake. While some schools have ceased to offer Commerce subjects, those that do have relatively few students in the field, whereas others have never offered this field of study. This study aimed to develop a forward-looking curriculum framework for the Commerce subject in Namibia. This study used a mixed-methods research design. The data were collected through face-to-face interviews and a closed structured questionnaire, which were used to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Reasons for the low intake in the Commerce field in grades 10-12 revealed fear of accounting, a core subject in the field. Furthermore, improving enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools requires enhancing the relevance and visibility of Commerce subjects by linking them to real-world applications and career opportunities. The recommendations offer a targeted call to action for all stakeholders, from classroom teachers and school administrators to Senior Education Officers and national policymakers. This study proposed A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects in Namibia, which encompasses eight key aspects: Commerce Club, Foundational Business Economics, Parental Involvement and Feeder School Engagement, Promoting Learner-Centred and Flipped Learning Pedagogy, Leveraging ICT to Modernise Commerce Education, The use Artificial Intelligence in Commerce classrooms, Intense advocacy for emerging careers and the integration of strong platforms such as Commerce Competitions and Quizzes to enrich classroom practice.

Keywords: Senior Secondary Phase; Commerce Subjects; Curriculum framework; Futuristic Curriculum framework

KAKARETŠO

Namibia e itemogela phokotšego ye kgolo ya palo ya barutwana ba go nyaka go ithutela dithuto tsa kgwebo mo eleng gore dikolo ga di sa humana barutwana bao ba ingwadišetšago dithuto tše. Dikolo tše dingwe di tšwela pele di bona go fokotšega ga baithuti ba go nyaka go rutwa dithuto tše mola tše di dingwe di sa ka tša ruta dithuto tše. Maikemišetšo a dinyakišišo tše e be e le go tla ka lenaneo la go fetola dithuto tša kgwebo gore di seke tša hwelela, eupša di be le bokamoso mo lenaneong la dithuto la Namibia ka ge di le bohlokwa go godiša moruo wa naga. Dinyakišišo tše di šomišitše mehuta yeo e hlakantšhitšwego. Yona ke dipoledišano le batšeakarolo le lemanoga la go tšea bohlatse ka dipalopalo go fihlelela dipoelo tša dinyakišišo. Dinyakišišo tše di utulotše gore lebaka le legolo la go dira gore go be le phokotšego mo dithutong tša kgwebo mo mphatong wa lesome go iša go wa lesome-pedi, ke go tšhaba thuto ya Accounting ka ge e le motheo wa dithuto tša kgwebo. Bjale sa bohlokwa kudu ke go phagamiša maemo a dithuto tša kgwebo ka go bontšha kgotlelelo le go bontšha barutwana gore dithuto tše di bohlokwa mo bokamosong ba bona lego dithuto tšeo di amanang le bophelo bja tšatši le tšatši lego ba bulela menyetla ya mešomo. Dikakanyo tša dinyakišišo tše di dira boipiletšo go batšeakarolo ba go ba le seabe mo dithutong, kudu kudu balaodi ba thuto le bangwadi ba melao naga ya Namibia ka bophara. Bjale dinyakišišo tše di tšweleditše Lenaelo la Ponelopele la go tlhabolla dithuto tša kgwebo. Dikarolo tšeo tše seswai ke Sehlopha sa Thuto ya Kgwebo, Thuto ya Motheo ba dipalopalo goba moruo wa tša kgwebo, go hlohleletša batswadi go tšea karolo dithutong tša bana ba bona, go šomišana le dikolo tša ka fase tšeo ba humanago baithuti go tšona, go šomiša mafarahlahla a se tegniki go ruta dithuto tsa kgwebo, go šomiša mafarahlahla a mahlale a se tegnini (Artificial Intelligence) mo dithutong tša kgwebo, phatlalatšo yeo e tseneletšego go kwalakwatša ka ga mešomo ya lefapha la dithuto tša kgwebo bjale ka diphadišano tša go ba le dipotšišo ka dithuto tša kgwebo.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BETD	Basic Education Teacher Diploma
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DNEA	Directorate Of National Examination and Assessments
FCP	Flipped Classroom Pedagogy
HoD	Head of Department
ICT	Information Communication Technology
LCA	Learner-Centred Approach
MEIYSAC	Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture
NDP6	Sixth National Development Plan
NSSCO	Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary
NSSCAS	Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Advanced Subsidiary
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NCBE	National Curriculum on Basic Education
ODT	Organisational Development Theory
SEO	Senior Education Officer
SBC	School Board Chairperson

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CHAPTER 1
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

There has been a decrease in the number of secondary schools offering commercial subjects and in the number of learners taking these subjects in Namibia. This trend has become worrisome. The researcher is the Senior Education Officer (SEO) in the Otjozondjupa Region, whose mandate is to monitor the implementation of all Commerce subjects in the region and provide sound advisory services on Commerce subjects. Given the researcher's role and portfolio in the region, the researcher developed an interest in investigating the phasing out of Commerce subjects in schools. This inquiry is of great importance, as it aims to influence decisions at both the school and regional levels regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects. The ultimate goal is to discourage the phasing out of these subjects in schools, which will, in turn, contribute to the growth of the field of study in multiple ways.

The National Institute of Educational Development (NIED) (2016:13) in the National Curriculum for Basic Education clearly stipulates that the Commerce subjects offered in Namibia, as part of the official curriculum, are Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Entrepreneurship, and Office Practice. These are subjects offered by only some secondary schools in Namibia, and even the schools that offer them tend to produce very uneconomical classrooms at the senior secondary level, owing to low intake. As a result, the senior secondary level (Grades 10-12) will be the focus of the study. Against this background, the research title sought to examine the fate of Commerce subjects in the Otjozondjupa Region, asking whether they will be able to survive and continue to be offered in the country in the future. Furthermore, it investigates strategies to ensure balanced curriculum implementation across all fields of study in the country, in an attempt to prevent their phased-out status predicted by the current status quo.

1.2 Background of the research

Since the beginning of independence for Namibia in 1990, basic education in Namibia has undergone various curriculum reforms and is currently using the curriculum reform of 2015 to 2026 (Kambeyo, Nauyoma & Julius 2023:22). Given the latter, Kambeyo, Nauyoma and Julius (2023:22) further emphasise that with every reform, changes to the subject content was made to ensure that the curriculum is responding to the needs of the learners at that time and that of society. Similarly, Commerce subjects have undergone reforms to meet current economic needs in the sector.

The 2010-2014 reform which is the former reform before the one in operation, stipulated that the Commerce field comprised of these subjects for senior grades Entrepreneurship (Grades 8-10); Accounting (Grades 8-12); Business Studies (Grades 11-12); Economics (Grades 11-12); Keyboard and Word Processing (Grades 8-10); Typing(Grades 8-10) and Office Administration and Keyboarding Applications (Grades 11-12) National Institute of Educational Development (NIED) (2010:14). However, in the current reform, Commerce field of study comprises the following subjects: Entrepreneurship (Grades 8-12), Accounting (Grades 8-12), Business Studies (Grades 10-12), Economics (Grades 10-12), and Office Practice (Grades 8-11) as stated by the National Institute of Educational Development (NIED) (2016:13). It can be clearly observed that there has been a decline in the number of subjects offered in Commerce and secondly the content has been aligned to suit the current trends in the market and to enable the system to produce learners that are able to contribute to a knowledge-based society.

In 2021, the second Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary Level (NSSCO) examination for the new reformed curriculum was taken and a total of 46,977 learners sat for the examination. From this figure, four thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven (4,997) learners sat for Commerce subjects (Directorate of National Examination and Assessment, 2022:1-240). This insignificant number represents only 10,63% of the total number that sat for examination in 2021. This indicates that, despite the large number of total candidates, Commerce subjects account for only a very small portion of that population. From the aforementioned figures, it can be

concluded that, in general, Commerce subjects constitute a minority of the total number of learners in a group.

There are currently neither studies in Namibia on developing a curriculum framework for Commerce subjects, nor on assessing the low intake in the Commerce field of study in the country. This research aims to fill that knowledge gap in the country and assist schools offering Commerce subjects on how to best grow the Commerce field of study. However, there are researchers working within the continent and at the global level on the phasing out of Commerce subjects. Most of these focused on specific subjects within the field of study, while this research focuses on all Commerce subjects. Therefore, the rationale is that each subject has its unique challenges, and focusing on one and generalising it to the entire field of study will not do justice in assisting to revive and revitalise the field of study.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory (Grant and Osanloo, 2014:12). It serves the foundation from which knowledge is constructed. This study is guided by Anderson's Organisation Development theory in assessing the low intake in Commerce subjects and developing a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects. Anderson (2017:21) defines Organisation Development as the process of increasing organisational effectiveness and facilitating personal and organisational change through the use of interventions driven by social and behavioural science knowledge.

The school is a social unit, and everything that happens within it is shaped by what that society defines as true. It is also the school community that constructs the multiple forms of knowledge found in a school; hence, this theory is relevant to the pragmatist paradigm. Organisational Development Theory guides the school in recognising obstacles within the organisation, devising action plans and implementing changes while consistently assessing the progress. The Ministry of Education has developed policies and strategies to continuously improve results, and schools in Namibia are expected to operate within the provided regulatory

frameworks. Organisational Development Theory maintains three tenets as guiding principles for organisational Development, namely:

- Provision of adequate training
- Improved learning process
- Improved teachers' performance.

1.3.1 Provision of adequate training

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) plays a crucial role in ensuring that teachers are skilled and up-to-date in their area of specialisation. Whenever a curriculum is revised, teachers are trained on how to implement it effectively, and refresher training is consistently provided in between. This is because CPD should be a continuous process, not a once-off strategy. This principle informs research questions 3 and 5 of the research, which seeks to find out

- What are the perceptions of SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?; and
- "What strategies can be implemented to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?

CPD to teachers can be provided by the respective Head of Department, Principals or SEOs. Through continuous monitoring, areas of need can be identified and training provided accordingly.

1.3.2 Improved learning process

The ultimate goal of the education process is to improve learning, which aligns with the second principle of Organisational Development, aiming for an enhanced learning process. The ideal situation is that providing adequate training in principle one (1) will lead to improved learning. This principle of Organisational Development aligns with question four (4) of this study, which aims to determine, "*What are the perceptions of SEOs, Heads of departments and teachers regarding the teaching methods used for Commerce subjects in Namibia secondary schools?"* The effective (doing the right things) and efficient (doing things right) use of teaching methods in classrooms presents an opportunity for the teaching and learning process to be improved, and

therefore, an increment in the number of learners passing Commerce subjects, by implication increasing the intake in Commerce subjects.

1.3.3 Improved teachers' performance

The final principle for Organisational Development is improved teacher performance. The principles of Organisational Development are interconnected, and therefore, if training is provided and the learning process improves, it subsequently means the teacher's performance has also improved, which is the ultimate goal of education. The status quo is that performance in Commerce subjects is unsatisfactory, leading to fewer learners pursuing these subjects.

The third principle aligns with research questions 1 and 2, which state SRQ1:

- What is the current status of schools offering Commerce subjects in Namibia? and
- What are the reasons for the low intake of learners in Commerce courses in Namibian secondary schools?

1.4 Key Concepts

1.4.1 Senior Secondary Phase

This study focuses on the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate (NSSC) phase, which comprises Ordinary Level (grades 10-11) and Advanced Subsidiary Level (grade 12). After completing the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary (NSSCO) level at the end of Grade 11, learners have various options: they may choose to continue with either vocational education or training or with distance learning, or seek employment (National Institute of Educational Development, 2016:18). Learners who meet the prescribed requirements may proceed to Grade 12. Therefore, within the context of this study, senior secondary phase refers to the highest formal education school phase comprising three grades (10-12) for Commerce subjects.

1.4.2 Commerce subjects

The National Institute of Educational Development (2016:13) notes that Commerce subjects offered in Namibia and part of the official curriculum include Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, and Entrepreneurship. For the purposes of this study, the concept of a Commerce subject will refer to these groups of subjects.

1.4.3 Curriculum Framework

The South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) (2015:2) for South Africa defines a curriculum framework as an organising tool that includes the knowledge and understanding of the world, the practical skills required and the attitudes and behaviours needed to develop citizens. In the context of this study, the curriculum framework refers to the officially defined curriculum for Commerce in Namibia, which outlines clear, definable standards of what students should know (basic competencies) and be able to do (specific objectives) as stipulated in the syllabus for Grades 10–12 Commerce subjects (National Institute for Educational Development, 2016).

1.4.4 Futuristic Curriculum Framework

In the context of this study, a futuristic curriculum framework is a model to be developed, one that is forward-looking and in line with global and future standards. Furthermore, a futuristic curriculum policy framework in the age of Artificial Intelligence refers to a curriculum that prepares learners not only for current jobs but also for emerging careers, technologies, and societal challenges. The futuristic curriculum framework was designed from the published scholarly works and results of the mixed methods study as a framework to empower Commerce teachers in the Namibian senior secondary phase, which will act as a guiding tool in the implementation of the Commerce curriculum, making Commerce relevant for the future and strategies on how teachers can retain learners and revitalise the subject in their own classrooms.

1.5 Preliminary Literature Review

The field of Commerce needs drastic change to survive extinction in the Namibian context, and it is time for decision-makers and influential individuals in education to

take a stand and contribute to this change. The decline in Commerce subjects is not only a Namibian concern, but literature also shows that this is an African problem that extends beyond the continent's borders.

A study on the future of accounting, conducted by Kachelmeier (2001:2) on one of the Commerce subjects, revealed that significant adjustments to the current educational paradigm are necessary to draw more students to accounting classrooms. Many aspects of the curriculum require attention, such as a more thorough analysis of the course material and curriculum, pedagogy and technology (Kachelmeier, 2001:15). It is argued that reviving the current curriculum will result in the necessary improvements, as most issues with the low enrolment in commercial topics are systemic and have deterred students from pursuing these courses. This is supported by Albrecht and Sack (2001:64), who discovered a decline in both the quantity and calibre of learners choosing to major in accounting.

In a study by Mhonyiwa (2014:93) in Tanzania, which focused on assessing the performance of Commerce subjects, revealed that all 24 (100%) learners interviewed for the research were interested in studying Commerce subjects. However, learners claimed that teachers did not direct them to their goals of success in studying Commerce subjects. At school, teachers are expected to act in loco parentis, defined by Mampane (2018:183) as acting in the place of a parent. Teachers, in their role as parents, ought to continually guide learners in all aspects, especially in career choices. If learners are not given a clear sense of direction about what they can achieve in a particular field of study, it can erode their morale and reduce their motivation to pursue their studies.

Galvin (1999:244) concurs with the preceding discussion, determining that teachers are essential to learning in the classroom and act as both mediators and models to their learners. This relationship may continue outside the classroom, as learners seek approval and personal guidance for their career choices. Owing to their direct impact on students, teachers ought to be involved as change agents responsible for bringing about changes to Commerce topics.

Although Commerce education has been widely studied internationally, there is limited published literature specifically focusing on Commerce subjects in Namibia, particularly regarding declining enrolment in these subjects. Amakali, Haimbangu and Chirimbana (2021:47) assessed the effect of the intersectionality of gender and socio-economic status on the academic performance of the girl child in accounting and found that some girls opt not to choose accounting owing to fear of the subject or a lack of interest. The aforementioned study focused on the gender and socio-economic status of a girl child; however, the findings are true to both genders, as accounting is presumed to be a difficult subject, a conclusion far reached even before learners attempt it, and because of this fear of the unknown, they discourage themselves and select other subjects.

Despite research on phasing out and low enrolment in Commerce subjects in other parts of the world, none has been conducted in Namibia, even though the country is also facing a serious dilemma regarding the discontinuation of Commerce subjects. This gap in knowledge within the country is what prompted the researcher to undertake the study, aiming to assist in revitalising the Commerce field.

1.6 Problem statement

During the researcher's tenure as an SEO in the Otjozondjupa Region for a period exceeding four years, the researcher observed that several schools within the region have ceased to offer Commerce subjects, while some schools have never offered this field of study and the intake in this field of study for the schools that are offering it is relatively low.

Not offering commercial subjects would mean that all learners at that school would be forced to take only one stream, and those with a career interest in Commerce would be at a disadvantage. Learners should be given a choice to select their preferred field, provided the school has the necessary human resources to support it, considering the demand from parents and the community the school serves. Furthermore, the Namibian curriculum is comprehensive, catering to diverse learners with varied interests and aspirations. Taking that choice away from them can be detrimental to their future and defeats the purpose of a broad curriculum.

Globally, concerns have been raised about the declining enrolment in Commerce-related subjects at the secondary school level. A longitudinal study by Solinas-Saunders, Hobson, and Frink (2025), titled *QuantCrit to Examine Black and White Student Graduate School Enrolment Trends From 2002 to 2018*, reported a concerning decline in black enrolments, driven by lower enrolment in high school Commerce subjects to raise awareness and interest in Commerce. Moreover, the New Zealand study by Neilson and Fowler (2026), which investigated high school students' negative attitudes towards accounting and the profession, suggested that students must be exposed to career choices. In addition, studies have cautioned that continued declines could lead to a shortage of qualified personnel in Commerce-related professions and adversely affect national economic development (Dawkins, 2023; Lee, Fernandez & Ro, 2022; Ona, 2025).

Evidence from India indicates a drop in Commerce enrolment. Chordia, Birla, and Bhanawat (2024) suggest that this decline results from shifts in the labour market, fewer job prospects in traditional Commerce sectors, and increased student interest in science, technology, and digital careers. They argue that without updating Commerce curricula to reflect current economic realities, student enrolment will likely continue to decline. Several African studies have confirmed similar trends of declining student enrolment in secondary school Commerce subjects (Ibelegbu Ngozi & Ogechi, 2025; Ng'humbu, 2025). From a South African perspective, some schools have phased out commercial subjects like Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics. A study by Thaba-Nkadimene and Mmakola (2020) identified factors such as poor learner performance, shortages of qualified teachers, limited pedagogical content knowledge, and scarce educational resources as reasons for the decline of these subjects in rural schools. Their study also showed that removing these subjects decreased opportunities for students interested in Commerce-related careers. Recent research in South Africa shows a continued decline in enrolment in Commerce subjects. Makhoba and Qoyi (2024) highlight that, although Commerce education is essential for preparing students for careers in business, finance, and economics, data reveal fewer learners are selecting Commerce streams in secondary schools. Multiple studies identify key factors affecting enrolment, such as limited

career guidance, insufficient resources, and learners' perceptions of job opportunities (Ketwa & Tebekana, 2025; Ngwenya, 2025).

These international and African trends suggest that declining enrolment in Commerce subjects is a global phenomenon rather than an isolated Namibian challenge. However, the literature also indicates that schools and education systems that modernise Commerce curricula by integrating entrepreneurship, digital business skills, financial literacy, data analytics, and artificial intelligence are more likely to sustain learner interest and increase enrolment in Commerce-related disciplines.

Burnett (2003:129) reported on the future of one of the commercial subjects and concluded that accounting education is indeed in serious trouble and must undergo significant interventions to survive. This research concurs with Salem (2013:62), focusing on one of the commercial subjects, accounting, which reveals that accounting programmes are consequently experiencing dramatic decreases in student enrolments. There is a clear need for accounting teachers and other education stakeholders to explore new strategies to help commercial subjects thrive in schools. The ripple effect extends beyond smaller class sizes; it also directly impacts the career development of teachers and education officers, given the limited opportunities for promotion in a small field of study.

Mathiba (2021:2) conducted a study on the factors contributing to the decline in learners' enrolment in commercial subjects in Limpopo Province. The findings revealed that enrolment in commercial subjects in Limpopo Province was declining over time, particularly in subjects such as business studies, economics and accounting. Dlamini and Koka (2023) report that the Director General of the National Department of Basic Education, Mathanzima Mweli, expressed concern that South Africa could face a scarcity of experts in the field of Commerce as the number of learners writing final examinations in matric in this field of study is showing a decline. Consequently, this might lead the country to import personnel in the field of chartered accountants if learners are not motivated to enrol in commercial subjects.

Dlamini and Koka's (2023) report showed that in South Africa, the number of pupils enrolled in accounting increased from 95,864 in 2020 to 108,631 in 2021. However, this figure declined to 107,239 in 2022. Business studies experienced the same trend,

increasing from 215,002 in 2020 to 250,918 in 2021. But it declined to 247,784 in 2022. Economics also increased from 123,471 in 2020 to 143,728 in 2021, and then dropped to 141,208 in 2022 (Dlamini & Koka, 2023).

In Namibia, enrolment in the four Commerce subjects is shown in Table 1.1, indicating fluctuations over two years.

Table 1.1: National examination enrolment in Commerce subjects for Grade 11(NSSCO) and Grade 12 (NSSCAS). *Directorate of National and Examination Assessment, 2026.*

	2024		**2025**	
	11	12	11	12
Accounting	5 269	1 002	5 239	1 177
Business Studies	5 842	614	5 124	1 051
Economics	6 116	532	5 634	874
Entrepreneurship	4 495	698	5 005	886
Total Nationally	**79 693**	**10 618**	**81 487**	**13 110**

Table 1.1 compares enrolment in Commerce subjects between 2025 and 2025. The results indicate that the enrolment trend differed across the four Commerce subjects. Accounting experienced a slight decrease in enrolment from 6,721 learners in 2024 to 6,416 learners in 2025, representing a decrease of 145 learners (2,3%). Business studies recorded the largest decline among the four subjects. Total enrolment decreased from 6,456 learners in 2024 to 6,175 learners in 2025, a reduction of 281 learners (4,4%). Economics experienced a decline, with enrolment falling from 6,648 to 6,508 learners, representing a decrease of 140 learners (2.1%). Overall, the national examination enrolment across all subjects increased from 90,311 learners in 2024 to 94,597 learners in 2025, an increase of 4,286 learners (4,7%). However, despite this overall growth, two of the four Commerce subjects, Business Studies and Economics, experienced declines in enrolment. These findings reinforce the need to

investigate the reason for the declining enrolment in Commerce education and to develop strategies to sustain learner participation in these subjects.

Not tabulated are the results of the 2023 national examination enrolment level. The total number of learners who sat for the Commerce subjects NASCO examination was 4,494 learners, while the total number of learners who sat for the examination in the country totalled 40,630 learners (Directorate of National Examination Assessment, 2024:1-252). The aforementioned figures are for the Ordinary level. When one moves further to the advanced subsidiary level, it is noted that in 2023, 774 learners sat for Commerce subjects out of 4,087 who wrote the advanced subsidiary (Directorate of National Examination and Assessment, 2024:1-63).

Thaba-Nkadimene and Mmakola (2020:2-3) conducted research assessing the phasing-out of commercial entrepreneurship subjects in Limpopo secondary schools in South Africa. This study examined teachers' reflections and experiences regarding the phasing out of commercial subjects in selected rural schools in Limpopo. The findings revealed poor teacher performance, which led to the phasing out of commercial fields. This poor performance is attributed to a lack of content knowledge and teachers not being subject experts in their respective subjects. Secondly, a shortage of qualified teachers in Entrepreneurship was identified as a challenge experienced in rural Limpopo. Based on these findings, the consequence was a shortage of qualified teachers to teach Entrepreneurship, resulting in teachers who are not specialists in these subjects being assigned responsibility for teaching it. Since they are not qualified in the subject, it has compromised the quality of education offered. This ultimately had a negative effect on the performance and phasing out of Entrepreneurship in schools.

Namibia, just like other African countries and countries across the globe, faces a shortage of professional accountants. In an interview conducted by Smit (2015:5), the former Trade and Industry Minister, Calle Schlettwein, opined that an additional 100 accountants will be required to alleviate the burden on the existing workforce. Moreover, the country currently has only 400 accountants serving ± 500,000 taxpayers. The persistent and substantial shortage of accounting skills in Namibia is likely to worsen over the next eight years, and if learners are not encouraged to pursue commercial subjects, this need will only grow.

1.7 Main Research Question

What are the projected trends and future prospects for commercial subjects in Namibian secondary schools, and how can these inform strategies to strengthen the teaching and learning of Commerce-related subjects?

1.7.1 Sub-Research Questions

The research seeks to answer the following sub-research questions (SRQs).

- SRQ1 What is the current status of schools offering Commerce subjects in Namibia?
- SRQ2 What are the reasons for the low intake of learners in Commerce courses in Namibian secondary schools?
- SRQ3 What are the perceptions of SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers' regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?
- SRQ4 What are the perceptions of SEOs, Head of Departments and teachers regarding the teaching methods used for Commerce subjects in Namibia secondary schools?
- SRQ5 What strategies can be implemented to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?

1.7.2 Aim and Objectives

The study aimed to design a futuristic curriculum framework that revitalises Commerce education. This includes aligning the curriculum with 21st-century skills, the demands of the digital economy and entrepreneurial competencies to enhance learners' employability and economic participation. The specific objectives (SOs) of this study are:

- SO1 To determine the current status of schools offering Commerce subjects in Namibia.
- SO2 To investigate the reasons for the low intake of learners in Commerce subjects at the schools.

- SO3 To explore SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers' perceptions on the implementation of Commerce subjects.
- SO4 To determine the teaching methods that are recommended by SEOs, Head of Departments, and teachers in classrooms when teaching Commerce subjects.
- SO5 To develop strategies that can be implemented to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in the Commerce subjects.

1.8 Research Methodology

1.8.1 Research Paradigm

What started as a group discussion in the early 1870s in Cambridge, Massachusetts, among noted philosophers gave rise to what is known as the pragmatism paradigm (Maxcy, 2003:51-89). As a philosophical movement, pragmatism originated in the late 19th century in the United States (Maxcy, 2003:51-89). The founding fathers of pragmatism include the philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, psychologist William James, philosopher and mathematician Chauncey Wright, jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., and philosopher and lawyer Nicholas St. Johns Green. The word pragmatism is originally derived from the Greek word "pragma," which means action (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019:3). The academics involved in this conversation aimed to challenge the widespread beliefs about reality, knowledge and inquiry. Because multiple realities cannot be achieved with a single approach, pragmatic researchers hold that reality cannot be obtained with a single method.

Pragmatists generally agree that all knowledge in the world is socially constructed, but some versions of these social constructions align more closely with individuals' experiences than others (Maxcy, 2003:51-89). In addition, Ray (2004:307) defines the paradigm of pragmatism as whatever functions well or has withstood scrutiny by individual users over time. Therefore, truth and reality cannot be separated from a person's experience, because it is one's experience that shapes their reality and what they consider to be true.

The paradigm is deemed suitable for this study, as knowledge about developing a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects was constructed through semi-structured interviews and closed-ended structured questionnaires. Information obtained from these findings was used to construct new knowledge on how to retain learners and revitalise Commerce subjects in schools. The researcher drew on the diverse experiences of teachers, SEOs, principals, and department heads and school board chairpersons, which were used to develop new knowledge through data collection.

1.8.2 Research approach

This study aimed at developing a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects in Namibia, a mixed methods research (MMR) was, therefore, used and aligned to the pragmatism philosophy. In this doctoral study, the MMR is used, which involves both qualitative and quantitative methods within the same research to study the same phenomena, either concurrently or sequentially (Maarouf, 2019:3).

One of the greatest strengths of using an MMR is that this research design increases validity, reliability and trustworthiness, and triangulates the research findings by using different methods of data collection to study the same phenomenon, thereby gaining a comprehensive understanding (Molina-Azorin, 2016:37-38). However, the MMR also has its own weaknesses, as implementing it requires more time, effort and money, as it involves two phases of research (Molina-Azorin, 2016:37-38). The MMR enables the phenomenon to be well explained and a thorough understanding to be obtained, as two methods are combined; hence, their strengths, when well utilised, can complement each other to enhance and support the research. Pragmatism, as a paradigm, provides the epistemology and logic for combining quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods, allowing multiple realities to emerge through their integration.

1.9 Research strategy

The convergent parallel MMR was used to collect data, both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and then integrate the overall results to get a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014:215). In a convergent design, integrating both data helped the researcher gain a complete

understanding beyond what was provided by the quantitative or qualitative results alone.

1.10 Research Methods

1.10.1 Population

Population refers to the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied (Shukla, 2020, p. 1). This study aimed to develop a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects in Namibia. All the schools in Namibia offering Commerce subjects at NSSCO (grade 10-11) and NSCASS (grade 12) form part of the population of this study. There is a total of 381 schools in Namibia offering Commerce subjects at the afore-mentioned level.

1.10.2 Sampling and Size

Sampling is a procedure for selecting a sample from an individual or a large population group for a specific research purpose (Bhardwaj, 2019, p. 158). For the quantitative study, a sample of 200 closed-ended questionnaires was distributed online via social media platforms for completion. It was sent to educational regions and to teachers teaching Commerce subjects in grades 10-12 because of the researcher's accessibility, irrespective of which school they work at, as long as they teach Commerce subjects at the desired phase, grades 10-12. For the qualitative study, only three SEOs were interviewed, along with four SGBs, five school principals, five department heads, and five teachers teaching grades 10-12. Owing to the desired characteristics of the participants, purposive sampling was employed in this research to select SEOs, principals, HoDs, teachers, and school governing bodies. Financial constraints and accessibility issues posed challenges, so the researcher was only able to conduct a limited number of interviews and observations.

1.10.3 Data collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and closed structured questionnaires. The convergent parallel mixed method was employed to collect data, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and then integrating them to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014:

266). Data were collected from SEOs, SGBs, school principals, HoDs and Commerce teachers.

1.10.4 Data analysis

Although the data were collected concurrently, the analysis was conducted independently. Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of the data provided (Braun & Clarke, 2013:1). Qualitative data were analysed thematically following a six-step approach, namely: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing (Caulfield, 2019). Finding significant patterns in the data and applying them to the research is the aim (Maguire & Dehalunt, 2017:5-20). Conversely, quantitative data were analysed descriptively and inferentially. Descriptive and inferential analyses help summarise and triangulate the collected data into numbers that convey meaning and guide the researcher to the study's conclusion (Thompson, 2009:57).

1.11 Measures of Trustworthiness and Reliability

1.11.1 Credibility

According to Cope (2014:89-91), credibility refers to data that is free from bias and supported by reliable evidence. To maximise credibility, the researcher spent time with each study participant to gain a thorough understanding of the individuals, their experiences and the phenomenon under investigation, thereby building a trusting relationship.

1.11.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (Cope, 2014:89-91). The researcher ensured transferability by providing all relevant, detailed and sufficient information for readers to make an informed decision about the relevance of research results in other contexts.

1.11.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistent production of the same data in similar situations (Cope, 2014:89-91). The researcher ensured dependability by ensuring

that there was a focused research question that linked the collection of data to how the data were analysed.

1.11.4 Confirmability

This refers to the extent to which the research results can be confirmed by other researchers (Korstjens & Moser, 2017:121). The researcher clearly stated all the steps taken from the start of the research to its completion to ensure confirmability. The interview records and the closed-ended structured questionnaires that respondents completed are kept.

1.11.5 Participant validation

Lindheim (2022) defines participant validation as a strategy to strengthen the credibility of data and further address ethical concerns of transparency and power imbalance in the research process. As opposed to a face-to-face validation interview, the researcher used the Synthesised Member Checking Model of Birt et al. (2016:1802–1811), which outlines as follows:

- Prepare a synthesised summary of emerging themes from the total sample of interviews using illustrative quotes from the different interviews.
- The informants' eligibility for participating in the member checking process is considered to ensure that the research process will not inflict unnecessary harm on the informants.
- The synthesised report is sent to the selected informants with an invitation to make corrections and add comments.
- The responses are collected and added to the data material.
- The new data are integrated and coded.

1.11.6 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement (Segal & Coolidge, 2018). Reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha, which assesses the internal consistency of an instrument by examining whether all items within a subscale correlate with one another (Johnson, 2011). The alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. The closer a scaled coefficient is to 0.7, the greater the instrument.

1.12 Ethical considerations

1.12.1 Informed consent

Permission was sought in writing through the office of the Regional Directors of Otjozondjupa, Erongo, Kavango West, Oshikoto, and Oshana, where the qualitative studies were conducted. Thereafter, consent was sought from all participants after the study's motivation was clarified, and the participants and respondents were permitted to proceed. Only once permission was granted from all parties could the researcher start conducting the research.

1.12.2 Confidentiality

All information obtained from the research is treated with strict confidentiality and privacy. The data collected were kept safe and accessible only to the researcher. For the questionnaires, an online, closed, structured questionnaire was administered to the participants. Their responses, once completed, were sent directly to the researcher's Gmail account, which was only accessible from the researcher's personal laptop. This laptop was protected by security measures, including passwords, to ensure confidentiality. For the interview questions, the researcher used a phone to record the interviews, and the recordings were transferred from the phone to a Compact Disc, which the researcher kept and stored safely.

1.12.3 Ethical Clearance

The University of South Africa (Unisa) requires that every researcher obtain research ethics clearance before commencing their research. The researcher applied for and obtained ethical clearance referenced **2025/ 01/ 08/ 00000389/ 07/ RB**, (see Appendix G) and only after this was approved did the researcher commence data collection.

1.13 Possible limitations and delimiters of the study

1.13.1 Limitations

The researcher is a self-funded student and therefore, experienced financial constraints during the data collection process, as she had to travel from one region to another for interviews. Moreover, the researcher is also a full-time employee, and time constraints were a factor in balancing conducting the study and a full-time job. Upon starting data collection in Otjozondjupa, the selected secondary school was

closed for more than a week due to a water crisis in the town, which significantly impacted the research, as recruiting participants was challenging. There is limited literature in Namibia that either develops a futuristic curriculum framework or studies the phenomenon of low learner intake in the commercial field, which impacted the literature review.

1.13.2 De-limitations

The study focuses on NSSCO (10-11) and NSSCAS (12); Therefore, the findings from this study cannot be generalised to other fields or subjects of study, as this solely focuses on Commerce subjects.

1.14 Chapter division

Chapter 1 Orientation to the Study

This chapter introduces the study and the researcher's involvement in the research phenomenon. Moreover, it outlines the significance of the study, provides a brief preliminary literature review and theoretical framework, and, finally, highlights the research design and methodology.

Chapter 2 Contextual, Theoretical and Conceptual framework for the study

The chapter discusses in depth the theoretical framework guiding the study, including a literature review related to the study.

Chapter 3 Curriculum change and Commerce subjects from a Namibian perspective

The chapter provides an overview of Namibia's education system, particularly in Commerce subjects. The chapter also discusses the curriculum changes and reforms in Namibia, highlighting the Commerce subjects offered in the country.

Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology

The research designs and methodology are described in this chapter in depth. The chapter encompasses the research paradigm, approach and research strategy, as well as other design and methodology subtopics.

Chapter 5 Data analysis and interpretation

The fifth chapter presents the collected data, as well as the results obtained from the interviews, observations and questionnaires. Furthermore, the results are also interpreted in this chapter.

Chapter 6 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents a critical discussion of the research findings, allowing for tactical conclusions and recommendations based on the responses.

Chapter 7: Design a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects and strategies for Namibian secondary schools

The final chapter addresses the primary objective of the research, which is to develop a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects and strategies for Namibian secondary schools.

1.15 Conclusion

This chapter presented an introduction to the nature of the study. An introduction and background of the study, which focuses on low intake in Commerce subjects in secondary schools. The chapter further presented the problem statement for the study, the main research question and sub-questions, the aim and objectives of the study, the definition of key terms, the research methodology, and the division of chapters. This is done to provide the reader with a comprehensive view of the entire study.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXTUAL, THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of the research background and a brief literature review of studies on the topic. Definitions of a few concepts were presented, and how those concepts will be used in the context of this study. The research methodology was presented, outlining how the research will be conducted and its ethical considerations. The study comprises seven chapters, divided into chapter divisions.

This chapter presents an extensive review of studies examining the low intake of Commerce subjects. This chapter outlines the following aspects:

- The current status in offering Commerce subjects in Namibia.
- The determinant for the low intake of learners in Commerce subjects.
- The perception of SEOs, school principals, HoDs and teachers' perceptions on the status of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools.
- Teaching methodologies that teachers use in the classrooms when teaching Commerce subjects.
- Strategies that can be implemented to retain learners in the commercial subject and grow the field.

The study begins by outlining its theoretical framework and then provides an in-depth literature review related to the topic.

2.2 Organisation Development Theory (ODT) as a Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the Organisation Development Theory (ODT) was selected as the theoretical lens for this study because it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how educational institutions adapt to change, improve organisational effectiveness and respond to emerging environmental demands. ODT views organisations as dynamic systems that require continuous development through planned interventions, capacity building, collaboration, leadership support and

resource alignment. These principles are particularly relevant to the transformation of Commerce education within rapidly changing technological and economic contexts.

Drawing from the core assumptions of ODT, this study identified several interrelated tenets that informed the conceptualisation of the research problem, data generation and data analysis. Specifically, the theory emphasises organisational readiness for change, stakeholder participation, leadership support, professional development, resource mobilisation and continuous improvement. These tenets were adopted because they provide an analytical lens for examining how schools respond to curriculum innovation, technological integration and the implementation of future-oriented Commerce education. Consequently, the dimensions discussed in this study are not independent constructs but are derived from the broader principles of ODT and adapted to the educational context under investigation.

A theoretical framework is a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory (Grant and Osanloo, 2014, p. 12). It is the foundation from which knowledge is constructed. This study is guided by Anderson's Organisation Development Theory in assessing the low intake in Commerce subjects and developing a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects. Anderson (2017:21) defines organisational development as the process of increasing organisational effectiveness and facilitating personal and organisational change using interventions driven by social and behavioural science knowledge. The theoretical framework chosen for this study will support the rationale for the study, the problem statement and the research questions. It is, therefore, imperative that a theoretical framework be applied to this study.

The rationale for the choice of this theory is based on the understanding that, as a ministry responsible for basic education, arts and culture, there is a mandate that all stakeholders in education should strive to fulfil. The ministry's mandate is to educate and train for sustainable national development and promote arts and culture (Ministry of Education, 2016). To contribute to the mandate of education for sustainable development, the ministry must make significant investments in education by providing quality, adequate training for teachers, who are the primary custodians of curriculum implementation. Consequently, well-trained teachers with a good

understanding of subject content and subject methodology will lead to improved learning processes and improved teacher performance.

Kapofi (2024) reports that N$18.4 billion has been allocated to basic education and arts and culture for the 2024/2025 financial year. Therefore, the significant funds allocated to the Ministry of Basic Education, Arts, and Culture are part of the government's commitment to ensuring quality education for all and serving within the ministry's mandate. The performance of teachers contributes to student learning and school success, or their failure. According to Thaba-Nkadimene and Mmakola (2020:4), workers are important to every business, and it is well understood that how well they perform affects the success or failure of the organisation.

A school is a social unit, and everything that happens within it, is shaped by what that society defines as true. It is also the school society that constructs the multiple forms of knowledge found in a school; hence, this theory is relevant to the pragmatist paradigm. The ODT guides the school institution in recognising obstacles within the organisation, devising action plans, and implementing changes while consistently assessing the progress. The Ministry of Education has developed policies and strategies to continuously improve results, and schools in Namibia are expected to operate within the provided regulatory frameworks.

The Organisational Development Theory (ODT) is relevant to this study as it informs the strategic operational objectives and organisational strategies that the school institution puts in place to identify hindrances within the organisation, craft plans of action and change, and continuously evaluate progress. The Ministry of Education has developed policies and strategies aimed at continuously improving results and schools in Namibia are expected to operate within the parameters of the provided regulatory frameworks. Thaba-Nkadimene and Mmakola (2020:4) argue that good policies are not adequately funded and therefore are likely to fail in implementation. The foregoing observations are a reality for most countries, and the dreams and aspirations behind those developed policies remain only on paper owing to financial constraints.

The National Curriculum for Basic Education (NCBE), the official policy governing the implementation of the Basic Education Curriculum in Namibia, states that the goal of

Basic Education is to empower learners to actively participate in building Namibia into a knowledge-based society (NIED, 2016). A knowledge-based society is characterised by advanced technology and advancing entrepreneurship within a growing production-based economy. It has been observed that the collapse of Commerce subjects in schools directly impacts the goal of education, as Commerce is the centre of businesses and an economy. Furthermore, fostering entrepreneurship requires a curriculum that promotes entrepreneurial thinking, which can be acquired in Commerce subjects.

The ODT posits three tenets as guiding principles for operational and organisational development, namely:

- Provision of adequate training
- Improved learning process
- Improved teachers' performance.

2.2.1 Provision of adequate training

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) plays a crucial role in ensuring that Commerce teachers are skilled and up-to-date in their area of specialisation. Furthermore, CPD has been defined as the continuation of a teacher's professional development beyond their initial training, qualification and induction (Stevenson, 2010). Teachers do not leave university as finished products; hence, the importance of CPD for them to continue growing professionally through various advisory services, such as training and mentoring opportunities in the profession. Mitchell (2013:388-390) defines CPD as the process whereby an individual acquires or enhances the skills, knowledge and/or attitudes for improved practice. CPD, therefore, focuses on acquiring knowledge throughout one's teaching career to enhance teaching and learning.

Indrawati and Octoria (2016:656) point out the role of the teacher as a professional educator, whose core duties include educating, teaching, counselling, guiding, training, appraising, and evaluating learners through formal education. Furthermore, teaching is a profession, and hence, a teacher is required to have academic qualifications, competence, a certificate of education, good physical and mental

condition, as well as the ability to achieve national education goals (Indrawati & Octoria, 2016, p. 656). For the teacher to fulfil the afore-mentioned role, there is a need for continuous training workshops to be provided through professional development, a process that aims to continually empower teachers to teach effectively and efficiently.

CPD enables teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to successfully implement the Commerce subject curriculum. Although CPD is often identified as a component of a successful education system, it is particularly imperative during curriculum reform. If adequate CPD is not offered during curriculum reform, the enacted and intended curricula may look quite different (Porcenaluk, O'Neachtain, & Connolly, 2023, p. 932). Whenever a curriculum is revised, teachers are trained to implement it effectively, and refresher training is provided in between. This is because CPD should be a continuous process, not a once-off strategy. This principle informs questions 3 and 5 of the research questions, which seeks to find out

- "*What are the perceptions of SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers' regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?;*
- "*What are the perceptions of SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers' regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?"*

CPD allows teachers to acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to implement the Commerce curriculum successfully. Although CPD is often identified as a component of effective education systems, it becomes particularly important during periods of curriculum reform. According to ODT, successful organisational change depends on the continuous development of staff capacity and the provision of support structures that enable individuals to adapt to new expectations. If adequate CPD is not provided during curriculum reform, the enacted curriculum may differ significantly from the intended curriculum (Porcenaluk, O'Neachtain, & Connolly, 2023, p. 932). Consequently, teachers require regular training, mentoring, and refresher workshops to ensure effective curriculum implementation. This aligns with the ODT principle that organisational effectiveness is achieved through continuous learning, professional growth, and the systematic development of human resources.

This principle informs Research Questions 3 and 5, which seek to determine the extent to which teacher development and support influence the successful implementation and sustainability of Commerce subjects in schools.

2.2.2 Improved learning process

The ultimate goal of the education process is to improve learning, which aligns with the second principle of Organisational Development, aiming for an enhanced learning process. The ideal situation is that providing adequate training in principle one (1) will lead to improved learning. This principle of Organisational Development aligns with question four (4) of this study, which aims to determine, "*What are the perceptions of SEOs, Head of Departments and teachers regarding the teaching methods used for Commerce subjects in Namibia secondary schools?"* The effective (doing the right things) and efficient (doing things right) use of teaching methods in classrooms presents an opportunity to improve the teaching and learning process, thereby increasing the number of learners passing Commerce subjects and, by implication, increasing the intake in Commerce subjects.

The improved learning process requires improvements in quality assessments, which can be achieved by training teachers to develop and administer them. CPD is crucial in all these processes, as teachers can only perform well in what they have been capacitated in. Singh et al. (2024) outline that literacy and numeracy skills have a significant impact on students' performance. The consistent use of technology also enhances students' literacy and numeracy skills, as they have access to a variety of learning materials tailored to their abilities, thereby encouraging critical thinking and ultimately improving their learning.

Lumpkin (2020:32) states a five-step improved learning process, which is outlined as follows:

- First, teachers preview how the course's content is organised.
- Second, teachers communicate information clearly and specifically to convince students how and why listening will personally benefit them.
- Third, teachers lead interactive classes utilising a variety of instructional approaches together with engaging learning activities.
- Fourth, through learning assessments, teachers reinforce learning.

- Lastly, students use the new knowledge and skills they have learned.

The ultimate aim of education is to see an improvement and change in the behaviour of learners. If learners can utilise the knowledge gained, then the learning process is proving to be effective, and as such, learners must be encouraged to take ownership of their learning.

2.2.3 Improved teachers' performance

The final principle of Organisational Development Theory is to improve teachers' performance. Citriadin et al. (2019) define teacher performance as a set of individual behaviours and activities that follow the hopes and goals of the organisation. The principles of Organisational Development are interconnected, and therefore, if training is provided and the learning process improves, it subsequently means that the teachers' performance has also improved, which is the ultimate goal of education. The status quo is that performance in Commerce subjects is unsatisfactory, leading to fewer learners pursuing these subjects.

The third principle aligns with research questions 1 and 2, which state SRQ1:

- "*What is the current status of schools offering Commerce subjects in Namibia?"* and SRQ2
- "*What are the reasons for the low intake of learners in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?"*

Teachers should be encouraged to set targets that allow them to measure their own learning improvement. Targets are important for both teachers and learners, as they enable them to pause, assess their achievement, identify reasons for low performance in their subject and determine the type of changes needed to improve results and sustain them. Lumpkin (2020:32) points out that teachers should continually grow as they construct new knowledge and change their beliefs and levels of comprehension. Teachers expand their extensive disciplinary expertise and instructional abilities as they connect new information with what they already know. Furthermore, teachers should reflect upon what they know, construct new knowledge and organise a layout for deepening their understanding (Lumpkin, 2020, p. 32).

It is possible that, despite the teacher's efforts to improve learning and stay up to date with knowledge, these efforts may be fruitless if learners fail to share their passion for learning, resulting in no improvement in teacher performance. Therein lies a huge challenge in the teaching and learning process: how to overcome learners' resistance so that they see personal benefits and take action using what they have learned, a task that will require motivation for both teachers and learners.

Teachers should be able to implement both the official and extramural curricula to assist learners in developing holistically, thereby improving their performance. Citriadin et al. (2019) assert that the indicator for assessing teacher performance is the ability to implement teaching activities related to teaching students in and out of the classroom. Teachers must perform to boost their morale and contribute to the overall goal of the organisation. Teachers' performance predicted school effectiveness and positively influenced. Özgenel and Mert (2019) found that building effective schools is a difficult process; teachers are expected to be involved and perform at a high level to overcome these challenges and achieve the school's basic objectives at the desired level. It is, therefore, essential to note that, for teachers to perform effectively, components of the school environment must also play their part for teachers to thrive. Lezotte (2001) highlights the components of the school environment as characteristics of effective schools: the school principal, the teacher, the student, the school curriculum and teaching process, the school culture and climate, the school environment and the parents.

2.3 The status of offering Commerce subjects

Reviews on commercial subjects are scarce, and the lack is most noticeable. Moreover, at meetings and conferences of teachers interested in the Commerce curriculum, papers and discussions on the teaching of Commerce seem to appear less frequently than those on the teaching of other subjects (Williams, 1948). This concurs with Gawde's (2014:105) finding that the discipline of Commerce has not been successful in attracting researchers' attention in India, nor has it yet been able to bridge the gap between professionals and researchers. This raises the question of why Commerce subjects are becoming unpopular in schools.

The status of Commerce in Namibia can be reflected in the number of learners writing national examinations. In 2023, the total number of learners who sat for the NSSCO examination in Commerce subjects was 4,494, whilst the total number of learners who sat for the examination in the country was 40,630 (Directorate of National Examination Assessment, 2024:1-252). In 2023, 774 learners sat for Commerce subjects, out of a total of 4,087 learners who wrote the advanced subsidiary (Directorate of National Examination and Assessment, 2024:1-63). The current status of Commerce in the country is not desirable, and education stakeholders and policymakers need to make drastic changes before the subject becomes extinct. A study by Muliaina, Tautofi and Seve (2020) shows a decline in the number of learners studying Commerce at the high school level. The study further reveals that, for the period from 2006 to 2019, and especially from 2009 onward, the number of learners enrolled in the Commerce field has been declining. The decline in the number of students taking Commerce subjects could have implications for the workforce, potentially leading to a shortage of qualified personnel in Commerce-related areas in the future.

The Commerce learning area is a specialist, skills-focused area central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society (NIED, 2016:13). Therefore, particular attention should be paid to these subjects owing to their importance to society. Commerce subjects in Namibia start at the junior secondary phase, Grade 8 and go up to the highest secondary level, Grade 12 (NIED, 2016:13). The implication is that Commerce starts very late in the learners' school life, as learners enter secondary school without the knowledge and a foundation in any of the Commerce subjects. Consequently, this negatively affects the choice of pre-vocational subjects in grade 8, thereby causing a low intake of Commerce subjects in grade 11. This is contrary to what is happening in other countries.

In South Africa, accounting is taught in Grades 7-9 as a learning area, after which it is taught in Grades 10-12 (Ifunyana, 2016). This practice is commendable, as learners become aware of various subjects early on, enabling well-informed subject choices in grade 10. In addition to the above, NIED (2021) states that the promotional requirement for a learner to proceed to grade 12 is to have three Cs or above in three of the six subjects they take in Grade 11. This requirement is a contributing factor to

the low number of learners in Grade 12, indicating that the performance in Commerce subjects is even lower at this grade level.

2.4 Determinant for the low intake of learners in Commerce subjects.

A study that sought to find out the reason for the low intake of learners in Geography revealed that learners were not interested in studying Geography because of the map work content, which they found difficult, challenging and confusing (Kaniita, 2020:77-103). In addition, the findings underscored that the field of Geography was not well grouped to attract learners to study Geography (Kaniita, 2020:77-103). Furthermore, it was found that the attitudes and teaching methodology of teachers were demotivating for learners, which did not encourage them to study Geography. Lack of teaching resources, disengagement from fieldwork, peer influence among learners, English as a barrier to learning, and problems with teaching methods were among the factors that teachers and learners highlighted as reasons why Geography was not highly valued as a school subject. Despite these findings being for Geography, the results can be generalised for Commerce subjects because both Geography and Commerce subjects are descriptive in nature.

Mwansa (2020) concurs with Kaniita (2020:77-103), who ascertained that the absenteeism of Commerce learners, coupled with a poor reading culture among learners and an unfavourable examination structure for Commerce subjects, causes learners to perform poorly and, eventually, discourages them from taking Commerce subjects. The research further found that the Commerce syllabus is too congested, making it difficult to attend to the learning objectives and giving the impression that the subjects are difficult, which is not the case (Mwansa, 2020).

Commerce subjects have a specific assessment method and a prescribed way of answering questions; if learners do not follow this structure, they can easily lose marks. This has the potential to discourage learners from taking Commerce subjects, as they are often perceived as being difficult. In addition to the aforementioned reasons for the low intake in the Commerce field, another study by Makhoba and Qoyi (2024) revealed that teachers have a significant impact on their learners, especially when they identify them as strong candidates for a particular field of study. Furthermore, the study also found that parents play a significant role in deciding which

career route and streams their children will follow, and demonstrated that parents decide which stream their children should enrol in, working with the children's teachers to do so.

Thaba-Nkadimene (2020) found that teachers' performance threatens the survival of Commerce subjects, as fewer learners are willing to pursue them. The study further reveals that the teacher shortage is a contributing factor to poor performance among both teachers and learners. South Africa faces challenges owing to a shortage of teachers to support societal knowledge development and provide the strategic human development required in science, technology and the economy. Another study conducted by Oleabhiele and Oko (2018) confirms the poor performance of economics. The study concludes that effective implementation of an economics curriculum is the remedy for the poor performance of economics students in both internal and external examinations. Other reasons for the low intake include hostile and toxic school working conditions, which are causing stress among teachers and high turnover in Commerce subjects (Thaba-Nkadimene, 2020). In a situation where there is already a shortage of Commerce teachers, the high turnover will negatively affect results, leading to poor performance again. The most effective way to encourage learners to pursue a career in Commerce is through strong performance. This requires minimising the factors affecting low intake to attract more learners to the field.

Mathiba (2021) notes that teachers and communities are not doing enough to promote commercial subjects to learners, especially those in grade 9 who face a crucial decision about their careers, involving the choice of subjects to take in grade 10. A lack of support for Commerce teachers and learners has also been identified as a contributing factor to low learner enrolment in Commerce subjects. More attention is given to science subjects, while Commerce subjects receive little attention, even though they form the backbone of industries in every country.

The strategic plan for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is aligned as a strategic initiative to the Fifth National Development Plan 2021/2022 requires that mathematics improve by 20% and Physical Science to have improved by 10% (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture 2017:12). The omission of Commerce

subjects not only highlights the lack of support for Commerce subjects but also serve as a source of demotivation for learners as the subjects are viewed as less important.

It is also noted that learners have a perception that Commerce does not offer opportunities that will enable them to advance in life, which leads them to avoid choosing Commerce subjects (Mathiba, 2021). Teachers further stressed the lack of practical experience, which allows learners to put the knowledge and skills they have learned into practice, disadvantages them and leads them to believe that Commerce does not offer opportunities. This finding confirms that there is a need for the syllabus to be industry-relevant, enabling learners to acquire practical skills and apply the theory learnt in class.

Mbonambi, Gamede and Ayodele (2023) show that Business Studies as a Commerce subject shows various challenges, such as a lack of exposure to appropriate teaching methods, insufficient time for syllabus coverage, a lack of commitment by business education teachers, non-availability of adequate instructional materials, inadequacy of teaching facilities/ equipment and non-availability of funds. These challenges have negatively affected the performance of business studies, discouraging other learners from pursuing the subject and resulting in low enrolments. Teachers need to employ standard teaching strategies to capture learners' interest in Commerce subjects and boost performance (Mudulia, 2012). The study revealed a disparity in the availability of teaching and learning resources between high- and low-performing schools, prompting the recommendation that the Ministry of Education implement more training on how to effectively obtain, create and utilise these resources.

2.5 SEOs', school principals, HoDs and teachers' perceptions on the Commerce subjects

Education, as commonly understood, is a shared responsibility among education stakeholders. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to understand the perceptions of stakeholders involved in implementing Commerce subjects' curricula regarding the field of study.

2.5.1 Perception of SEOs

SEOs, also known as advisory teachers, are regional officials responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the national curriculum, particularly regarding teachers' professional development and participation in curriculum development and research (MoEAC, 2019:6).

Smith, Gamede and Uleanya (2019:293-303) found that in Commerce subjects, curriculum delivery is dependent on teachers' familiarity with the curriculum, lesson planning and teaching using the curriculum. The study recommended that teachers be motivated to familiarise themselves with the curriculum and receive periodic training on how to use it effectively when planning lessons and teaching. Continuous curriculum change should be regularly assessed to ensure alignment with evolving societal and economic needs. Similarly, the curriculum for Commerce subjects needs to be revised regularly to meet current needs. In Namibia, the curriculum is revised every five years.

Tjozongoro (2019) conducted a study on the perceptions of SEOs regarding their role in supporting teaching and learning. The findings indicate that SEOs are responsible for training teachers to prepare them for curriculum implementation during curriculum dissemination (Tjozongoro, 2019: 95). Additionally, Florence (2006) found that teachers should get ongoing training and meet with experts regularly to learn the specific skills they need.

However, based on the findings, it can be deduced that the workload of subject advisers is too heavy, as the subject allocation is too extensive. Furthermore, the research revealed that SEOs are also concerned about the way allocated subjects are combined in the field of study and complained that, at times, areas of specialisation and subject teaching experience are not considered.

A SEO for Commerce in Namibia is responsible for supporting six subjects: Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Entrepreneurship, and Office Practice. From the five, it can only be possible that a SEO is only professionally qualified for two subjects, causing the other four (4) subjects to lag in terms of subject support, and if subjects are not performing, the school principals, in most cases, opt to discontinue them.

Mabe (2019) shares the view of Tjozongoro (2019) that the common reason given for the unavailability and limited visibility of SEOs in schools is that they have a heavy workload and struggle with time management. This time constraint is caused by having too many subjects to manage and other administrative tasks that SEOs must fulfil. There are regions with two SEOs for Commerce, which splits the subjects, subsequently easing their burden of overseeing many subjects. However, this is not a common practice nationwide. Ngwenya, Sithole and Okoli (2005) argue that ongoing support should be provided by the SEOs in schools to assist teachers with challenging topics and teaching strategies. Ongoing support will ensure that teachers are well-equipped to fully implement the curriculum, providing regular advisory services to assist them in areas where they may lack sufficient subject knowledge and supervision skills.

2.5.2 Perception of Principals

School principals are at the centre of curriculum implementation in schools; they possess the highest level of authority at the school level in decision-making and significantly impact school practices in many ways. The Basic Education Act (2020) defines a school principal as a teacher who holds the post as the head of the school. The Act further stipulates the powers and functions of the school principal, as per Section 4(7)(g), to ensure the proper implementation of policy and legislation. Principals are, therefore, responsible for the effective implementation of the curriculum and have the responsibility to ensure, as much as possible, that all fields of study are implemented and offered in the school, without favouring one field over another, but rather offering what is in the best interest of the learners.

A South African study by Ndou (2023:97) sought to gauge principals' perceptions of the phasing out of accounting in secondary schools in the Limpopo Province. The principals revealed five factors why the subject is phased out namely: poor teachers' performance results and higher failure rate in accounting; reduction in numbers of learners taking accounting in grade 10, redeployments of accounting educators in schools with fewer numbers in the commercial stream, shortage of teachers and a lack of support staff in the South African Limpopo schools and the hostile working

environment caused by work overload and lack of strategic school resources and infrastructure.

The greatest way to increase intake in a field of study is always through performance. Parents are more willing to encourage their learners to take up Commerce subjects when those subjects are performing well; conversely, when they are underperforming, they are less willing to do so. Hence, teachers need to be encouraged to work hard to attract more students to the field of Commerce. Parents are observed to play a significant role in preparing their children for their chosen careers, as evidenced by their discussions with children about how to achieve their forthcoming career goals (Ngussa & Rehema, 2019). The choice for parents to be involved in their learners' work is commendable; however, there is a need to raise awareness so that parents are informed about all possible career choices to better advise their learners.

With all the influences that principals carry in the school setting, Hämäläinen, Ruskovaara and Pihkala (2018:4-5) stated the commitment and what principals can do to promote entrepreneurship education, outlining that principals can ensure the successful implementation of entrepreneurship education by including it in their plans. This plan will serve as a backbone for teachers in offering enterprise theme days, elective entrepreneurship courses or enterprise-oriented periods. If carried out well, learners involved in entrepreneurship in schools can assist them in running school tuck shops and entrepreneurship days, giving them the opportunity to practice their entrepreneurial skills.

Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) revealed that inefficiency in time management, classroom management, and lesson note preparation and delivery can hinder the attainment of instructional goals, ultimately reducing learners' academic performance and, consequently, their employability. Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) further maintain that business studies teachers try to view time and class management as well as appropriate lesson note preparation as genuine tools for productive interaction, mastery and acquisition of necessary skills for employability, particularly because learners' performance on both internal and external exams appears to be at an all-time low. The findings of the cited study suggest that as Commerce teachers, they also play a role in the discontinuation or low intake of the subjects, contributing

to their ineffectiveness through factors such as poor classroom management and a lack of exploration of effective teaching strategies for business studies.

In the same vein, Uzoechina (2015) identified another constraint in implementing the Commerce Entrepreneurship subject. Principals are aware of the relevance of Entrepreneurship in learners' lives, but it appears that the achievement of these objectives is being challenged by inadequate funding, which they rated 4.00 (Strongly Agree). Without sufficient funds, the resources for entrepreneurship will be lacking, which will consequently lead to the poor implementation of the Entrepreneurship curriculum.

2.5.3 Perception of Teachers and Heads of Departments

A study aimed at understanding teachers' perceptions of accounting in the United States of America found that accounting bodies need to improve and reposition the image of accountants (Wells & Fieger, 2010). Furthermore, there is a possible mismatch between the requisite skills perceived by teachers and those sought by the profession. The skills that learners acquire in Commerce classes are currently insufficient to prepare them for the job industry that awaits them after school. Therefore, the Commerce syllabus should be revised to align learners' skills with the market's expectations.

A study aimed to establish the role of HoDs found that, in their view, their main functions were leading the curriculum, coupled with developing staff and managerial skills, as well as overseeing curricula, learning materials, learners and accounting colleagues (Rajoo, 2012). The perceptions of HoDs of Commerce in this study were positive, and they made concerted efforts to develop their skills to effectively train and support their teachers. A positive attitude from a leader usually sets the tone for the department, as subordinates will model their leader's behaviour and adopt that attitude towards the subjects. Furthermore, Ngwenya, Sithole and Okoli (2005) argue that HoDs should be fully trained on curriculum changes in their subjects to provide effective guidance and supervise teachers under their leadership. Accounting teachers further opined that they often struggle to teach new content as learners lack adequate background knowledge needed to learn the subject in succeeding grades owing to the unique language of the subject, shortage of textbooks and insufficient

assessment activities in the textbooks, constraining the teaching of accounting (Ngwenya, et al., 2005).

Wells (2009) concurs with the findings of Wells and Fieger (2010) that there is a growing concern that a widespread perception of accounting is discouraging individuals with the required skills and capabilities from entering the accounting profession. The findings suggest that not only are perceptions inaccurate but also difficult to change.

Commerce teachers in India shared their perceptions of Commerce subjects and their approaches to these subjects in a study (Gupta, 2019, p. 303). Furthermore, the teachers highlighted that Commerce education in India has been developed to support the growing manpower needs of business enterprises. Commerce education is important and helpful for various areas of business, trade, commerce, and industry (Gupta, 2019, p. 301). The perceptions highlighted by the teachers in India are as follows:

- There are no Commerce subjects available at secondary school levels, like science and arts subjects, which could provide the basic knowledge for the students to gain admission in Commerce and understand the importance of studying.
- The syllabus of Commerce courses does not provide practical work experience or industry-oriented experience. This prevents them from getting a suitable job in future.
- Many curricula are outdated and have lost their relevance to the present scenario, which makes students fail to deal with the current scenario.
- Many colleges or institutions did not have facilities like well-designed classrooms with modern devices like computer networks, overhead projectors (OHPs), digital libraries, internet facilities and more.
- More of the institution's classrooms are overcrowded owing to the non-availability of proper required facilities and seating arrangements, which prevent students from getting proper learning and skill development.

- Junior colleges and degree colleges are not providing timely counselling and guidance to their students for further studies, improvements and career building, because of this, many students are not able to choose proper careers.
- There is an absence of a body to promote Commerce education; many people suggest science or arts education.
- Commerce teachers are expected to teach all subjects despite their specialised fields.

2.6 Teaching methodologies teachers use in the classrooms when teaching Commerce subjects

Methodology is the systematic and theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study and the principles associated with a branch of knowledge (Dhere, 2014). Hameed (2024) further simplifies the definition of methodology as a description of how information or behaviour is carried forward or consolidated during the instructional process. The most common method of teaching is the teacher-centred approach. The teacher-centred approach is an approach to teaching in which the teacher plans lessons that are controlled by the teacher, who is in a position of authority (Johnson and Van Wyk, 2016:104).

The teacher is the primary focus in implementing the lesson plan to achieve the lesson's objectives. The role of a learner in this approach is that of a passive listener, whose task is limited to responding to what the teacher asks of them, while the teacher remains in control of teaching and learning in the classroom. Johnson and Van Wyk (2016:109) outlined the following methods of teaching using the teacher-centred approach:

- Direct instruction method
- Whole class discussion
- Teaching large classes as a method
- Question and answer method
- Textbook method
- Economic cartoons as a method.

2.6.1 Cooperative Learning and jigsaw as a teaching strategy

Cooperative learning is defined by Alexander and Van Wyk (2014: 689) as a philosophical and practical approach to transforming classroom settings and school organisations, as well as classroom processes and learning activities, to provide all learners with more active learning experiences, equal opportunities, access, and a more socially supportive role. When the correct teaching methods are employed in the classroom, teachers can effectively transfer knowledge to learners, and learners can grasp the content with equal ease. Van Wyk (2008) proposed cooperative learning as a teaching strategy for one of the Commerce subjects, economics. This strategy, when used effectively, can evoke learner interest in the subject matter, promote the efficient and effective establishment of links between prior knowledge and new subject matter and encourage a critical attitude among learners towards the subject matter.

Learners who are more individually inclined may be predisposed to forge relationships and master learning material in culturally diverse contexts, as noted by Alexander and Van Wyk (2014:689). Cooperative learning as a teaching strategy in a Commerce classroom has the potential to maximise the knowledge of both the teacher and the learners, as both parties are involved in the teaching and learning process. Learners are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by engaging in knowledge acquisition, rather than merely receiving preconstructed information from the teacher.

The role of the teacher during cooperative strategy is to serve as the subject-matter expert and identify the outcomes to be achieved. Learners must take an active role; therefore, the teacher is responsible for assigning roles to students based on their academic competence, social skills and unique personalities (Van Wyk, 2008). It is, therefore, the teacher's task to create a climate conducive to a teaching and learning environment that facilitates the successful completion of cooperative learning activities.

Odike (2016) shares the same sentiment as Van Wyk (2008), who highlighted cooperative learning as one of the teaching methodologies for Commerce. Cooperative learning is a method of delivering content in which students work

together to complete a particular task. The teacher should group learners and assign roles; this will be effective only if the teacher has cultivated a classroom environment that fosters group work, allowing learners to interact and express their views.

Another strategy for teaching Commerce subjects is a flipped classroom pedagogy. This is a model for delivering instruction that shifts lectures from a class-time activity to an at-home activity and shifts “homework” from an at-home activity to an in-class, critical-thinking set of activities (Brown, 2016:4). Brown (2016:11) briefly explains how this strategy works in a classroom setting. When using this teaching method, the teacher prepares a lecture that is either recorded by them or obtained from another professional source. Learners are then expected to watch this video at home as part of their homework. Elmaadaway (2018) established that this model repositioned the instructor away from lecturing, allowing them to circulate and provide individualised guidance and support to learners during class time. Furthermore, this preparation enabled them to engage more productively in sessions by asking informed questions and collaborating on problem-solving tasks.

If learners have access to the Internet, they have access to the learning content. Van Wyk (2018) revealed that the FCP digital pedagogy enhanced the academic performance and perceptions of economics students in an online, open-distance learning environment. Moreover, Galindo-Dominguez (2021) found that the Flipped Classroom method may be more beneficial for learning than traditional methods. Furthermore, learners and teachers appreciate the functionality of the FCP experience as an online strategy, finding it useful and effective for their learning. The FCP allows learners to learn at their own pace; however, it can place a burden on parents with limited access to technology, making the FCP less inclusive for all learners.

Odike (2016) further highlighted other teaching methodologies in the Commerce classroom, such as:

- **Project method**: a planned piece of work that is designed to find information about something, to produce something new or to improve something: a research project, building project, etc. It is also a piece of work that involves

careful study of a subject over a period of time, done by school or college learners.

- **Field trip/Excursion Method**: the act of taking learners outside the classroom for them to learn some concept and things as they occur in their natural environment. Sitali-Mubanga, Lukonga and Denuga (2018) recommended that to foster active learning, teachers should integrate field trips into the curriculum to promote intrinsic motivation and enable learners to construct meaningful knowledge.
- **Discussion Method**: involves the sharing of ideas or arguments between members of a group.
- **Simulation and Role Play**: is a method of teaching where the learner plays the roles of the person being talked about.
- **Demonstration Method**: involves showing the learners the response pattern that is desired.
- **Brainstorming Method**: is a way of making a group of people think about something at the same time, often to solve a problem or to create good ideas.
- **Discovery Approach**: Teaching and learning involve helping pupils discover certain facts or answers to a given problem.
- **Team Teaching Method**: Team teaching can be defined as an arrangement in which two or more experienced teachers share the responsibility for a common group of learners, varying in size and teaching procedure according to the objectives of the work at hand and the needs of the learners.

These methods share an equal status and none should be elevated above others. The teacher teaching Commerce subjects does not have to choose only one method to use in their classroom but instead can alternate between the methods depending on their suitability for the topic of the day and the outcome they seek to achieve.

Dhere (2014) researched the methodology of teaching Commerce and highlighted the different methods as follows:

- **Role-playing**: a form of dramatic skill that emphasises individual performance.

- **Cooperative learning**: involves students working in groups to accomplish learning goals.
- **Question Answer method**: The teacher can develop the participation of students through question-and-answer activities between the teacher and the students.
- **Demonstration**: it is a type of teaching that involves showing the student the response pattern that is desired. It is a method whereby the teacher demonstrates what they are teaching, and the students imitate their actions.

Ngwenya (2014) concurs with the methodologies outlined above and further emphasises that learners need to be actively involved in their learning through methods such as case-study analysis, individual and group projects, problem-based presentations, problem-solving, real-life scenarios, role-playing, discussions, and simulations. Mbonambi, Gamede, and Ayodele (2023) identified instructional strategies such as field trips, group discussions, simulations, demonstrations, project-based methods, questioning, assignments, and drill-and-practice as effective methods for teaching business studies.

Agreeing with the foregoing findings, Adu and Zondo (2023: 57-66) reviewed strategies teachers use in the Economics and Management Sciences, which are textbooks, question-and-answer methods, economic cartoons, direct instruction and whole-class discussion for teaching large classes.

As observed in the teaching methodologies presented earlier, most involve learners working in pairs or groups, allowing them to peer-teach one another as they carry out the activity. This is in contrast with what happens in the teacher-centred approach, as opined by Otukile-Mongwaketse (2018), that teachers' delivery of instruction using a teacher-centred approach leaves out some learners, minimally benefiting from the teaching and learning process, especially learners who have learning difficulties. Learners learn better when they are involved in the lesson; hence, most of the methods identified involve learners working together and taking charge of their own learning. Regardless of the method the teacher uses, it is essential to note that the teacher remains the facilitator of this learning process, and learners ask questions as needed. Briggs (2019) found that no single teaching method is better than others,

and that teachers should continue to hone their skills by attending workshops and be aware of the appropriate methods to apply when one method is not effective.

2.7 Strategies that can be implemented to retain learners in the commercial subject and grow the field

Learner retention is defined as an issue of increasing interest in a subject or higher education institutions in learners (Ameijde, Weller & Cross, 2018: 41). Retention in the Commerce classroom is crucial as it ensures that learners do not, at any given point, decide to change from the Commerce field to pursue another field of study. Against this background, strategies must be implemented to motivate learners to remain in the Commerce classroom.

Reddy (2007) suggested the following retention strategies that teachers can use to increase learners' interest in pursuing and remaining in Commerce subjects, thereby growing the field.

- Build rapport with trade, Commerce and Industry;
- Elicit the industry needs and requirements;
- As business operations need more knowledge and skill, the Commerce syllabus must contain a knowledge component, skill component and practice component;
- Industry people to be on the syllabus board of Commerce subjects;
- Commerce students should also be provided with a Computer Lab, as Commerce and computers go together.
- The trainer must be trained first. The university department should take the lead whenever the syllabus is changed, whenever new subjects are introduced.

Even for general updates and posting with the latest developments in the field. Training is essential for teachers to support their continuous professional development and stay up to date with advancements in their respective fields of study.

It is necessary to revise the Commerce subjects to make them more engaging for learners, thereby motivating them to pursue these subjects. Learners in Commerce classrooms and those aspiring to be in a Commerce classroom need to be motivated,

encouraged and introduced to innovative strategies in teaching and learning Commerce subjects to achieve success and productivity.

Singh et al. (2023:450-451) outlined strategies for students to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in Commerce subjects, which, when implemented correctly, will assist in boosting the subjects.

- Strengthening the importance of literacy and numeracy skills in Commerce.
- Improved parental involvement.
- Innovative teachers' teaching strategy in Commerce subjects.
- Guiding learners' career paths that follow the Commerce path.

The foregoing teaching strategy is similar to the results reported by Reddy (2008). This similarity highlights the significant role that teachers play in revitalising Commerce subjects. Content delivery needs to be effective, as that is the departure point for any good motivation and helps the subjects survive. The afore-mentioned strategies, despite their focus on literacy and numeracy, will impact the revitalisation of Commerce. An increase in performance directly contributes to the growth in the intake of Commerce subjects, as better performance in these subjects will encourage other learners to take them.

Ayyapparajan, Vijayakumar, and Jayashree (2024:49) identified a strategy to revitalise Commerce subjects through exposure and emphasised that exposure for Commerce learners should be improved. Moreover, learners pursuing Commerce subjects are given enough training related to communication, accounting, problem-solving, leadership skills, knowledge of taxes and laws. Despite the skills provided, their application knowledge in real-time is not up to the mark, making them irrelevant to the job market. One strategy for building exposure is through Commerce clubs. Fugate (1942) created a blueprint for Commerce clubs in schools and concluded that such clubs are generally desirable as an extracurricular activity. Similarly, Pence and Dymond (2015) conducted research on extracurricular activities in schools and found that school clubs are the most organised activity in which learners can participate for them to function properly. The exposure will enable learners to receive a practical and

relevant education, preparing them to become global citizens who can compete effectively in the job market.

Ozturk and Debelak (2008) identify academic competitions to revitalise the Commerce field and suggest that it could expand the depth of learners' knowledge on subject matters and give an opportunity to above-average learners to learn subject areas beyond what they learn in the classroom. Career awareness has, over time, emerged as a strategy to revive the Commerce field, as learners prefer to choose a subject they can relate to and see how it can advance their careers. Ibrahim et al. (2014) carried out research among secondary school learners and discovered that the learners who were aware of careers were able to make career decisions, while those who were not aware of careers had difficulty in making career decisions.

To revitalise the field, a strategy that exposes learners to the real world and industries where they will apply their skills needs to be implemented. Industries for Commerce, therefore, need to be consulted when developing a Commerce curriculum to ensure the relevance of school subjects in comparison to what the real world exposes them to.

2.8 Integration of ICT, Generative AI in Commerce classrooms

2.8.1 The use of AI in Commerce classrooms

Sheikh, Prins and Schrijvers (2023) define artificial intelligence (AI) as the imitation of various complex human skills by machines. Models like the one used by ChatGPT are tools that utilise Generative AI to compose poems, write papers, solve code problems, and generate algorithms, interacting with human beings through written conversation (Brandao, Pedro & Zagalo, 2013). It is therefore no surprise that teachers and learners are among the largest users of GenAI, given its ability to interact and produce text similar to that of humans. A study by Sharma, Mistry and Thakar (2024) revealed that the use of AI technologies in Commerce classrooms saves teachers time by quickly producing custom-made content, such as case studies

and interactive learning aids. By simply specifying details such as student level and tone, teachers can generate relevant materials in moments.

AI has also become popular in the Namibian school system. Siririka (2022) noted that in Namibia, an Okalai Project cost-free AI course is currently underway, providing AI education to diverse segments of the Namibian population and to students from other African countries. While the course seeks to foster interactive learning by enabling learners to take ownership, the project also provides AI education to learners from diverse backgrounds, contributing to a globally competitive AI-literate workforce, as noted by Siririka (2022). Jatileni et al. (2024) stated that Africa faces hindrances in implementing AI effectively, such as uneven modernisation and inequalities, as well as the unavailability of reliable technological infrastructure. However, despite the challenges noted above, education is a global initiative; therefore, the integration of AI from early grades through high school is essential for Africa to produce citizens of the world equipped with all technological advancements.

To address these challenges as a continent, there is a need to equip young citizens with the skills to meet future demands, such as AI literacy and skills. Teaching AI to young generations in these countries could enable them to utilise AI to transform productivity and service delivery across the public sectors of healthcare, agriculture, education, transportation, and governance (Jatileni et al., 2024). Artificial Intelligence has the potential to accelerate sustainable development and empower young Africans (Neupane & Sibal, 2021). Neupane and Sibal (2021) demonstrate that some African countries have implemented AI strategies, policies, programmes, and initiatives for education, research, and training, as well as programmes to support innovation through start-ups. The report indicates that 18 of 32 countries have initiated efforts to guide national AI development.

The biggest question of concern raised by Brandão, Pedro and Zagalo (2013:150) is, however, how learners use these tools. Do they use them to develop and deepen their learning? Or do they use the results and claim to be the authors of the content produced without critically analysing them? Given the concerns raised by the authors , it is, therefore, crucial that teachers assist learners in making the best use of AI and ensure it is utilised correctly in teaching and learning. Special attention should,

therefore, be given to cases of plagiarism to better guide learners (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005). Whittemore & Knafl (2005) further maintain that tools using Gen AI are accessible to learners, raising numerous ethical issues that teachers need to address in the classroom. Furthermore, teachers need to guide their learners towards an ethical and safe use of these tools; in-service teachers should be familiar with them and, if desired, incorporate them into their teaching practices.

Brandao, Pedro and Zagalo (2013:150) outline the different methods and strategies in which AI can be used in the Commerce classroom and learning of learners, namely:

- Analyse student work and give them feedback
- Help to get information
- Help write
- Help learn without pressure as they are available 24/7
- Help summarise
- Serve as an aid for brainstorming ideas
- Provide personalised teaching through interactions that adapt to the content and characteristics of the students

For the foregoing strategies to be effective, it is essential that critical thinking skills are applied by both learners and teachers when utilising these tools. The purpose behind each teacher's use of these tools should determine their relevance, since they should help to facilitate the methods of instruction and learning and be suitable for the age group of the learners (Brandao, Pedro & Zagalo, 2013).

AI and ICT are distinct fields of study; however, their integration in education can have a significant impact.

2.8.2 Integration of ICT in teaching and learning

Sharma defines ICT as techniques and methods that help in the transformation of a conventional classroom into a smart classroom. Teachers can utilise distinctive applications in online resources to enhance traditional teaching methods and keep learners more engaged. Dhiman and Gera (2021) found an improvement in learners' performance when using blended e-learning instruction in Economics, positively enhancing the academic achievement of XI class Commerce learners in the

economics subject through video lessons and live online teaching. Kaur shares the benefits of using ICT in the classroom. Computer-based learning is one of the modules of the school communication instrument that helps learners to improve their learning skills through computer-supported instruction. ICT empowers learners to become dynamic members in their own learning.

Video Conferencing in schools is an effective communication tool that can change how we convey information to learners (Kishor, Arora & Pooja, 2020). Singh et al. (2023:449) contribute that the consistent use of technology also enhances students' literacy and numeracy skills because they have access to a variety of learning materials suited to their abilities. Furthermore, Singh et al. (2023:449) indicate that the use of technology improves students' literacy and numeracy skills by providing access to online learning materials that encourage critical thinking, thereby sequentially increasing their performance in accounting and economics, which require numeracy.

2.9 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. It further reviewed on (a) related literature on the status of Commerce subjects (b) related literature on the determinants of low intake in Commerce (c) related literature The perception of SEOs', school principals, HoDs and teachers' perceptions on the status of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools (d) related literature on teaching methodologies teachers use in the classrooms when teaching Commerce subjects. (e) related literature on the strategies that can be implemented to retain learners in the commercial subject and grow the field. The use of AI and ICT in Commerce classrooms was also explored, including how they enhance teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 3

CURRICULUM CHANGE AND COMMERCE SUBJECTS FROM A NAMIBIAN PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the theoretical framework of ODT, which underpins this study, was discussed. It further reviewed (a) related literature relevant to the sub-questions of this study. The use of AI and ICT in Commerce classrooms was also explored, including how it has the potential to enhance teaching and learning.

The chapter provides an overview of Namibia's education system, with a focus on Commerce subjects. The chapter discusses the curriculum changes and reforms in Namibia, both pre- and post-independence, and highlights four Commerce subjects offered in Namibia and their individual importance. The learner-centred approach, which is the recommended strategy for all subjects, including Commerce subjects in Namibia, will be discussed, along with how teachers can apply the teacher-centred approach in Commerce classrooms to enhance teaching and learning.

3.2 Curriculum Change

The curriculum is understood as an educational project that forms identities, founded in three domains: knowledge, action and self (Barnett, Parry and Coate, 2001). The curriculum encompasses all learning that occurs in both formal and informal settings at the school. Since the curriculum is responsive, it must continually adapt to meet society's current needs. Law (2022) defines curriculum changes as alternatives in the education system that are geared towards ensuring the needs of the government, learners and social institutions are met. Like any other system, education must also examine its surroundings and identify areas that need change to thrive in this evolving world and produce learners who are competitive in the job market. Namolo (2021) suggests that reforms are driven by an ever-changing global economy and contemporary social issues, which affect the education system and the country's curricula.

Gruba et.al (2004) highlight drivers for curriculum changes as follows:

- Influential individuals: The capacity to attract other academic staff to rally behind principled educational objectives that are supported within the environment.
- Financial pressures: There are powerful budgetary forces that influence our decisions. Team-oriented project subjects are arguably one of the most important parts of computing education.
- Staffing issues: even if funding for staff positions is available, it is not always possible to fill them. Staff shortages can mean that we narrow the range of subjects offered.
- Learners' abilities: In an ideal world, our programmes would be dictated by our desires to create graduates of the highest possible calibre.
- Academic fashion: The enrolment marketplace is competitive. School subjects should be able to attract learners because of their relevance.

Curriculum changes are managed primarily through a hierarchical process (Gruba, et al, 2004). In Namibia, the curriculum is changed every five years. Each subject and discipline-related group of subjects is overseen by a team of teachers and senior personnel, including industry professionals from various institutions of higher learning, who are responsible for ensuring that the content is appropriate and recommend changes, such as adding a subject to the group.

Teachers, as key implementers of the curriculum, play a significant role in its successful implementation. A Portuguese study on curriculum changes indicated that teachers acknowledge the flexibility and local logic in the management of school curricula, in which they play a key role, while highlighting issues of bureaucracy and imposed collaboration, along with the lack of support and guidance to perform their new roles at school (Assunção, 2005). The aforementioned challenges are also echoed by the findings of Namolo (2021), which indicate that negative perceptions towards the new curriculum, lack of textbooks, lack of preparation, lack of support, inadequate content knowledge, lack of teacher involvement in the development of curriculum reforms, changes in the passing requirements and learners' background affect teachers' perceptions towards the implementation of the new curriculum.

3.3 A Pre-Independence of the Namibian Education System

This section provides a brief overview of the historical development of education systems in Namibia, from missionary education to those established under German rule to those in independent Namibia.

3.3.1 Missionary Education in South West Africa (1805-1905)

The Namibian curriculum has undergone several transformations to reach its current state. Josua, Auala and Miranda (2022:1156-1157) allude that the first form of education known was traditional education, which existed before the arrival of missionaries. Indigenous education transmitted knowledge and skills from one generation to another through undocumented traditional means. Traditional education took the form of initiations that have been institutionalised where boys and girls are taken out of their homes to attend sessions conducted by sage experts (ibid). This was followed by the Missionary Education Curriculum, which had an education system modelled around Western-centric civilisation while instilling Western cultural values and norms in the indigenous community of Namibia (ibid).

The missionaries built schools to teach catechism, aiming to produce royal and obedient labourers. Moreover, the catechism aimed to deliver the indigenous people from the state of uncivilisation as well as paganism, which the missionaries claimed was prevalent at the time (ibid). Katjavivi (1988:31) stated that the church provided a sense of patronage and security to those whose traditional social structures had been destroyed. Moreover, the message of salvation offered hope to those who were hopeless. The impact of the missionary education system can still be felt in Namibia, as most indigenous people have abandoned their traditions and norms due to European influence in earlier days. During the missionary education curriculum, girls were trained in domestic roles, while boys were trained in brick making, carpentry and gardening (Iita, 2014).

3.3.2 Imperialist education under German rule (1894-1914)

After the missionary era came the German colonial era, with an education system not far removed from that offered by the missionaries. This education system also aimed to produce obedient labourers to work as livestock men and domestic workers serving the German settlers' families. The preceding sentiment was supported by Walther

(2012), who found that appropriate white education in the settler colony of South West Africa (SWA) was essential for maintaining German hegemony in the territory. A few selected black individuals were required to serve as messengers, clerks and other administrative functionaries; however, basic literacy and numeracy were permitted as an exception (Iita, 2014).

The colonial government aimed to secure the colony as a German possession for future generations by turning its white youth into good, loyal and productive Germans through education (Walther, 2001).

3.3.3 Education under South African colonial rule (1915–1990)

After German rule, South Africa acted on behalf of Britain, and this government introduced the Bantu Education system. Josua et al. (2022:1156-1157) highlight that this Bantu Education system was specifically designed for Namibian indigenous people. Moreover, it also enforced the divide-and-rule policy, which enabled the white settlers to control the indigenous natives economically and politically.

Under the apartheid regime, separate forms of teacher training were provided for black, coloured and white population groups. Primary teacher training for different black ethnicities was delivered in the northern and northeastern rural regions, specifically in Ongwediva, Rundu and Katima Mulilo. Coloured students were trained in their residential area of Khomasdal, and white student teachers had their training in Windhoek (Erixon, Erixon & Rehn, 2016). Erixon et al. (2016) further reveal that teacher training for the native population was based on the Christian National Education curriculum, which excluded Mathematics and Science. Despite its basic, low-salary nature, the teacher training provided to residents served as an important source of employment at the time.

3.4 Namibian post-colonial education system

Finally, in 1990, soon after Namibia gained its Independence, new ways of equally educating a nation of different races were devised. The unified basic education system addressed the culture of separateness (Josua, et al., 2022:1156-1157). Unity has been discussed in many national forums while recognising the diversity among communities. Investment in human development at independence was a primary

focus of the government to promote socioeconomic development (Gonzales, 2000). The government's focus was as such because it needed its own people to be equipped and able to run crucial departments within state enterprises and institutions. The education system in independent Namibia has undergone several reforms aimed at making education relevant to current times and the government's educational needs.

Following independence, the government initiated a reform process for teacher education in the country. Dahlström, Swarts and Zeichner (1999) allude that reforms are based on the view that teachers are critical agents in the creation and development of changes in schooling. These reforms in the educational system are seen as contributing to a societal reconstruction that fosters greater equity and social justice for all (Namibians Dahlström, Swarts, and Zeichner, 1999). As implementers of the curriculum, teachers play a crucial role in ensuring it is implemented correctly; hence, investment in their training and education is important.

The Integrated Teacher Training Programme, despite being there before independence, was one of the reforms and believed that a learner is a subject whose prior knowledge, skills and attitudes should be acknowledged in the process of education (Erixon, et al., 2016). Furthermore, Erixon et al. (2016) demonstrate that in 1995, the ITTP gave rise to the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD), which was principally based on the structures and pedagogical approach of the ITTP programme. However, the BETD is currently phased out, and has given way to the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), which is offered by several universities and colleges in Namibia.

Despite teacher training reforms, the education system itself has also undergone many changes, with various education policies introduced. Three years into independence, as part of the government’s educational policy, the ‘Education for All Policy’ was launched as a stepping stone to providing free, quality education (Amukugo, 2017). This policy aims to raise awareness that education is a right for every Namibian child, as anchored in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, Article 20. Article 20 articulates that “All persons shall have the right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory, and the State shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing

and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge'' (The Namibian Constitution, 1990). This constitutional right was further strengthened with the abolition of school development fees in 2013, making education free from pre-primary through Grade 12.

3.5 A History of Curriculum Reforms in Namibia

At the dawn of independence, the Namibian government had to pay special focus to the Department of Education, amidst other areas of change, to upskill its citizens who would now have to take responsibility for contributing economically, politically and socially in overcoming all colonial challenges. Kambeyo, Nauyoma and Julius (2023:22) recognised that to address these challenges and enhance the knowledge and skills of society at the school level, the Namibian government began to develop a new basic education curriculum. The broad curriculum for the education fraternity has undergone many reforms and changes, as reflected in the successive curricula 1993-1995, 1996-2000, 2000-2005, 2005-2007, 2010- 2014, and 2015 to present (Kambeyo, et al., 2023:22). Every part of the curricula served a specific purpose depending on the needs of the country at the time. The reforms, as outlined below, were designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to address past inequality and injustice.

3.5.1 1991-1993: Junior Secondary Certificate.

The first curriculum reform aimed to provide education for all, as opposed to the education before independence, which favoured the elites. Ipinge and Likando (2012) noted that the new education goals set in 1990 in Namibia were a response to dissatisfaction with the lack of relevance of both the content of the school curriculum and the assessment systems of the Cape Matriculation Examinations in South Africa. Moreover, the schools and curriculum before independence were organised and run on a racial basis; the curriculum content and assessment procedures were foreign, and the curriculum materials were mainly examination syllabuses prepared in and by the ruling party (Ipinge & Likando, 2012). The goals of the first curriculum reform after independence were access, equity, quality and democracy in education (Kambeyo, et al., 2023:22). As time goes on and goals are met, the goals must change to meet the current needs, and this can be observed in the aims of education, during the sixth reform.

3.5.2 Curriculum for 2015 to present

The National Curriculum for Basic Education aims to empower learners to actively participate in making Namibian society a knowledge-based society (NIED, 2016:5). A knowledge-based society is characterised by the effective and wise use of existing knowledge and the creation of new knowledge; the effective sharing and using of knowledge through a dynamic information infrastructure; the use of high-level technology and research to create innovations and promote sustainable development for people and the environment; the fostering of entrepreneurship in a growing production-based economy; and by equity (National Institute of Education Development (NIED), 2016:5).

The aim to provide education for all is anchored in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, Chapter 3, Article 20 (1990:14), which stipulates that:

- All persons shall have the right to education.
- Primary education shall be compulsory and the State shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.

Although the Constitution only highlights free primary education, the government of Namibia committed in 2013 to providing free education from primary school through the Advanced Subsidiary level, the highest grade in formal education.

The NIED (2016) provides information on the four current phases of the education curriculum. The first phase is the Junior Primary phase, which spans from pre-primary to grade 3, followed by the Senior Primary phase from grade 4 to 7. The secondary level begins with a Junior Secondary phase, comprising two grades only, grades 8 and 9, and is followed by the senior secondary phase, which starts in grades 10 to 12 (NIED, 2026). Commerce subjects only start in grade 8, which is the secondary level. This is in comparison to science subjects, where learners are already introduced to mathematics and Natural Science from the primary level. As a result, the late introduction of these subjects in the curriculum significantly influences whether learners elect the Commerce subjects, as they are new to them, rather than taking subjects they already know.

Countries around the world are currently implementing Sustainable Development Goal 4, Education 2030, and the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Education is central to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda for SDG4, and its corresponding targets aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (NIED, 2015). The Government of the Republic of Namibia has committed itself to implementing the SDGs. Therefore, the revised curriculum for Basic Education has been aligned with the aspirations of SDG 4 (NIED, 2015). Moreover, the curriculum is aligned with the country's greatest vision, Vision 2030, which aspires for Namibia to be a fair, gender-responsive, caring, and committed nation, in which all citizens can realise their full potential (Office of the President, 2004). Namibians live together in harmony, sharing common values and aspirations and those living with disability are well integrated into the mainstream of society. The vision further envisions Namibia as developing from a literate society to a knowledge-based society, one where knowledge is constantly acquired, renewed and utilised for innovation to enhance the quality of life for its citizens (Office of the President, 2004). The realisation of this vision requires a significant investment in education to provide quality education to learners, enabling them to become literate and responsible citizens who can contribute positively to the transformation of the societies in which they live.

3.6 Commerce Subjects

The Commerce learning area is a skills-focused area, which is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society (NIED, 2016). Learners acquire and apply commercial knowledge in practical situations, develop particular communication skills, and work attitudes and practices, which are essential in effective business life. Commerce is defined as a social institution that deals with the provision of goods and services (Bansal, 2017:16).

According to the NIED (2016), the National Curriculum for Basic Education clearly stipulates that the Commerce subjects offered in Namibia and part of the official curriculum are Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Entrepreneurship and Office Practice. The subjects mentioned are offered at both the Ordinary Level and

the Advanced Subsidiary Level in the Namibian curriculum, except for Office Practice, which is not offered at the Advanced Subsidiary Level.

The significance of Commerce cannot be emphasised enough as this field of study forms the heart of a nation's economic prosperity (Agrawal, 2021). A career in Commerce is among the most sought-after professions, as it is considered highly lucrative.

Commerce serves as the foundation of trade and industry, and it further teaches learners how to maximise the use of available resources (Agrawal, 2021). Bansal (2017:15) concurs that Commerce education is business education, and it is that area of education that develops the required knowledge, skills and attitudes for handling trade, Commerce and Industry.

Learners who pursue a career in Commerce are better equipped with the skills, knowledge and mindset needed to successfully manage trade, business and industry. Education in Commerce provides exposure to the business world in all its forms. Shah (2024) recommended that Commerce education undergo a proper transition, such as updating syllabi to reflect current market realities, thereby enabling learners to become employable graduates and ensuring the content remains relevant. More importantly, learners who specialise in Commerce possess the knowledge and skills to pursue a variety of job options in industries such as accounting, finance, marketing, human resources and entrepreneurship (Shah, 2024). Commerce is a vital field of study in any country, and its decline can be detrimental to any economy.

3.6.1 Accounting

In accounting, learners understand and master mathematical skills, knowledge, concepts and processes, to investigate and interpret numerical relationships and patterns. It helps learners to develop conciseness, logical and analytical thinking, and apply these skills to other areas of learning and real-life situations (NIED, 2019). Accounting is a practical subject, and learners are expected to understand the theory and apply it to practical exercises. Accounting education is, therefore, essential for the benefit of students and other involved stakeholders to properly manage finances, manage time, make decisions, record and maintain activities, manage risks, manage

taxes, manage trade and marketing, prepare bookkeeping records, prepare accounting statements, and interpret them, among other things (Shah, 2024).

Kavari (2012) established that accounting teachers had a positive attitude towards learner-centred education as a method of teaching accounting. However, they lacked the skills to adapt their teaching appropriately to address learners' limited English literacy. The teachers possessed basic knowledge of learner-centred education practices but found it very difficult to implement them in resource-poor environments (Kavari, 2012). Given the practical nature of the subject and despite their desire to embrace learner-centred methods, accounting teachers will still prefer using a learner-centred method that allows them to be in control of the learning process.

3.6.2 Business Studies

Business Studies aims to impart fundamental business skills to learners. It will help learners to apply the business knowledge, skills and attitudes they have acquired to solve environmental, economic, and social problems in their everyday lives. The subject will help learners appreciate the importance of good working habits, develop positive attitudes towards work and promote an interest in self-employment (NIED, 2019).

As part of the curriculum reform, Business Management was introduced from grade 8 to grade 10. In the new curriculum, Business Management was discontinued at the Junior Secondary level and replaced by Entrepreneurship, while only Business Studies was retained. This subject was introduced only in Grades 10 to 12. There is, however, a major problem involved in Entrepreneurship being substituted with Business Management, and Business Management was a requisite for students who want to study business at higher levels, both in senior secondary as well as at university (Larsen & Nagel, 2013:22). This late introduction of the subject to the learners in their school process also discourages many learners from taking up the subject due to a fear of not performing well.

3.6.3 Economics

Van Wyk (2008) describes economics as the study of the individual who, by exerting effort and making choices, satisfies an infinite number of needs with the scarce resources available, thereby creating optimal wealth. Economics is the study of participation in the social, civic, political, economic, cultural, and natural environment, and is central to this area of learning. It includes understanding and interpreting past and present human behaviour and experience, and how they influence events, circumstances and the environment (NIED, 2019).

The importance of economics is often overlooked in many schools, and it is sometimes perceived as a subject suitable only for those who aspire to join the political arena after graduation. However, Van Wyk (2015) emphasises the importance of economic education, noting that learners develop perceptions of their economic world at an early age, which, as they progress through the educational process, evolve into attitudes and opinions about the subject of economics. By finding ways to teach students more about economics, teachers are contributing to improved attitudes toward the subject. By teaching basic economic concepts and applying them to classroom discussions of economic issues, teachers provide a foundation of knowledge for more informed opinions and decision-making on vital economic issues.

The more economic concepts students know, the more they like and value the subject and the more information they have about economic issues (Van Wyk, 2015:83). Teachers must devise ways to teach economics in an interesting and relatable way to learners because the subject is based on everyday economic decision-making, which the learners have experience in and have informed opinions on. Furthermore, the more discussions learners have in the classroom, the more they will be able to analyse economic situations in an examination, which will assist them in scoring more marks and performing well in the subject.

3.6.4 Entrepreneurship

Larsen and Nagel (2013:4) revealed that the government's main objective for introducing entrepreneurship has been to address the high youth unemployment in the country. The specific features of Entrepreneurship at this phase aim to impart basic entrepreneurial concepts to learners, enabling them to create jobs for

themselves and others in the future. Moreover, it will help learners to apply the enterprise knowledge, skills and attitudes they have acquired to solve environmental, economic and social problems in their everyday lives (NIED, 2019). The subject will help learners change their mindsets about working for themselves and gain an understanding of the importance of good work habits and positive attitudes towards work. It will also help learners to be creative in initiating and organising an enterprise.

Larsen and Nagel (2013:4) conducted a study to evaluate the implementation of the Entrepreneurship curriculum, which revealed that learners and teachers were enthusiastic about the subject. Changes in learners' thinking and their self-consciousness were found because of being exposed to Entrepreneurship, and there is evidence of some positive changes in teaching methodology and teacher behaviour (Larsen & Nagel, 2013:4).

3.7 Continuing Professional Development in Namibia

At the heart of the ODT is the provision of adequate training to teachers as catalysts for change in their schools. As curriculum implementers, teachers must receive adequate training to ensure they implement the curriculum effectively. Continuing Professional Development is defined as practices aimed at employees' development beyond that derived from their initial training (Collin, Heijden, & Lewis, 2012). CPD is a form of lifelong learning that needs to be well-structured and regulated. Furthermore, CPD for educators is important through a functional CPD committee at the school level. The University of Namibia (2014:2), in a CPD implementation booklet, gives a guide to who should form part of a CPD committee at the school level, namely:

- Principal
- Mentor Teacher
- Heads of Department
- Novice teacher
- Experienced teacher.

This committee has the key roles of identifying professional development needs and planning to address them. The committee also implements professional development action plans and evaluates the interventions (University of Namibia, 2014:2). This

committee is site-based, enabling a prompt response to teachers' CPD needs. When CPD is localised, it makes it possible for the approach the school is taking and the methods of training to be tailor-made for that specific teacher, rather than a general approach that is usually taken when training at a national or regional level. Schools can tap into the expertise of experienced teachers within the school to assist others. If the school lacks expertise in a particular area, it can look for assistance from a sister school or at the cluster level. Alternatively, schools must go to the circuit level for expertise. It is only after all options have been exhausted and proved fruitless that the school can liaise with the respective regional office to deploy experts for assistance.

Principals and teachers need to realise the importance of CPD committees at schools and ensure that these committees are functional, as they contribute positively to academic performance. Subject meetings can be organised and problematic topics identified and be peer taught, or best practices to be shared on how to teach those topics or a lesson on how to prepare an effective lesson plan (University of Namibia, 2014:2). The topics to be submitted to CPD committee are not only subject content related but can also include other topics such as subject administration, circulars and policies that teachers need to understand and comply to.

Ucan (2016) highlights three different settings in which CPD can take place: firstly, direct learning through workshops and conferences; secondly, learning in school through peer coaching, mentoring, and learning out of school, such as school-university partnerships. These propositions align with Uy's (2024) findings, which indicate that formal training programmes, workshops, seminars, and conferences are commonly utilised methods for skill enhancement and knowledge acquisition in CPD. In addition, Uy (2024) highlights that organisations are increasingly recognising the value of informal learning opportunities, such as communities of practice, peer learning networks and on-the-job experiences, technology-enabled learning platforms, e-learning modules, and digital resources have gained prominence as efficient means of delivering learning content and promoting self-directed learning.

Beyond the formal setting of CPD, these findings indicate that teachers are also expected to take ownership of their learning by networking with other teachers in the

teaching fraternity through various platforms, such as social media groups, to enhance their professional development. Furthermore, teachers do not leave university as finished products and therefore, need to fill the learning and knowledge gap through CPD. Even teachers who have been in the teaching profession for a long time need CPD to keep abreast of all the latest developments in their areas of specialisation.

The benefits of CPD cannot be emphasised enough. Kruger and Pienaar (2020) found that CPD delivers benefits to the individual, their profession and the public. Moreover, CPD enhances credibility and maintains skills and knowledge to deliver professional healthcare services. It also ensures that individuals are up to date with industry change by constantly updating their skills set and filling in gaps in competencies and knowledge (Kruger & Pienaar, 2020). When implemented successfully, the benefits of CPD will enhance classroom practice, ultimately leading to improved academic performance, the ultimate goal. However, a study conducted by Johnson (2024) that sought the opinion of teachers on the implementation of the new Commerce curriculum found that while some value its hands-on and flexible nature, others point to problems such as minimal teacher support, poor training and limited materials. Poor training can be detrimental, even to the best curriculum; if teachers, as implementers, are not well prepared, the curriculum will not be successful.

3.8 A preferred teaching approach to be applied in Namibian classrooms: A Learner-Centred Approach

In Namibia, teachers are expected to employ a learner-centred approach in delivering their lessons (MEAC, 1992). O'Sullivan (2004) alludes that a learner-centred curriculum was introduced in Namibia soon after independence from South Africa in 1990. It was considered an effective antidote to the stifling teacher-centred practices used within the previous apartheid system (O'Sullivan, 2004). Shinyemba (1999) defines the learner-centred approach as a method that entails learners being allowed to identify a problem in a guided manner, explore, investigate, analyse, extrapolate, share, debate, discover and experiment. This concurs with what Kubavat and Verma

(2023) found that modern teaching involves more than classroom management, upfront explanations and testing, rather the responsibility of the teacher to create conditions in which learning takes place. This approach to learning requires teachers to be aware of their learners' backgrounds and interests, making it easier for learners to grasp the material.

The Namibian education system aims at producing a knowledge-based society that requires ownership of teaching and learning. This means that the point of departure when teaching is always what the learners already know and can do. The next step is for them to acquire new knowledge through methods of working and learning that are relevant and meaningful to them, and, finally, to learn how to apply their knowledge creatively and innovatively (NIED, 2016).

The Ministry of Education and Culture (1993:120 cited in Ipinge and Likando (2012) outlined tenets for learner-centred education as follows:

- An enlightened understanding of humankind, its culture, its traditions and its history.
- a methodology that promotes learning through understanding and practice directed towards the autonomous mastery of living conditions.
- a general reorientation of the organisation of schoolwork with the view to fostering the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills by all pupils.
- continuous assessment of the learning process and its results.
- establishment of a non-confessional religious curriculum where teaching about the roles of different religious and other philosophies of life in the history of humankind is introduced.
- promoting and protecting the fundamental equality of all learners and equity in their access to, their work in, and their benefits from the learning environment.
- introducing and encouraging classroom practices that reflect and reinforce both the values and practices of democracy.

Norman and Sphor (1996:24-27) highlight that at the heart of the idea is the notion that people learn best when they are engrossed in the topic, motivated to seek out new knowledge and skills because they need them to solve the problem at hand. The goal is active exploration, construction and learning rather than the passivity of lecture attendance and textbook reading. The learner-centred approach is akin to the "user-centred" approach, which focuses on modern interface design. For both the user-centred and learner-centred approaches, the focus is on the needs, skills and interests of the learner. Learner-centred approaches are often accompanied by a problem-based approach, where the problems are selected to fit the interests and needs of the learners. The focus is on the learner and authentic problems, rather than on the structured analysis of curriculum content, although both are necessary (Norman & Sphor, 1996:24-27).

Learner-centred approach teaching emphasises the varied processes and learning experiences needed for the creation of knowledge, rather than relying predominantly on the transmission of knowledge by the teacher. An important aspect of the learner-centred approach is also the integration of ICT as a tool to enhance teaching and learning. Dhere (2014) highlights the internet as a crucial method of teaching Commerce subjects.

The learner-centred approach acknowledges the fact that a learner is not a *'tabula rasa',* which translates to a blank slate, but rather an individual with past knowledge and experiences that can contribute to classroom learning (Abiogu, 2016). Teachers ought to tap into this knowledge to identify what learners already know, learning gaps and what they do not know. The approach invites the learner to be an active participant in their learning, in contrast to the traditional approach of teaching that assumes that the teacher is the only knowledgeable person in the classroom and that all information can only come from them.

For the learner-centred approach (LCA) to be effective, the teacher must view the group of learners as a community of learning and work towards developing a constructive environment. Equally important, the goal of the lesson must also be made known to the learners for every lesson; hence, teachers need to ensure that the specific objective of the day is shared with the learners. In this way, they take control of their learning.

3.9 Conclusion

The chapter explored the theoretical framework of Organisational Development Theory, which underpins this study, and was discussed. AI and ICT were also discussed, and its use in a Commerce classroom. The chapter discusses the curriculum changes and reforms in Namibia, both before and After Independence. The four Commerce subjects that are the focus of this study were deliberated, along with their importance and the potential career paths they present. The provision of CPD to teachers was discussed, and finally, the learner-centred approach and how teachers can enforce it in their classrooms.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of Namibia's education system, particularly in Commerce subjects. The chapter began with a general overview of curriculum change and then discussed the various changes Namibia underwent, both before and after independence. The learner-centred approach, as a nationally adopted teaching approach, was also discussed. This chapter will discuss the pragmatist paradigm underpinning this study and describe the research strategy employed in this mixed-methods study. Moreover, the data collection and data analysis for the research will be discussed. Measures of trustworthiness and ethical considerations will also be discussed.

4.2 Research Design and Methodology

4.2.1 Research Paradigm

This study is informed by a pragmatic paradigm, which is underpinned by specific ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions. These philosophical assumptions guided the research design, data generation, data analysis and interpretation of findings.

4.2.1.1 Ontology

Ontology refers to assumptions about the nature of reality and what can be known about the world. This study adopted a relativist ontology, which assumes that reality is socially constructed and that multiple realities exist. The experiences and perceptions of principals, Heads of Department, Commerce teachers and education officials regarding the implementation and sustainability of Commerce subjects are shaped by their unique contexts and interactions. Consequently, there is no single objective reality concerning the challenges and opportunities affecting Commerce subject enrolment; rather, multiple perspectives collectively contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

4.4.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge and how knowledge is generated. This study is guided by a constructivist epistemology, which assumes that knowledge is co-constructed through interaction between the researcher and participants. Understanding the factors influencing the implementation and sustainability of Commerce subjects required engaging with participants' experiences, interpretations and meanings. Through interviews, discussions and qualitative inquiry, the researcher sought to gain insight into how participants perceive curriculum implementation, teacher development, resource provision and learner enrolment within their specific educational contexts.

4.2.1.3 Axiology

Axiology refers to the role of values in the research process. This study acknowledges that research is not value-free and that the researcher's professional experiences as a Senior Education Officer in the Otjozondjupa Region informed an interest in the decline of Commerce subjects. However, measures such as reflexivity, ethical conduct, participant verification and transparent reporting were employed to minimise bias and enhance trustworthiness. The study also recognises the values of equity, learner choice, educational access and curriculum relevance as important considerations when examining the sustainability of Commerce education in Namibia.

The ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions of this study align with the interpretivist paradigm and support the use of qualitative methods to explore participants' experiences and perspectives on the provision of Commerce subjects and enrolment in secondary schools.

The philosophical assumptions underpinning this study are consistent with ODT. ODT recognises that organisational realities are shaped by stakeholders' perceptions and interactions, that knowledge about organisational change is generated through engagement with those involved in the change process, and that values such as collaboration, participation, empowerment and continuous improvement are central to organisational development. Consequently, the theory aligns well with the study's

interpretivist orientation and its focus on understanding participants' experiences of the implementation and sustainability of Commerce subjects.

As a philosophical movement, pragmatism originated in the late 19th century in the United States (Maxcy, 2003:51-89). The founding fathers of pragmatism include the philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, psychologist William James, philosopher and mathematician Chauncey Wright, jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., and philosopher and lawyer Nicholas St. Johns Green. The word pragmatism is originally derived from the Greek word “pragma,” which means action (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019:3). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a paradigm as a worldview, a perspective, or thinking, or a school of thought, or a set of shared beliefs, that informs the meaning or interpretation of research data. A paradigm, therefore, reflects what the researcher believes in. The academics involved in this conversation aimed to challenge the widespread beliefs about reality, knowledge and inquiry.

Lincoln and Guba (2000) distinguish between the elements of the paradigm, which is that the ontology of this paradigm focuses on practical solutions and outcomes rather than fixed realities. Lincoln and Guba (2000) further maintain that the epistemology is that the knowledge is derived from practical consequences and real-world applications. Pragmatism employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. For pragmatism, realities are not permanent, and hence changes depend on the issue being investigated and the applications. Reviving Commerce subjects requires a practical framework that will be applied by all teachers in the classroom, enabling the growth of Commerce subject intake and the field's long-term sustainability.

Pragmatists generally agree that all knowledge in the world is socially constructed, but some versions of these social constructions align more closely with individuals’ experiences than others (Maxcy, 2003:51-89). In addition, Ray (2004:307) defines pragmatism as whatever functions well or has withstood scrutiny by individual users over time. Therefore, truth and reality cannot be separated from a person’s experience, because it is one’s experience that shapes their reality and what they consider to be true.

The paradigm was deemed suitable for this study, as knowledge about developing a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects was constructed through semi-structured interviews, closed-ended structured questionnaires. Information obtained from these instruments was used to construct new knowledge on how to retain learners and revitalise Commerce subjects in schools. The researcher drew on the diverse experiences of teachers, SEOs, principals, school board chairpersons and department heads, which were used to develop new knowledge through data collection.

4.2.2 Research approach

This study aimed to develop a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects in Namibia. Therefore, a mixed-methods research (MMR) was employed, aligning with the pragmatist philosophy. In this doctoral study, MMR was selected as the research approach, which involves using both qualitative and quantitative methods concurrently to study the same phenomena (Maarouf, 2019:3).

The justification for selecting this MMR was that it possesses the greatest strengths. MMR enhances validity, reliability, and trustworthiness and triangulates research findings by employing multiple data-collection methods to study the same phenomenon, thereby yielding a comprehensive understanding (Molina-Azorin, 2016, pp. 37-38). However, MMR also has its own weaknesses, as implementing it requires more time, effort and money, as it involves two phases of research (Molina-Azorin, 2016, pp. 37-38).

MMR enables the phenomenon to be well explained and a thorough understanding to be obtained, as two research approaches were combined; hence, their strengths, when well utilised, can complement each other to enhance and support the research. The above benefit is supported by Maarouf (2019:3), who states that mixing quantitative and qualitative methods provides a more complete understanding of the research problem than using only one research method. The pragmatist paradigm provides the epistemology and logic for combining quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods, allowing multiple realities to emerge through their integration.

4.2.3 Research strategy

The convergent parallel MMD) was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, and then integrate the overall results to obtain a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014: 215). In a convergent design, the integration of both data enabled the researcher to gain a complete understanding of what was provided by the quantitative (results) and the qualitative (findings), thereby justifying triangulation.

4.2.4 Research Sampling and Methods

4.2.4.1 Population

Population refers to the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied (Shukla, 2020, p. 1). This study aims to develop a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects in Namibia. All the schools in Namibia offering Commerce subjects at NSSCO (grade 10-11) and NSCASS (grade 12) form part of the population of this study.

4.2.4.2 Sampling and sample size

Sampling is defined as a procedure for selecting a sample from an individual or a large group of the population for a specific research purpose (Bhardwaj, 2019:158). For the **quantitative study**, a convenient sample size of 200 participants was targeted in the educational regions to teachers teaching Commerce subjects in grades 10-12 because of accessibility to the researcher, irrespective of which school they are working at, as long as they are teaching Commerce subjects at the desired phase, grades 10-12. Despite the target, only 81 could be achieved. Initially, the questionnaire return rate was above 50%, at 109 respondents; however, only 81 were fully completed and analysable, bringing the return rate below 50% at 41%.

While purposive sampling ensured that participants possessed the desired characteristics and thus provided relevant insights, the reduced sample size narrows the breadth of evidence and limits the diversity of perspectives captured. These limitations highlight the challenges of accessibility in educational research and underscore the need for cautious interpretation of the results, while affirming the value of the opinions and experiences successfully included.

Conversely, for the **qualitative study**, purposive sampling was employed to select five SEOs, five SGB members, five school principals, five department heads, and five teachers teaching Grades 10-12 for interviews. Owing to the desired characteristics of the participants, purposive sampling was employed in this research to select SEOs, principals, HoDs, teachers, and SGB members. Accessibility proved challenging, and as a result, the researcher was unable to conduct the targeted number of interviews. Five teachers were interviewed, along with four school principals, four HoDs, four school board chairpersons, and three SEOs. Despite the researchers' efforts to conduct telephonic interviews when participants could not attend face-to-face interviews, these efforts proved futile.

4.2.4.3 Data collection procedures

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, closed-ended structured questionnaires and classroom observations. The convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and to integrate the results to achieve a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014: 266). In this regard, data were collected from SEOs, SGB members, school principals, HoDs and teachers. Interview questions were set before the interview. The researcher introduced themselves to the participant and provided a background on the study, explaining why the participants' views were important. The researcher then requested permission to record the interview, and upon consent, the interview commenced. There were instances in which participants refused to consent to the interview being recorded; however, the interview still proceeded. The closed structured questionnaire was administered online, as prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire began with an introduction of the researcher and the purpose of the study. It further asked for the participant's consent to participate in the study. Once the participant clicked "Proceed," they were taken to the questionnaire to complete.

4.2.4.4 Data analysis

Although the data were collected concurrently, the analysis was conducted independently. Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of the data provided (Braun & Clarke, 2013:1). Qualitative data were analysed thematically following a six-step approach to analysing thematically, namely: familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing

themes, defining and naming themes, and writing (Caulfield, 2023). Finding significant patterns in the data and applying them to the research is the aim (Maguire & Dehalunt, 2017: 5-20).

Although Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis framework guided the analysis, the researcher did not apply the stages mechanically; rather, they were used iteratively and recursively. The practical application of each stage is outlined next.

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the Data

Following data collection, all interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. The researcher repeatedly read and re-read the transcripts while listening to the audio recordings to ensure accuracy and gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences. Initial observations, reflections and emerging ideas were recorded in a research journal. This process enabled the researcher to become immersed in the data and to identify recurring patterns related to the implementation of the Commerce subject and learner enrolment.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

The researcher systematically coded meaningful segments of data across all interview transcripts. Coding was conducted manually by highlighting significant statements and assigning descriptive labels to relevant extracts. Examples of initial codes included "lack of qualified teachers", "insufficient technological resources", "limited learner interest", "parental influence", "inadequate professional development", and "curriculum challenges". Similar codes were grouped together to facilitate further analysis.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes

The initial codes were examined for similarities and relationships. Related codes were clustered into broader categories that reflected common patterns across participants' responses. For example, codes such as "lack of computers", "limited internet access", and "insufficient teaching resources" were grouped under a provisional theme labelled "Resource Constraints". Similarly, codes relating to teacher training and

professional support were grouped under "Capacity Building and Professional Development".

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

The provisional themes were reviewed against the coded extracts and the entire dataset to determine whether they accurately represented participants' experiences. During this phase, some themes were merged, refined or discarded. For example, themes relating to resource shortages and technological challenges were combined because they represented closely related aspects of the same phenomenon. This process ensured internal consistency within themes and clear distinctions between themes.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

Once the final themes had been established, the researcher refined their scope and meaning. Each theme was clearly defined to capture its central organising concept and its relevance to the research questions. Themes were given concise, descriptive names that reflected participants' experiences with the provision of Commerce subjects, teacher development, resource availability, curriculum implementation and learner enrolment.

Phase 6: Producing the Report

The final stage involved integrating the themes into a coherent narrative linked to the research objectives, ODT and the reviewed literature. Representative quotations from participants were used to illustrate each theme and support the interpretation of findings. The themes formed the basis for discussing the factors influencing the implementation and sustainability of Commerce subjects in Namibia and for developing recommendations to enhance learner enrolment and programme sustainability.

To strengthen this even further, include a table in the coding of themes in the thesis showing the progression from.

Table 4.1: From coding of data to themes

Raw Data Extract	Initial Code	Category	Theme
"We do not have enough computers for learners."	Lack of computers	ICT challenges	Resource Constraints
"Teachers have not received training for years."	Lack of CPD	Teacher development issues	Capacity Building and Professional Development
"Learners prefer science subjects."	Learner preference	Subject choice factors	Learner Enrolment Challenges

Quantitative data were analysed descriptively and inferentially. Descriptive and inferential analyses help summarise and triangulate the collected data into numbers that convey meaning and guide the researcher to the study's conclusion (Thompson, 2009:57). The researcher used Microsoft Excel to sort and filter the data. The researcher ensured that the data were ready for analysis by identifying outliers and handling any missing data.

4.2.5 Measures of Trustworthiness for qualitative and Reliability for quantitative

4.2.5.1 Credibility

According to Cope (2014: 89-91), credibility refers to data that is unbiased and supported by reliable evidence. To ensure credibility, the researcher conducted member checking (participant validation) by sharing findings with participants for validation (extracts from interviews). Additionally, peer debriefing was employed to reduce researcher bias and enhance interpretive accuracy. To further maximise credibility, the researcher spent time with each study participant to gain a thorough understanding of the individuals, their experiences and the phenomenon under investigation, thereby building a trusting relationship.

4.2.5.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (Cope, 2014: 89-91). The researcher ensured transferability by providing all relevant, detailed and sufficient information for readers to make an informed decision about the relevance of research results in other contexts.

4.2.5.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistent production of the same data in similar situations (Cope, 2014: 89-91). The researcher ensured dependability by ensuring that there is

a focused research question that links to the type of data collected. To ensure the dependability of this study, a comprehensive audit trail was maintained throughout the research process. This included the raw interview transcripts and field notes.

4.2.5.4 Confirmability

The degree to which the results of the research could be confirmed by other researchers is called confirmability (Korstjens & Moser, 2017:121). The researcher outlined all the steps taken from the start of the research until its completion to ensure confirmability. Furthermore, a comprehensive audit trail was maintained, including raw data from interview records and closed-ended structured questionnaire responses, to ensure triangulation by combining interview data with the results of closed-ended structured questionnaires.

4.2.5.5 Participant validation

Lindheim (2022) defines participant validation as a strategy to strengthen the credibility of data and further address ethical concerns of transparency and power imbalance in the research process.

As opposed to a face-to-face validation interview, the researcher used the Synthesised Member Checking Model of Birt et al (2016:1802–1811), which outlines as follows:

- Prepare a synthesised summary of emerging themes from the total sample of interviews using illustrative quotes from the different interviews.
- The informants' eligibility for participating in the member checking process is considered to ensure that the research process will not inflict unnecessary harm on the informants.
- The synthesised report was sent to the selected informants with an invitation to make corrections and add comments.
- The responses were collected and added to the data material.
- The new data were integrated and coded.

4.2.5.6 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement (Segal & Coolidge, 2018). The reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α = 0.7), which assesses the internal consistency of an instrument to determine whether all items within the subscales correlate with each other in the closed-ended questionnaire (Johnson, 2011). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, for which this closed structured questionnaire is computed at 0.82. The closer a scaled coefficient is to 0.7, the greater the instrument.

4.3 Ethical considerations

4.3.1 Informed consent

Permission was sought in writing through the office of the Regional Directors of Otjozondjupa, Erongo, Kavango West, Oshikoto, and Oshana, where the qualitative studies were conducted (*see Appendix C*). Thereafter, consent was sought from all participants after the study's motivation was clarified, and the participants and respondents were permitted to proceed. Only once permission was granted by all parties could the researcher start conducting the research. Thereafter, consent was sought from all participants after the study's motivation was clarified, and participants and respondents were permitted to withdraw from the research at any point. Moreover, only once permission had been granted by all parties could the researcher begin conducting the interview and recording it.

4.3.2 Confidentiality

All information obtained from the research was handled with privacy in mind. The data collected were kept safe and accessible only to the researcher and the promoter. For the questionnaires, a closed, structured online questionnaire was shared with participants. Their responses, once completed, were sent directly to the researcher's Gmail inbox, which is accessible only from the researcher's personal laptop and protected by security measures, including passwords. For the interviews, the researcher used a phone to record them, and the recordings were burned to a compact disc, which the researcher kept and stored safely.

4.3.3 Ethical Clearance

The University of South Africa (Unisa) requires that every researcher obtain research ethics clearance before commencing their research. The researcher ensured to apply

to this practice and obtained ethical clearance referenced **2025/ 01/ 08/ 00000389/ 07/ RB** first before commencing their data collection process (*see Appendix H*)

4.4 Possible limitations and delimiters of the study

4.4.1 Limitations

The researcher is a self-funded student and, therefore, financial constraints challenged the successful completion of this study. Moreover, the researcher is also a full-time employee, and time constraints were a factor in balancing work and a full-time job. There is limited literature in Namibia focusing on either developing a futuristic curriculum framework or studying the phenomenon of low learner intake in the commercial field, which will impact the literature review.

In addition to the preceding limitations, during the data collection process, the researcher encountered difficulties when one of the scheduled schools was closed owing to a water crisis in the town where they reside. This made it challenging for the researcher to contact participants, as they were not at their duty station; however, the researcher eventually managed to arrange meetings at times that were convenient for them.

The targeted number for the interview sample could also not be reached owing to selected participants not being available. Despite further arrangements made by the researcher to conduct the interviews by phone, the participants were still unable to attend the phone interviews.

The target sample size for the online closed-ended questionnaire was 200; however, only 81 respondents participated. The researcher has tried to share the link widely on social media and reached out to principals and SEOs to complete. Nevertheless, the number still could not meet the desired standard.

4.4.2 Delimitations

The study focuses on NSSCO (10-11) and NSSCAS (12). Therefore, the findings from this study cannot be generalised to other fields or subjects of study, as this solely focuses on Commerce subjects.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter discussed pragmatism as the research paradigm for the study and explained why it was considered suitable. It further detailed the convergent parallel mixed methods design. All essential concepts for the measure of trustworthiness and reliability were explained and how they were employed during the research process. All limitations that the researcher experienced during the research process were outlined. The next chapter presents and analyses the data.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the data collected during the research process. It begins with the qualitative analysis of interviews conducted by the researcher, which highlights themes and subthemes identified through a manual thematic analysis process. This analysis is supported by verbatim responses from participants, including SEOs, school principals, school board chairpersons, HoDs for Commerce, and teachers. It proceeds to analyse the quantitative data collected through an online questionnaire completed by SEOs, HoDs for Commerce and teachers.

5.2 Qualitative Data: Semi-Structured Interviews

The qualitative analysis examines themes that emerged from the collected data, providing in-depth insights into the participants' perspectives and their contributions towards developing a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce in Namibia.

Biographical data for participants

Table 5.1: Biographical data for Senior Education Officers, Principals, Head of Departments, Teachers and School Board

Coding	Gender	Experience	Areas of specialisation
Senior Education Officers			
SEO 1	Male	Less than 1 year	Accounting and Business Studies
SEO 2	Male	Less than 1 year	Accounting and Economics
SEO 3	Female	Less than 1 year	Economics and Business Studies
Principals			
P1	Male	16 years	Biology
P2	Female	16 years	Mathematics and Sciences
P3	Female	17 years	Business Studies and Entrepreneurship
P4	Female	More than 10 years	Mathematics and English

Coding	Gender	Experience	Areas of specialisation
Head of departments			
HoD1	Female	±10 years	Accounting and Business Studies
HoD2(acting)	Female	Less than a year	Economics and Business Studies
HoD3(acting)	Female	Less than a year	Business Studies and Economics
HoD4(acting)	Female	Less than a year	Economics and Business Studies
Teachers			
T1	Male	±10 years	Entrepreneurship
T2	Female	2 years	Economics and Accounting
T3	Female	9 Years	Business Studies and Economics
T4	Female	5 years	Economics and Business Studies
School Board members			
SB1	Male	4 months	
SB2	Male	4 years	
SB3	Female	4 months	
SB4	Male	20 years	

Table 5.1 shows that the three SEOs interviewed were two males and one female, and that their experience as SEOs for both accounts was less than a year. It is expected that, as their experience is less than a year, the SEOs might also not have much to relate to and not be well-versed in the questions at hand.

The majority of principals who participated in this interview were female (75%). The highest recorded experience was 17 years, and the lowest was 16 years, shared by two principals. Of the principals interviewed, only one has a background in Commerce. The principal's specialisation plays a significant role because it determines how much effort they are likely to put into the Commerce field, regardless of whether they are from that background.

Of the HoDs interviewed, only one is permanently appointed and has over ten years of experience as an HoD, while three are acting in the HoD capacity for less than a year. All interviewed HoDs are female. Only the permanently appointed HoD has

accounting as a specialisation subject, while the acting HoDs specialise in Economics and Business Studies.

Four teachers were interviewed; only one was male, and the other three were female. The male participants have more than ten years of teaching experience. The teaching years of experience show a fair distribution, with the most experienced teacher having more than ten years, and the least experienced having two years.

The school board chairpersons interviewed two of them, who had less than one year of experience, while another one had four years of experience. One school board chairperson possessed more than 20 years of experience as a school board member. Three of the school board chairpersons interviewed were male, and only one was female, indicating that the role of school board chairperson appears to be male-dominated.

The following themes and subthemes were identified during the data analysis.

5.2.2.1 Theme 1: Current status of Commerce education subjects (SRQ1)

This theme seeks to understand participants' perceptions of the state of Commerce curriculum in the senior secondary phase in terms of intake.

Participant SEO 2 said: *"It's not good because. Most of the classes don't have a lot of learners."*

Participant 3 SEO mentioned that "*the intake is a bit high in some schools, but then, the problem is now the subject combinations. Let's say you would find business studies, the child has business studies, economics and then agriculture. So, some of those combinations, you will find that the learners have, meaning the school has a high intake, let's say, possibly even 80 learners, in the range of 80 to 120 learners. For other schools in the other circuits, the intake is really low, where you will find, with an intake of Commerce learners of, let's say, even three learners for Commerce, or six learners. So, the intake really varies from school to school.*"

5.2.2.2 Theme 2: Reasons for the low intake in Commerce (SRQ 2)

Most participants provided reasons for their low intake. Under this theme, participants highlight the factors contributing to low learner enrolment in Commerce subjects and in the field of business education in the senior secondary phase.

According to participant **SEO 1**, "*I would conclude that I think some schools prioritise certain fields that are not Commerce*. *Furthermore, Commerce teachers or teachers are not confident enough to take in a lot of learners."*

This view is supported by **SEO 2**, who echoed the sentiment that, "*Most of the learners feel that science has more studying opportunities and employability when they finish school. So, that's why they opt for science. Some learners may feel that accounting is too difficult; so, they would rather opt for a different field."*

Another participant, SEO 3, is of the view that "*Most of our subjects are the subjects of concern, nationally. This, obviously, will also lead to the learners' interest in the subject. So, that will then, obviously, make the learners not be interested in taking the subject, because they have the fear that these subjects don't perform*."

5.2.2.3 Theme 3: Perception of SEOs in the implementation of Provide in-service support to Commerce teachers for curriculum implementation (SRQ 3)

This theme examines the types and adequacy of in-service support provided to Commerce teachers by SEOs, aiming to equip them with the confidence to deliver their lessons effectively and adhere to the prescribed curriculum.

5.2.4.1 Subtheme: Providing subject support and advisory in-service training.

The SEOs are compelled to provide support and provide specific in-service advisory services to commence teachers in secondary schools. One specific in-service support and advisory role SEOs provided, as depicted by **SEO 1**, "*Ensuring that these teachers received quality training first of all, but the challenge sometimes is that teachers are not willing to request assistance. Going to school may be one of our options. Our responsibilities are just to pop in at the schools and just to ask if they need any assistance because we are waiting for teachers to ask for this assistance from us."*

Furthermore, SEO 1 continues and mentions that "*By going to schools and observing lesson plans. Ensuring that the schemes of work are completed on time and the syllabus is what they teach, also then giving that feedback to the teachers*."

In the same vein, **SEO 3** concurs that "*career fairs, being involved in career fairs as SEOs, so that we try to invite people who are from our field to inspire these learners,*

to guide these learners, and not just learners, together with the parents, on the various career prospects that are available in the Commerce field."

5.2.4.2 Subtheme: Ongoing circuit and regional workshops to support Commerce teachers

SEOs revealed that different regions are supported through specific regional workshops and support for Commerce teachers. Several quarterly school visits were planned and executed, and additional teaching resources were provided or posted to Commerce teachers in the circuits and region. **SEO 2** echoed the same sentiments as follows: "*We hold annual workshops in the regions, as well as in partnership with NIED, which really helps them. We conduct school visits to engage with students one-on-one. After observing their teaching. That also helps, and we try to source resources for them from all over. We then either send them to their schools or to their circuits. Especially if it's maybe a soft copy or we just post it on the WhatsApp group."*

5.2.2.4 Theme 4: Teaching methods recommended to Commerce teachers (SRQ 4)

This theme emerged because it discusses the different teaching methods mentioned by participants who believe they are effective for teaching Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, and Entrepreneurship in the senior secondary phase.

5.2.5.1 Subtheme: Application of the case study teaching method

After analysing the data sets, participants identified the case study teaching methods that Commerce teachers in schools found most effective. This participant **SEO 2** echoed this perspective: "*For economics, I always prefer that they use case studies*, *and the learners have to debate on case studies. That's what happens after they have taught that lesson: the teacher must get the case study and divide the group into two. One group has to discuss the case study from 1 angle and the other one has to oppose the views of the other group."*

In the next subtheme, participants also mentioned an interactive, participatory teaching approach specifically for Commerce subjects.

5.2.5.2 Subtheme: Role play and peer teaching as an active and engaged teaching method

Several teaching strategies were mentioned, but in some cases, participants highlighted role-play as an engaging, participatory approach for teaching Commerce subjects.

SEO 1 said: *“Learners' presentations can also give the teachers a chance to see what kind of learners they have, and then also, we guide the learners with their answers, whether their research is accurate or not*.”

This participant's **SEO 2** expressed the following: “*And now there are some of the accounting concepts that they can do role play, yes, but that is only now limited to, let's say, chapter one of grade 8, where you want to really make learners understand what a transaction is. How does purchasing work? Where does the source document come from, or how do sales come in, just for them to really understand the nature of accounting. So, I always recommend it for the first few weeks of grade 8.’’*

5.2.2.5 Theme 5: Strategies to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in the Commerce field (SRQ 5)

This subtheme examines the extent to which regional offices are establishing partnerships or collaborations with local businesses and organisations (NGOs) to foster interest and participation in Commerce education.

When asked whether any partnerships or collaborations were established with local businesses or NGOs, the responses were negative. These are what participants revealed. **SEO 1** said: “*our region does not have.”* **SEO 2** said: “*No, at the moment we don't have*.” Finally, **SEO 3** said: “*Yes, I can see Bank of Namibia is really one of them that comes through for Commerce, through the Bank of Namibia Economics Competition. However, there is no regional partnership with any business or organisation*.”

In summation, the current state and challenges of Commerce education in the Namibian senior secondary phase, focusing on the perceptions of SEOs (SEOs) reveals that Commerce subjects often experience low learner intake, attributed to factors such as school prioritisation of other fields, lack of teacher confidence and student perceptions that science offers better career prospects. Despite these challenges, the study identifies effective teaching methods, such as case studies, role play and learner-led activities, that can enhance student engagement and understanding in subjects like accounting and economics.

The interviewees (SEOs) highlight the importance of in-service support for Commerce teachers, including subject advisory training, ongoing mentorship and resource

provision through workshops and school visits. However, it notes a lack of partnerships with local businesses, which could otherwise enrich the curriculum and promote real-world relevance. The participants emphasise the need for systemic support, curriculum innovation and strategic collaboration to revitalise Commerce education.

In the next section, the interviews with school principals are discussed.

5.2.3. School principals

Based on the manual thematic analysis, the following themes and subthemes were identified.

5.2.3.1 Theme: Status of Commerce at Secondary Schools (SRQ 1)

This theme aims to determine the status of Commerce in schools at the senior secondary level. Where possible, principals provided figures, while others indicated whether the figure was low or high.

5.2.8.1 Sub-theme: The number of learners in the Commerce classrooms, grade 10-11

During the interviews, this school principal, P1, said: "*Okay, maybe to start, I have 44 teachers. Let me say 43 teachers. Out of the 43 teachers, Commerce has only 5 teachers, making it the least offered subject in the school, both in terms of the number of teachers and the number of learners. Traditionally, it has been a subject attracting low learners.''*

Based on the sentiments of the previous school principal, this participant, P2, mentioned in his school, "*Grade 10, only one class is specific. Out of the six classes that we have for grade 10. Grade 11, also one class group for Commerce. Out of the 14 classes that we have in Grade 11 now. Grade 12, we have just a few, maybe, I don't have the specific statistics now."*

But P3 indicated a decrease in learner enrolment in Commerce subjects, which is a concern. "*In grade 10, yes. For me, there are nine. In grade 12, I only know 2. In grade 11, I'm not sure, but there are not more than 20. The intake is very small."*

Another school principal expressed concern that Commerce subjects are no longer feasible due to low learner intake. Participant, P4, alluded to "*Statistics, very few. Let me start with the junior secondary. Due to the small numbers in the senior secondary, we are now essentially forcing learners, when they transition from primary school to grade 8 , to take two classes. We have six grade 8 classes, and we are forcing two classes to do accounting compulsorily. Because we don't want the field to die completely at the end of the day. We want to have at least 30 learners from these two classes, let's say 40 learners each, by the time they move to grade 10. This way, we will have at least 30 learners in a class who can continue with the Commerce field of study. Currently, as I speak, we have 26 students in grade 10. We have 35 in grade 11. And then in grade 12 as, it depends on the subjects. Accounting, I think there were five. Economics, if I'm not mistaken, maybe six.*"

The next sub-theme highlights the performance of Commerce in schools.

5.2.8.2 Sub-theme: Performance of Commerce at grades 10-12

This theme aims to understand the performance of Commerce in Namibian schools. The performance was necessary to determine whether there is a link between performance and low intake in the commercial field.

P1, P2, and P4 positively highlighted the positive performance of Commerce in their schools.

P1 states that "*But for the past three years, despite the low intake, we have recorded some commendable results in Commerce, even including last year, which has then prompted us to say, if learners are giving these wonderful results in Commerce, why are we not increasing the intake?*"

P2 "*They have been very good. Most of our teachers who are getting awards are from Commerce subjects.*"

P3 states that no establishment has yet been made to determine the performance of Commerce in the school.

P3 *"I did not establish this yet."*

P4 Cements this good performance of Commerce by further highlighting the strong Commerce group they have *“Not bad. Not bad at all. We have a very strong grade 11 group this year.”*

5.2.3.2 Theme 2: Reasons for the low intake in Commerce (SRQ2)

This theme examines potential reasons for the low intake of Commerce learners at the senior secondary level in Namibian schools.

P1 stated that “*One challenge that you see is the perception and the understanding of the parents as far as continuity is concerned. Because learners are coming from a primary school where there's no accounting. It's not like life science; they are building on natural science. So, they come to meet accounting for the first time in grade 8*.” Furthermore, P1 expressed concern about the lack of exposure and marketing to raise learners' awareness of this field of study. “*Commerce is under-marketed, but it is the bone of the economy. The reason why our economy is not doing very well is that maybe those who are interested in working in finance have little background in economics.”*

P2 shares the same sentiments as P1, regarding the marketing of Commerce as a major problem contributing to the low intake in this field.

P2 “*Most of the time when we were growing up, all that parents would talk about was what Dr Nuuyoma, the former president, used to say, I want people to study more in science, and that's the perspective that our parents had. Almost everyone was talking about science, but they didn't even know the subject. Some of them, their performance is very poor, so that they are not even able to make it in physics or chemistry.”* P2 further highlighted a new emerging factor in the low intake of learners: “*fear of uncertainty, of things that they don't even know, and they've not even started with the subjects.”*

P3 agrees with P1 and P2, highlighting the importance of Commerce, which is not well-known to learners and parents, indicating a lack of well-marketed information.

P3 said: “*Learners don't understand the importance of Commerce. They often feel that you are not taken seriously in fields like Commerce or social sciences, and as a result, you are considered less competent compared to learners in science. So, they*

want to be seen as competent if they are doing more science. They think they will get better job opportunities if they finish with a science degree."

P4 said: "*So these learners, they all just believe science, physics and chemistry. This is what parents are telling them. Every parent wants their child to become a doctor. Every parent wants their child to become a lawyer. No one is thinking about an accountant. No one is thinking about a chartered accountant or, you know, in that area, where this person can go. They don't think about that. These kids' minds are filled with what their parents are saying. So, even if the kid feels that I am strong in accounting, why can't I continue in the Commerce field?*"

Another point considered by P4 as a reason for the low intake is that "*kids perceive accounting, you know, accounting has got to do with a lot of numbers. So, kids are perceiving accounting as a very complicated, difficult subject, just like mathematics. So many of them, if they are done in grade 9 with accounting, irrespective of what symbol they got, they just want to drop out*.''

The next theme examines the implementation of Commerce curriculum, focusing on two aspects: resource provision and continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers.

5.2.3.3 Theme: Perception of principals on the implementation of the Commerce curriculum (SRQ 4)

The theme aims to investigate how the Commerce curriculum is being implemented, focusing on the provision of financial resources for CPD for teachers.

5.2.10.1 Sub-theme: Allocation of funds to the Commerce department at the school level

This theme investigates how resources are allocated at the school level to ensure that each department benefits from the school's budget. Funds are vital, as they enable every department to have the resources essential for delivering the curriculum effectively and efficiently.

P1 points out that "*The allocation is fair. The allocation is fair because it is based on the number. It is how many learners and how much you allocate per learner.*"

P2 gave an account of the process of how budgeting is done and agrees with P1 on the formula used for the number of learners per department

P2 "*Every end of the year, each department is instructed to set or to come up with a budget. Now, for this budget, you must also include what you'll need, how much, and so on. So, our budget is usually determined by the number of learners and the number of teachers; yes, there's a ratio that we also use. But they are given or treated equally as any other department."*

In addition to the foregoing points, P3 pointed out the process, however, emphasise that priority is given to one item per department only in order to cater for every department. "*What we did with the approved budget now, I first encourage all the departments to have their meetings. And then they must submit their needs. And then, after they submit their needs, that's when we allocate our budget, especially for teaching aid. Therefore, it's allocated in such a way that we cater to everything submitted from each department. So, from each department, we choose just one item to be able to accommodate the rest; so, we can do it, per every financial need, we are at least touching on one item for each department.*''

The next sub-theme identifies the CPD activities the school offers to teachers.

5.2.10.2 Sub-theme: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities for Commerce teachers

This theme identifies if there are any CPD activities for Commerce teachers in schools. These CPD activities are crucial, as they equip teachers with the skills needed to thrive and help maintain and grow the Commerce field.

P3 shared the plans of how they will train teachers; their focus is on self-introspection using SWOT analysis. "*To be honest, the CPDs that we are planning to have will focus on all the teachers. We are going to look at our weaknesses. I have drawn up the SWOT analysis, and we will now focus solely on our weaknesses. So, it's like a one-day training for the whole staff."*

P4 made a positive remark about what the school is busy organising to capacitate their teachers.

P4 said: "*The HoD was, or the acting HoD was, in the process of organising for examiners and people that are having experience in external marking to come to the*

school, to share their experience with other colleagues. this session was supposed to take place this week.''

5.2.3.4 Theme: Strategies to revive the Commerce field (SRQ 5)

This theme explores strategies that can be utilised to increase intake in the Commerce field at the senior secondary phase. This strategy aims to pique learners' and their parents' interest in pursuing the field of study. This is an attempt to avoid the field from becoming extinct and phasing out completely.

5.2.11.1 Sub-theme: Advocacy and promotion for Commerce

Advocacy and promotion of Commerce subjects are crucial pillars that influence policy and drive growth in Commerce.

P1 narrates the crucial role that advocacy can play by stating that "*we need to do some aggressive advocacy on creating awareness on how content is designed at the entry grade, particularly grade 8. Maybe only then can we increase, because if we can increase the intake at grade 8, obviously, when we go to the secondary grade 10, we will have a large volume of learners that we must take up."*

However, P3 demonstrated a different experience on the advocacy and promotion of Commerce in schools, stating, "*We don't call up the meeting specifically just to come and talk about the field of studies. That's one thing I've never come across at any school that I've been to, where we could at least have time with parents.''*

The following sub-theme tackles careers fairs that take place at the school to promote the Commerce field

5.2.11.2 Sub-theme: Career fairs for Commerce in schools

Career fairs are platforms that enable learners to explore opportunities and receive valuable guidance.

P1 agrees that career fairs are a crucial aspect of guiding learners. *"We need to venture into things such as career fair, because if you expose them to career fair, the career fair kind of opens them up to say, if I want to be an MD (Managing Director) of a certain bank, for example, I need to be having some sound knowledge either of business management or economics or accounting, and these are the subjects I should take from early grades and that can go as far as marketing. And we also*

maybe look for a corporate entity, a career fair, where these corporate or commercial entities come and market what it takes for one to land a job with them, so that when that comes, it kind of prompts interest from them."

P3 concurs with the remarks of participant P1 and further elaborates on the established planned activities for their school in terms of career fairs.

P3 "*What we decided was to have a career fair early next semester. We would like to invite them to come and stay here for a week. So, we don't want them to come just for a day, because in most cases, if they come for a day only to the assembly point and talk, learners don't get anything. So, it's best if we allocate the hall to them, and then they can at least give us a station of one person at each, and then learners can make time for at least all our free periods, at least each period with us, at least send a group of learners to them and explain all, at least especially the Human Resources. We don't want to miss out on any field, even the science field."*

This formal organisation of a career fair contrasts with what P4 highlighted as what can possibly be done in an informal setting when there is no formal career fair organised.

P4 demonstrates that apart from the formal career fairs that school can organise, the informal guidance can still be done. *"But what we do is when it comes now to end of the year, my assistant, deputy principal, the two of us, we will go in grade 9 classes and we will tell learners what is it that we have to offer or what do we offer at X Secondary School. I remember that last year, we went in, had five classes, and were in grade 9; we made time to go and sit with them. We wrote down all the subjects and fields of study, and we went through them, briefly mentioning the commercial field of study. But then the learner is the one who makes the decision.''*

In addition to the preceding guidance given to learners, P4 further outlined that "*We rely mainly on the life skills teachers. When they are teaching life skills, we have two life skills teachers. They also provide career guidance, especially to grade nines. And then, of course, teachers themselves. We hold career fairs, but they're not typically open to juniors. Our career fairs are primarily for seniors, grades 10, 11 and 12. So for the juniors, we don't do a career fair."*

The following theme explores the role teachers play in marketing Commerce within their schools and classrooms.

5.2.11.3 Sub-theme: School management must design a clear marketing strategy to improve enrolment

Teachers for Commerce education can help grow the field. This can attract more learners and strengthen the reputation of the Commerce field, and principals play a crucial role in leading this process.

P3 emphasises that teachers at the school, together with management, market the field of Commerce and explained that "*So, we can at least talk to the learners because we had a lot of learners who only registered this year. So, what we did was call in the learners who came for the first time. We explained to them. And then, before that, we encouraged most of those learners, especially the ones we took in this year, to pursue Commerce. However, first, we had a talk. Because Commerce was empty and the other teachers were packed, especially the science teachers."*

Likewise, P4 shared the same sentiment on how teachers of their school market the field of Commerce.

P4 "*The Commerce teachers are trying their level best. Like last year, they had a campaign where they actually marketed the Commerce field of study to the grade 9 learners. And that's why this year we have, it's actually a lot of learners, 26 in grade 11, 35 that are doing it for the first time in many years.*''

Additionally, P4 clarifies that "*I tell them, colleagues, have a week for marketing. Go to the grade 9 classes. Go and sell your subjects to the learners. Even you, when teaching, make your subject as interesting as possible to the learners. And then perhaps the one thing we have not yet done is reaching out to parents. Maybe to talk to parents, actually, of these grade nines that are now doing accounting."*

The next sub-theme examines whether learners have the freedom to choose the fields of study they wish to pursue.

5.2.11.4 Sub-theme: Free will for learners and parents to choose fields of study

Providing learners with the freedom to choose their fields of study is essential for fostering personal growth and academic success.

However, P1 notes that giving learners the freedom to choose their fields of study has proved problematic over time, as learners often make choices that lead to poor performance in their chosen subjects.

P1 "*We are making a lot of mistakes, and it's showing in the results that we let the learners have the free will of choice, but they don't know what they are choosing. I have here the U symbol in mathematics, the U symbol in life sciences, and the learners and their parents are both convinced that their child will be a medical student.*
P2 presents a different perspective, highlighting that the regional office is responsible for allocating learners to specific fields of study.
P2 ". *Admission is handled by the regional office for learners who are entering grade 10. It's done through the region*. *They look at what the learners have applied for, which field of study. Once that field of study is full, such as the one for Commerce and social sciences, some fields are not offered. Because almost all of them apply for science. Now, when those who have applied to a specific school, such as when science classes are full, they look at those who have applied for Commerce and feed them into the Commerce classes.*

P4 said: "*We give them that option. Yeah, we don't compel them to do any field of study."*

The next sub-theme is exploring any extracurricular activities offered by schools

5.2.11.5 Sub-Theme: Extracurricular activities for Commerce subjects

The theme aims to highlight the extracurricular activities offered by schools in the Commerce department. Even though extracurricular activities are non-academic, they help promote the holistic development of learners.

Disappointingly, P3 indicated the absence of extramural activities at their school, *"Commerce field, there's nothing."*

Similarly, P4 indicated that nothing is happening with Commerce extracurricular activities.

P4 said: *"We used to have a Commerce club. But it has also died a death. And it does not look like our teachers are planning to revive it."*

This summary explores the current status of Commerce education in Namibian senior secondary schools, focusing on the low learner intake, contributing factors and potential strategies for improvement. The study identified several reasons for the declining interest in Commerce subjects, including the perception that science fields offer better career prospects, a lack of teacher confidence and limited promotion of Commerce as a viable academic path. Additionally, some schools prioritise other subject areas, further reducing the visibility and appeal of Commerce education.

To address these challenges, participants suggest strategies such as enhancing teacher training, introducing engaging teaching methods like case studies and role-playing, and increasing awareness of career opportunities in the field of Commerce. Strengthening partnerships with local businesses and organisations is also recommended to provide real-world relevance and motivation for learners.

The next section addresses protocols for department heads.

5.2.4 Heads of Departments

The following themes and sub-themes were identified as the data were being analysed.

5.2.4.1 Theme 1: Status of Commerce at your school (SRQ1)

This theme highlights the status of learner intake for Commerce at schools. This theme focuses on the senior secondary level, which is grades 10-12.

5.2.13.1 Number of learners in grades 10-12

HoD2 highlights that "*Grade 10 Commerce learners we have 45, grade 11s and grade 12 we have 18 learners*". While the earlier statistics are slightly higher, HoD3 shares a much smaller number of learners.

HoD3 said: *"We have 33 learners in grade 10. And then 13 learners in grade 11. And yes, we have 4R from the Advanced Subsidiary level."*

The next sub-theme reveals the performance of Commerce subjects in schools.

5.2.13.2 Sub-theme: Performance of Commerce at schools

This theme assesses the performance of Commerce subjects in schools and ascertains if there is a relationship between learners' performance and the low intake of learners.

Impressively, **HoD2** reveals that *"The subjects are performing very well; all subjects were above 50 in the 2024 academic year."*

HoD3 shows a fluctuation in the performance of Commerce, with economics being a concern. "*Entrepreneurship is performing. However, accounting is better because it is more varied. It depends on the learners that you have. However, I have taught economics for quite a few years, but my performance has been below average. Performance is bad for economics."*

The next theme reveals the reasons for the low intake of Commerce learners.

5.2.4.2 Theme 2: Reasons for the low intake of Commerce (SRQ2)

This theme summarises the possible reasons why Commerce has a low intake overall in schools and why learners are not willing to pursue this field of study.

HoD 1 shares that "*fear for the subject. I see fear in the learners of the accounting subject. Even in grade 8, you will see that somehow the parents themselves are doubting. Yes, I would say it's mainly interesting, and also, there's the fear of accounting. But then, you will also find some external factors that others are trying to impose on learners. There is no career in Commerce. Like, there are no careers for accountants. There are no job opportunities."*

HoD4 reveals similar findings to **HoD1** regarding the fear of Commerce subjects, particularly accounting as follows:

“Learners are scared of accounting. And that starts from a junior grade, grade eight, where most parents tell their children that accounting is a difficult subject. Since Commerce involves accounting, learners are often not interested in taking it. Even those who perform well in it are often convinced by their parents to pursue something else. And I think the other thing is just exposure to careers that are in the commercial field. They are mostly not aware, I think, that career guidance, especially in our region, in the commercial field, is not advanced.”

The next theme outlines the perception of HoDs on the implementation of Commerce subjects, focusing on a variety of aspects.

5.2.4.3 Theme 3: Perception of Heads of Departments in the implementation of Commerce subjects. (SRQ3)

The theme highlights several diverse aspects that are vital in ensuring the successful implementation of Commerce subjects.

5.2.15.1 Sub-Theme: Support given to learners who struggle with Commerce.

This sub-theme establishes the support given to struggling learners in Commerce to help them excel in the field.

HoD2 maintains that “*We mostly give extra classes to learners who are struggling, and since there is a hostel, there is also provision for study time in the afternoon.”*
Additionally, **HoD3** adds to the types of support given to learners for Commerce that “*In most cases, what I do is an extensive assessment. I try to keep them busy by all means. Another thing I used to do was that the class teacher was in charge of classroom management. I make sure to start with discipline, just like we have rules. Because once a learner is disciplined, it's easier to teach. Another thing I try to do is motivate these learners, because in most cases, learners do not perform well because they are not motivated by other things. So, I try to motivate them, even if it's just by including a motivational quote in the test whenever I give them one. And then I also try to accommodate my slow learners. When I'm setting up a test, I'll make sure*

that there are some questions that I know that even my slow learners will be able to get."

The next subtheme examines whether learners have the freedom to choose their preferred field of study.

5.2.15.2 Sub-theme: Free will to choose or not to choose Commerce at the grade 10 level

This sub-theme examines the extent to which learners are given the freedom to choose the field of study they wish to pursue at the beginning of their senior secondary phase.

HoD2 points out that learners do have a free choice, albeit the final decision lies with the regional office. "*Yes, there is free will, but only to an extent, as placements are done at the regional level. If their preferred field of study is full, they have to be placed in another field of study, even though it is not what they might have preferred."*

The next theme examines the resources that schools often lack; yet are essential for teaching Commerce subjects.

5.2.15.3 Sub-theme: Scarce resources that can be utilised in the Commerce classroom

This theme highlights the resources not currently available in schools for Commerce teachers, but that could potentially contribute positively to the betterment of Commerce if they were acquired.

HoD1 points out that "*Technological products like smart screens, there is only one in the whole school, so it is limited."*

Equally, **HoD2** points out a lack of technological equipment in schools, which is a major factor that could enhance teaching and learning in schools.

HoD2 cemented this point that "*There is a serious lack of textbooks at the school, and technological equipment, such as smart boards, that could enhance teaching and learning, is also not sufficient. There is only one smart board for the whole school to use, and it is not enough."*

The next sub-theme highlights the skills that a Commerce learner must possess to excel.

5.2.15.4 Sub-Theme: Skills that learners in Commerce need to possess to excel

This theme determines the skills a learner pursuing a career in Commerce should possess and the extent to which they possess them.

HoD3 remarked that *"Communication, other skills, is maybe numeracy because accounting and other subjects like entrepreneurship, you need to know how to calculate."*

HoD4 concurs with HoD3 on the numeracy skills and narrated that "*Mathematical skills are an advantage. So, they should at least have some basic understanding of being good at mathematics. Apart from that, it is just practical skills, because most of the subjects, especially entrepreneurship, are practical subjects."*

The next theme outlines the methods HoDs use that are effective in engaging learners in Commerce classrooms.

5.2.4.4 Theme 4: Teaching methods that are most effective in engaging learners for Commerce. (SRQ4)

This theme explores the effective strategies that teachers of Commerce subjects employ to teach their subjects.

HoD 2 shares that "*The teachers mostly use peer teaching; we ensure that learners in the senior secondary phase have a syllabus, and at most, they are given topics to research and come and present to the class."*

Similarly, HoD3 also shared that they use learner-centred approaches, specifically in group work.

HoD 3 asserts that "*The teaching strategies that I encourage my teachers to use and that I use are more learner-centred. I try to incorporate group work where learners can work in groups and then share their findings."*

The next theme highlights the strategies that can be utilised to improve intake in the Commerce field and motivate learners to stay.

5.2.4.5 Theme 5: Strategies you employ to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce at your school. (SRQ5)

This theme examines the strategies schools are implementing to make Commerce a more attractive field of study and a viable career choice for learners, with the goal of increasing enrolment in this field.

5.2.17.1 Strategies currently in place to improve enrolment and retention

This sub-theme outlines the current efforts of schools to motivate learners to pursue a career in Commerce.

HoD3 suggested that *"The strategies that we have, we are planning to have someone to represent us in the committee for admission. So that when people are going for admission, our department is represented, which will ensure we get good performers."*

HoD3 further shared that *"at the school level, what we used to do is, like last year, we hosted a career fair where we told learners or instructed learners to dress according to their careers. And I think that is one of the reasons, it motivated them. And then, what we used to do from the beginning, from the start of the school, was compile a list of possible careers that a learner can pursue once they have completed their studies. Another thing we used to do was take them to different places, such as the Town Council, where they would see the number of management posts available. We used to take them to places like the banks, just to expose them*."

On the contrary, **HoD4** maintains that "*We come up with plans to say mostly when the school reopens, we try to go, like to introduce the commercial teachers. So, when you introduce your lesson, try to invite other teachers who are also teaching commercial subjects, just so they are aware that you are not the only commercial subject teacher. And then we also try to get our former learners, this can be graduates*

or still pursuing certain commercial fields to come back and just to come and motivate the others and say, education is not the only field of study that is there."

HoD4 submitted that "*Commerce club provided that if it's well-planned, teachers are well aware and equipped with what they need to be doing in this Commerce club with the learners. I think that if the others are able to see what the Commerce Club is doing, then it will really motivate, especially the juniors, to be interested and consider it a field we can join. Because I recall our past experiences, I think we used to have mini tours, for example, to a specific location, in 2018 and 2019. We were the department that was more active, even organising a school tour to take learners to visit different areas that could benefit them, such as Windhoek. However, most cases where it becomes an educational tour now are because we need to accommodate other fields of study, so we mostly divert to more science-based subjects. Because then, when you reach these areas, it's mostly because you didn't do enough planning to say we want to visit, such as the Bank of Namibia. Learners are also aware, as are the rest of the others."*

The next sub-theme profiles the extracurricular activities that schools offer.

15.2.17.2 Sub-Theme: Extracurricular activities for Commerce at school

This theme aims to highlight the extracurricular activities that schools offer to supplement and enhance the official curriculum.

Both **HoD2** and **HoD3** disappointingly revealed that none of the school offers extracurricular activities for Commerce.

HoD2 "*Not at the moment."*

HoD3: "*We do not have really any extracurricular activities for Commerce because of the workload ."*

In summary, the HODs alluded to the low enrolment in Commerce subjects at the senior secondary level in Namibian schools, which is attributed to several factors. It identifies key factors such as limited promotion of Commerce fields, learner perceptions favouring science and a lack of teacher confidence. The study also

highlights the impact of inadequate funding and insufficient resources on teaching quality and learner performance. To address these challenges, it recommends strategies that include enhanced teacher training, the use of interactive teaching methods such as case studies and role-playing and stronger partnerships with local businesses. The findings aim to support HoDs in making informed decisions to improve Commerce education outcomes. The next theme outlines protocols for teachers.

5.2.5 Commerce teachers

The following themes were identified during the data analysis and interpretation.

5.2.5.1 Theme 1: Current status of Commerce in the school (SRQ1)

This theme highlights the status of learner intake for Commerce at schools. This theme focuses on the senior secondary level, which is grades 10-12.

5.2.19.1 The number of learners in Commerce Grade 10-12

T1 highlights that "*The Commerce field effect is a very small sort of department, taking into account that it's not really all learners, or what the broad scope of subjects that are being offered, you will pick up that there's always just a handful of learners who are opting to do Commerce."*

The above is similar to what **T4** have pointed out that "*we have a very low intake. Grade 10s, I'm not entirely sure, but I would estimate that there are around 35 learners doing Commerce. And these learners are not, in fact, all doing Commerce completely, which means that half of these learners, I think, are coming from social science. And then the full Commerce group, like learners who are doing all Commerce subjects, would be 20 learners."*

The next is a sub-theme that establishes the performance of Commerce at schools.

5.2.19.2 Sub-Theme: Performance of Commerce in the school

This theme assesses the performance of Commerce subjects in schools and ascertains if there is a relationship between learners' performance and the low intake of learners.

T2 disappointingly shares that "*Grade 12, it's not improving like 1% this year, 2% from the next year. And then for Grade 11, there's no improvement. I cannot see improvement there.*"

However, **T4** has a positive remark, stating that "*the best performing subject in Commerce would be entrepreneurship, then followed by economics and accounting, more or less the same.*"

The next theme reveals the reasons for the low intake of Commerce in grades 10-12.

5.2.5.2 Theme 2: Reasons for the low intake of Commerce at grades 10-12 (SRQ2)

This theme summarises the possible reasons why Commerce has a low intake overall in schools and why learners are not willing to pursue this field of study.

T2 pointed out two reasons why there is a low intake: "*I think the reason may be the poor performance. We don't perform like grade 11. Grade 11, the performance is very low. That's why when they are going there, they do not manage to get the three Cs from the three subjects. That's why we have a few learners in Grade 4. Also, sometimes in our school, we have learners who are transferred from other schools. The transferred learners, just imagine that from grade 8, they have been transferred to grade 9. In grade 9, transferred to grade 10.*"

On the other hand, **T3** remarks on different reasons from the former teacher that "*most of the learners believe that, okay, after grade 12 doing Commerce, most of them, they have that fear that they have low job prospects. And which I don't support at all. And also the way they believe that they have that Commerce or accounting itself, a very tough subject that they cannot master. According to whatever research*

they made or what they have heard from other people out there or other learners, which could be the reason why we have low intake of the Commerce learners."

The next theme for this protocol identifies resources that Commerce teachers might lack; however, these are essential for effective teaching and learning in Commerce. Furthermore, it highlights skills that learners need to possess to excel in this field of study.

5.2.5.3 Theme 3: The Perception of teachers in the implementation of Commerce Subjects in Namibian Secondary schools (SRQ 3)

This theme highlights two key aspects in the implementation of Commerce subjects: resources and skills that learners need to hone to be successful in this field of study.

5.2.21.1 Sub-theme: Resources that the Commerce department needs for the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian schools to be more effective

This theme highlights the resources currently lacking in schools for Commerce teachers, but that could potentially contribute positively to the betterment of Commerce if they were acquired.

T1 highlights technological needs for Commerce teachers as "*projectors, maybe the interactive boards, or whatever you can use, even the screen, at least if you do not have the interactive screens. There is only one interactive board for AS level, but for a big school like this, you will not really have access to that."*

T3, however, in contrast to **T1, T2** puts emphasis on the need for textbooks for Commerce subjects, "*Textbooks. For all the grades, from grade 8 up to grade 12; we really need textbooks."*

The next sub-theme emphasises the essential skills that Commerce learners need to excel in Commerce subjects.

5.2.21.2 Sub-Theme: Skills that Commerce learners should excel in the Commerce field and related careers

This sub-theme determines the skills a learner pursuing the field of Commerce should have and the extent to which they possess it.

T1 highlights key skills as "*organisational skills, managerial skills, skills that most of these learners possess, if they are just given a chance, and if they can be given chances earlier in their career, perhaps it will help them to really see that there are prospects of them even succeeding later in life.*"

In addition, **T3** points out more skills learners need to possess, as "*mathematical skill is very important. Because it involves what calculations? Analytical skills. Because learners, especially those in grades 11 and 12, are the ones with whom we have to deal with ratios. Additionally, learners are asked to advise a specific firm. They need to have analytical skills at least to analyse what's going on.*"

The next theme highlights the teaching methods used by teachers when teaching Commerce subjects and found to be effective in their classrooms.

5.2.5.4 Theme 4: Teaching methods commonly used in engaging learners in Commerce subjects. (SRQ4)

This theme explores the effective strategies that teachers of Commerce subjects employ to teach their subjects.

T3 highlights specific learner-centred teaching methods used in class, stating that "*I make use of group work, peer learning or peer teaching. I identify learners who understand the topic better or more thoroughly. They will be able to teach others. Even the ones that were not understanding, they are able to*."

T4 is found to be using both learner-centred and teacher-centred methods. "*We have presentations by learners and peer teaching too, but the most dominant one is teacher-centred.*"

The next theme examines the efforts made by Commerce teachers to increase enrolment at grades 10-12.

5.2.5.5 Theme 5: Strategies recommended to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce (SRQ5)

This theme explores the strategies schools are employing to make Commerce a field of choice and to make it more appealing to learners, aiming to increase enrolment in this field of study.

5.2.23.1 Subtheme: Strategies in place to boost the intake and improve learner engagement

T1 shared a technique to boost Commerce intake at their school that "*We have started, like with a small group with our Commerce group, the purpose being, obviously, to make it a living proof sort of department, not just in a classroom, but maybe with other co-curricular activities that learners can get involved in. And then our results also, to an extent, okay, it does fluctuate, but then to an extent, it gives those few learners that want to really get into this department, the hope that there's a chance for them to perhaps do these subjects and also perform very well."*

T2 recommends that intrinsic motivation from Commerce learners "*should come from home. They should be told that every subject only needs concentration. The learner needs only to study for a subject, the learner needs to do the activity, and the learner needs to do everything to pass that subject."*

Whilst **T3** has a slightly different approach to increase the intake and highlighted that *" I have to go to feeding schools to create awareness to abolish the myth that they have that accounting is a very tough subject. Additionally, they believe that pursuing these commercial subjects, such as accounting, economics, entrepreneurship, and business studies, leads to a perception that there's no job market, which is not true at all. Some people believe that to receive the job, it's only about being recruited by someone. I personally believe, as a teacher, that Commerce learners should be the job creators."*

Alternatively, **T4** offers practical recommendations on what can be done to revive the Commerce field. "*Instead of just us relying on some institution bringing it, we can actually organise competitions ourselves at our schools, and these learners can get recognition at assemblies. Apart from that, maybe just another strategy would be inviting important people who are well-established, who have studied Commerce like economists from different institutions, who are, you know, doing well like chartered accountants, to just come and share with our learners their accomplishments in life through the field of study that they are in. Commerce club, maybe, with well-grounded rules on what it really does."*

The next theme examines the extracurricular activities offered to Commerce students by schools.

5.2.23.2 Sub-Theme: Extracurricular activities for Commerce that schools are offering

This theme aims to explore the extracurricular activities that schools offer to supplement and enhance the official curriculum, which have the potential to improve retention and enrolment of learners in the field of Commerce studies.

Both **T2** and **T3** indicated that there are currently no extracurricular activities for Commerce.

T2 "*Currently, nothing there is nothing. If I introduce a certain club in the school, learners will not be interested. I tried to do it in my first year of being here."*

T3 *"Nothing currently, we need to revive the Commerce club."*

In summary, based on the identified themes, teachers echoed the sentiment that enrolment in Commerce subjects at the senior secondary level in Namibian schools is low. It identifies key factors such as limited promotion of Commerce fields, learner perceptions favouring science and a lack of teacher confidence. The study also highlights the impact of inadequate funding and insufficient resources on teaching quality and learner performance. To address these challenges, it recommends strategies that include enhanced teacher training, the use of interactive teaching methods such as case studies and role-playing and stronger partnerships with local businesses. The findings aim to support teachers in making informed decisions to

improve outcomes in Commerce education. The next section highlights the protocols for school board chairpersons.

5.2.6 School Board members

The following themes were identified during the data analysis stage.

5.2.6.1 Theme 1: Awareness of the status of Commerce at the school (SRQ1)

The theme examines the school boards' understanding of the Commerce field of study in terms of the number of learners accepted into senior secondary.

SB3 highlights the strategy their school uses to boost intake in their field of study *"What I understand is the kids here, mostly when they are in grades 8 and 9, take Commerce as compulsory. You don't have to choose that. However, when they reach grade 10 and grade 11, they change their subjects. By now, I don't think there are many kids taking Commerce in Grade 10 and Grade 11. So, I understand grade 11 only has 10 or 5."*

SB4 shares the same disappointment with **SB3** and stresses that the number is relatively low,

SB4 *"Few learners are taken in for Commerce, and as a school board member, not happy with the number."*

The next theme highlights the role of the school board in helping learners choose the fields of study.

The next theme highlights any extracurricular activities that school board members are aware of in the school.

5.2.6.2 Theme 2: Participation in Commerce-related extracurricular activities (SRQ 2)

The theme examines the various extramural Commerce activities available at the school to support the implementation of Commerce subjects.

In the words of **SB3,** "*I don't know really. I've been here for four months as the chairperson. And in those four months, I don't really...*"

"Oh, you have not heard about any... Yes, maybe they were doing so in previous years. But for this year, in those four months, I have not heard anything yet."

This lack of Commerce activities by schools, as expressed by SB3, is similar to the view of SB4, who found that "*The schools have neglected and even at the national level this field of study has been neglected for a long time. The teachers for Commerce have to come together and decide on that and submit to management."*

The next theme outlines strategies that school board chairpersons suggest to teachers to help the field of Commerce grow.

5.2.6.3 Theme 3: Strategies to give to the school to help the Commerce field grow (SRQ3)

The theme reveals possible strategies teachers can use to increase enrolment in the Commerce field in Grades 10-12 and make it a field of choice.

SB1 highlights planned views on how to lobby other parents to encourage their children to do Commerce. *"My focus point was the involvement of parents in their learners' teaching system. For me, in the future, I plan to have a committee for the people where we are going to discuss these Commerce subjects, so that we share ideas, and how we are going to introduce this subject to learners."*

SB2 suggested as follows: "*Make learners understand about Commerce on career choice*, *make use of parents' meetings to make parents understand about Commerce and relatives."*

In the view of **SB3**, the greatest influence is at home because "*in most households, you will hear parents saying, yeah, Commerce is very tough. I don't understand. It's not easy. And what a child hears at home, they do it. They do it. No matter how hard we try to motivate them to take Commerce, they will also say, Ah, my mother even*

says it's hard. I cannot take Commerce. And most of the learners are influenced by the parents or by the uncles or aunties from home."

The latter view concurs with SB3 that parents influence SB4. "*Parents are not well informed that these subjects are important, only familiar with science and as parents, they mostly encourage their learners to pursue science. The school management must do a great deal to create awareness among learners. Teachers must market the Commerce field to junior secondary learners. Motivation for learners in the form of awards and prizes to attract and motivate them and develop an interest in Commerce."*

To summarise this section, the perspectives of school board chairpersons on the status and development of Commerce education in Namibian senior secondary schools are highlighted. The themes reveal that Commerce subjects experience low enrolment, particularly in Grades 10 and 11, which concerns school board members. A key issue identified is the limited involvement of school boards in curriculum decisions, with some members noting that decisions are often left solely to teachers. Another issue, parental influence emerged as a significant factor, with learners often discouraged from choosing Commerce owing to negative perceptions at home. To counter this, participants emphasised the importance of engaging parents through meetings and awareness campaigns to highlight the value of Commerce education.

The study also found a lack of Commerce-related extracurricular activities and national-level support, contributing to the subject's low visibility and appeal. Suggested strategies to improve enrolment include early promotion of Commerce subjects at the primary level, motivational initiatives such as awards and improved marketing by teachers. Overall, the participants highlighted the need for stronger collaboration between school boards, teachers and parents, as well as increased efforts from school management to raise awareness and support for Commerce education. These insights can guide targeted interventions to strengthen the field.

5.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA: CLOSED-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

This section presents the analysis of the quantitative data collected during the study. The aim is to uncover patterns, relationships and trends that address the research objectives and provide evidence-based insights. Using statistical tools and descriptive techniques, the data are examined to highlight key findings and support the conclusions drawn in later chapters. The data were collected through an online survey targeting school teachers teaching Commerce, the HoD for Commerce, and Commerce SEOs. A total of 81 respondents took part.

5.3.1 Commerce Teachers Quantitative Response

Table 5.2: Biographical and Respondents Data for Commerce Teachers

Personal particulars of Teachers	**Respondents of Teachers Number of teachers=70 F=Frequencies**	
	F	%
	Gender	
Male	12	17%
Female	58	83%
Female teachers recorded the highest percentage of participation in the survey, at 83%, while male counterparts were at 17%.		
Region of employment		
!Karas	8	10%
Erongo	7	9%
Hardap	2	2%
Kavango East	3	4%
Khomas	5	6%
Kunene	2	2%
Ohangwena	5	6%
Omusati	4	5%
Oshana	4	5%
Oshikoto	10	12%
Otjozondjupa	19	27%

Personal particulars of Teachers	**Respondents of Teachers** **Number of teachers=70** **F=Frequencies**	
Zambezi	1	1%
Otjozondjupa had the highest number of respondents, accounting for 27%, and Oshikoto had 12% of the respondents. Karas had 8 10% of the respondents, Erongo 9%, Hardap 2 %,Kavango East 4%, Khomas 6% respondents, Kunene 2%, Ohangwena and Omusati both had 5%, Oshana 5% and Zambezi the lowest record of 1%.		
Subjects currently taught		
Accounting	36	
Business Studies	24	
Entrepreneurship	49	
Economics	27	
Entrepreneurship has the highest record of teachers currently teaching it of 49, accounting for 36. Economics has 27 teachers, Business Studies has 24 people. A discrepancy of 14 teachers recorded in the graph did not indicate the subjects they teach.		
Professional training		
Accounting	43	
Business Studies	41	
Entrepreneurship	28	
Economics	43	
Professionally trained, accounting accounts for 43, Business Studies 41, Economics 36, Entrepreneurship 28 and again a discrepancy of 11 that cannot be allocated to any of the above subjects.		
Highest Professional qualification		
BETD	5	7%
B.ED Honours	51	73%
Master of Education	13	19%

Personal particulars of Teachers	**Respondents of Teachers** **Number of teachers=70** **F=Frequencies**	
Doctor of Philosophy	0	
Post-Doctoral Studies	1	1%
Bachelor of Education records the highest percentage, with 73% of the teachers, followed by Master of Education at 19%. Five teachers indicated a Basic Education Teacher Diploma at 7%, while 1% indicated post-doctoral studies.		
Year of Teaching Experience		
1-5 year	28	40%
6-10 years	25	36%
11-15 years	9	13%
16-20 years	5	7%
20 years +	3	4%
Years of teaching experience, 1-5 years, recorded the highest number of teachers with 40%. Approximately 36% of the teachers reported 6-10 years of teaching experience, and 13% reported 11-15 years. 7% of the teachers indicated 16-20 years, and only 4% teachers have more than 20 years of experience.		
Teaching experience in the Commerce subjects currently taught		
1-5 years	30	43%
6-10 years	24	34%
11-15 years	7	10%
16-20 years	7	10%
20 years +	2	3%
About 43% of the teachers indicated 1-5 years of experience, while 34% of the teachers are in the range of 6-10 years. Both the ranges of 11-15 years and 16-20 years attained 10%. Only 3% indicated having an experience in Commerce subjects exceeding 20 years.		
Number of learners in your grade 10 class **Frequency=67**		
05-10 learners	4	6%
11-20 learners	12	18%

Personal particulars of Teachers	**Respondents of Teachers** **Number of teachers=70** **F=Frequencies**	
21-30 learners	23	34%
31-40learners	24	36%
+40 learners	4	6%
The highest number of 36% teachers selected to have a range of 31-40 learners, followed by 34% of teachers who indicated 31-30 learners. In contrast, 18% of the teachers indicated 11-20 learners, while 5-10 learners and approximately 40 learners each received 6% of the teachers.		
Number of learners in your grade 11 class **Frequency=62**		
05-10 learners	11	18%
11-20 learners	21	34%
21-30 learners	16	26%
31-40learners	14	22%
+40 learners	0	
In Grade 11, the highest number of teachers indicated 34% in the range of 11-20 learners, from 21 teachers, followed by 21-30 learners in a class, at 26%. The range of 31-40 learners was selected by 22%, while the lowest range, 05-10 learners, was chosen by 18% of the teachers.		
Number of learners in your grade 12 class **Frequency=47**		
05-10 learners	23	49%
11-20 learners	16	34%
21-30 learners	7	15%
31-40learners	1	2%
+40 learners	0	
49% recorded the highest number, falling within the range of 5-10, followed by 34% of the teachers who indicated 11-20 learners. 15% of the teachers indicated 21-30 learners, and lastly, 2% of the teachers indicated the range of 31-40 learners in their grade 12 class.		

SECTION B RELEVANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMERCE CURRICULUM

Please indicate your opinion about each statement according to how you perceive it in class. Respond to each item as it pertains to you in your accounting class. **How to Answer Each Question.** Likert Scale: **Strongly Agree = (SA); 4 Agree =(A) 3; Disagree = (D) 2; Strongly disagree= (SD) 1**

Table 5.3: Relevance of the current Commerce curriculum

2. Do you agree or disagree with the statement that the **relevance of the current Commerce curriculum** has lived up to the expectations of the country				
	SD%	D%	A%	SA%
2.1 It lived up to the expectations of the country	9	20	60	11
The aspect assessed whether the curriculum has lived up to the country's expectations, to which 60% of teachers agreed, 20% disagreed, 11% strongly agreed, and 9% strongly disagreed.				
2.2 It is relevant and aligned with the National Development Plan of the country.	9	25	50	16
Regarding whether the curriculum is aligned with the country's National Development Plan, 50% of teachers agreed, and 25% disagreed. In contrast, 16% teachers strongly agreed that the curriculum does align, while 9% strongly disagreed.				
2.3 It is a specialist and practical skills-focused subject which is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society	4	19	63	14
The third aspect assessed the practicality of Commerce subjects, on which 63% of teachers agreed, 19% disagreed, 14% strongly agreed, and 4% strongly disagreed.				
2.4 It prepares learners for the world of work	14	20	10	56
56% of teachers strongly agreed that the curriculum prepares learners for the world of work, while 20% strongly disagreed. However, 14% teachers strongly disagreed with the statement, and 10% agreed.				
Table 5.4: Challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce				

3 Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when **implementing the curriculum for Commerce** subjects?				
3.1 Resource Limitations/lack of teaching materials	7	14	56	23
The challenge of resource limitation was agreed upon by 56% of teachers as a challenge, and 23% strongly agreed. Meanwhile, 14% teachers disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed with it as a challenge.				
3.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training.	19	34	31	16
Insufficient professional development training, 34% teachers disagreed with it being a challenge, while 31% agreed, 19% teachers strongly disagreed, and 16% strongly agreed.				
3.3 Student Diversity and Differentiated Instruction	10	19	61	10
Student diversity was agreed by 61% teachers as a challenge, 19% teachers disagreed to it, while strongly disagreed and strong agreed was voted by 10% teachers each, respectively.				
3.4 Curriculum Relevance and New Technological Trends	14	14	56	16
New technological trends were agreed as a challenge by 56% of teachers, with 16% strongly agreeing, while the categories of disagreed and strongly disagree each received 14% of teachers, respectively.				
3.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning	10	21	55	14
Assessment methods were agreed to be a challenge by 55% teachers and disagreed by 21% teachers; 14% teachers strongly agreed with it as a challenge; however, 10% strongly disagreed.				
3.6 Lack of Parental Involvement	7	7	40	46
The lack of parental involvement was strongly agreed by 46% teachers as a challenge, 40% teachers agreed that it was a challenge, while strongly agreed and disagreed both got 7% teachers.				
3.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes	9	17	50	24
On the aspect of Curriculum and policy changes was agreed by 50% of the teachers, 24% of the teachers strongly agreed, 17% disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed.				
Table 5.5 Factors that influence the teaching of Commerce subjects				

4 Do you agree or disagree with the following **factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects**?				
4.1 Resource limitations /lack of teaching materials (textbooks/laptop/overhead projector).	7	23	36	34
The lack of teaching materials as a factor impacting the teaching of Commerce subjects was agreed upon by 36% of teachers, while 34% strongly agreed. 23% teachers disagreed with it as a factor, and 7% strongly disagreed.				
4.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training (in-service training /subject matter training)	10	31	31	28
Subject matter training as a factor was disagreed with by 31% of teachers, which is equal to the percentage of teachers who agreed. The teachers who strongly agreed were 28%, and the teachers who strongly disagreed were 10%.				
4.3 Curriculum Relevance and new technological trends (update changes in curricula and training on new technologies).	9	21	47	23
New technological trends were agreed by 47% of teachers as a factor that impacts the teaching of Commerce subjects. Twenty-three percent (23%) of teachers strongly agreed that technological trends are a factor; however, 21% of teachers disagreed, and 9% strongly disagreed.				
4.4 Assessment methods to measure student learning (innovative assessment/ authentic assessment).	7	26	46	21
The assessment methods to measure student learning were agreed upon by 46% of teachers, disagreed with by 26%, strongly agreed with by 21%, and strongly disagreed with by 7% of teachers.				
4.5 Lack of parental involvement (teacher-parent conferences or teacher-student conferences)	11	13	27	49
Lack of parental involvement was strongly agreed upon by 49% of teachers as a factor, 27% of teachers agreed, 13% disagreed, and 11% strongly disagreed with it as a factor.				
4.6 Curriculum and policy changes (teaching/assessment/promotion of learners)	6	27	40	27

Curriculum and policy changes were agreed by 40% teachers as a factor, disagreed and strongly agreed equally were voted by 27% teachers and strongly disagreed by 6%.				
4.7 AI tools (generative AI tools such as ChatGPT/Grammarly)	16	28	30	26
Artificial Intelligence as a tool for teaching Commerce subjects was agreed upon by 30% of teachers, 28% disagreed, while 26% strongly agreed, and 16% strongly disagreed.				
Table 5.6 Perception of a Commerce teacher on the status of Commerce subjects				
5. Do you agree or disagree with the following perception as a **Commerce teacher on the status of Commerce** subjects?				
5.1 Rated as highly professional by learners and parents	10	24	54	12
Related as highly professional agreed by 54% of teachers, 24% disagreed that it is related as highly professional, 12% strongly agreed with the notion, while 10% strongly disagreed.				
5.2 Commerce subjects outperformed other subjects	14	37	37	11
Regarding the performance of Commerce subjects, both those who agreed and disagreed received equal responses, with 37% of teachers agreeing and 37% disagreeing. Additionally, 14% of teachers strongly disagreed and 11% strongly agreed.				
5.3 Give prominent status in business and government	14	16	64	14
Regarding the perception that it gives prominent status in government and businesses, 64% of teachers agreed, 16% disagreed, 14% strongly agreed, and 6% strongly disagreed.				
5.4 Obtain more accessible job opportunities compared to other subjects	14	33	44	9
When considering more accessible job opportunities compared to other subjects, 44% of teachers agreed, 33% disagreed, 14% strongly disagreed, and 9% strongly agreed.				
5.5 Prepare learners for the world of work	9	17	61	13
Regarding preparing learners for the world of work, 61% of teachers agreed, 17% disagreed, 13% strongly agreed, and 9% strongly disagreed.				
Table 5.7 Reasons for the low intake of learners enrolled in the Commerce subject				
6. Do you agree or disagree that the following reasons are valid for the **low intake of learners enrolled in the Commerce subject**?				

6.1 Lack of awareness and promotion of commercial subjects to the learners	9	1	53	37
Lack of awareness was agreed upon by 53% of teachers as a reason for the low intake, and strongly agreed upon by 37% of teachers; however, 9% of teachers strongly disagreed, and 1% disagreed.				
6.1 Influence from parents and friends	7	9	40	44
Influence from parents and friends was strongly agreed upon by 44% of teachers, agreed upon by 40% of teachers, disagreed with by 9% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 7% of teachers.				
6.3 Different career preferences	10	19	41	30
Different career preferences were agreed upon by 41% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 30% of teachers, disagreed with by 19% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 10% of teachers.				
6.4 Teachers' workload and preferences of learners in class sizes	16	40	21	23
Teachers' workload and learners' preferences in class sizes were disagreed with by 40% of teachers, strongly agreed with by 23% of teachers, agreed with by 21% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 16% of teachers.				
6.5 Assuming that Commerce subjects are difficult	10	6	43	41
Learners assuming that Commerce subjects are difficult was agreed upon by 43% of teachers as a valid reason for the low intake, strongly agreed upon by 41% of teachers, however strongly disagreed with by 10% of teachers and disagreed with by 6% of teachers.				
6.6 Learners have a perception that Commerce does not have opportunities for a future career	7	14	40	39
The perception of a lack of opportunities in Commerce was agreed upon by 40% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 39% of teachers, disagreed with by 14% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 7% of teachers.				
6.7 Negative attitudes and teaching methodology of teachers were demotivating for learners,	7	33	34	26
Negative attitudes of teachers were agreed upon by 34% of teachers, disagreed with by 33% of teachers, strongly agreed with by 26% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 7% of teachers.				

6.8 Unfavourable examination structure for Commerce subjects causes learners to perform poorly.	11	34	26	29
The unfavourable examination structure was disagreed with as a reason for the low enrolment by 34% of teachers, strongly agreed with by 29% of teachers, agreed with by 26% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 11% of teachers.				
6.9 The Commerce syllabus is too packed, making paying attention to the learning objectives difficult.	21	12	46	21
The packed Commerce syllabus was agreed upon by 46% of teachers as a reason for the low intake, with both 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' having 21% of teachers each, and disagree' being indicated by 12% of teachers.				
6.10 A teacher shortage contributes to poor teachers' and learners' performance.	16	33	34	17
The teachers' shortage was agreed to by 34% of teachers, disagreed with by 33% of teachers, strongly agreed with by 17% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 16% of teachers.				
6.11. Lack of exposure to appropriate teaching methods, insufficient time for syllabus coverage, and lack of commitment	12	13	44	31
Lack of exposure to appropriate teaching methods was agreed upon by 44% of teachers as a reason and strongly agreed upon by 31% of teachers, disagreed with by 13% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 12% of teachers.				
Table 5.8 Methods to encourage and motivate more learners to pursue Commerce				
7.1. Do you agree or disagree that a **Commerce teacher can use these methods to encourage and motivate** more learners to pursue Commerce subjects in grades 10-12 ?				
7.1 Give positive feedback in class	3	10	47	40
Giving positive feedback was agreed by 47% teachers, 40% teachers strongly agreed, while10% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed.				
7.2 Showcasing work in the classroom display	3	9	57	31

Showcasing work in the classroom was agreed upon by 57% of teachers as an effective strategy, while 31% strongly agreed with the strategy, 9% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.				
7.3 Announcements at assembly	7	13	46	34
Announcement at assembly on achievement was agreed upon by 46% of teachers as an effective strategy, followed by 34% of teachers who strongly agreed with the strategy. Thirteen percent (13%) of teachers disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed with the teaching strategy of making announcements at school assemblies.				
7.4 Give career guidance on Commerce	4	6	44	46
Career guidance was strongly agreed upon by 46% of teachers, agreed upon by 44% of teachers, and disagreed with by 6% of teachers, and 4% of teachers strongly disagreed.				
7.5 Forming Commerce Clubs	4	6	43	47
Commerce clubs as a strategy to encourage more learners to pursue a career in Commerce was strongly agreed upon by 47% of teachers, 43% agreed, 6% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed.				
7.6 Commerce quizzes and competition	6	4	47	43
Commerce quizzes and competitions were agreed upon by 47% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 43% of teachers, strongly disagreed with by 6% of teachers, and disagreed with by 4% of teachers.				
Table 5.9 Teaching approach preferred in teaching Commerce subjects				
8. Which **teaching approach** do you **mainly prefer** in teaching the Commerce subject for which you are currently responsible?				
8.1 Teacher-centred approach	20	29	33	18
About 33% of teachers have agreed to use a teacher-centred approach in teaching Commerce subjects, 29% have indicated that they disagree with this approach, while 20% have strongly disagreed, and 18% have strongly agreed to use a teacher-centred approach in their teaching.				
8.2 Learner-centred approach	6	1	33	60

A learner-centred approach was strongly agreed to be used by 60% of teachers, 33% of teachers agreed to be using this approach, while 6% of teachers strongly disagreed with it, and 1% of teachers also disagreed with using this approach.

Table 5.10 Teaching methods used in teaching Commerce

9. Do you agree or disagree with the teaching methods **you mainly use** in teaching the Commerce subject to **increase active participation**?				
9.1 Cooperative learning method	1	6	60	33
Cooperative learning as a teaching method was agreed upon by 60% of teachers to increase active participation of learners. Thirty-three percent (33%) of teachers indicated that they strongly agreed, 6% indicated that they strongly disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed with this method for increasing active participation.				
9.2 Jigsaw Cooperative Learning Strategy	1	21	55	23
The jigsaw cooperative learning strategy was agreed upon by 55% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 23%, disagreed with by 21%, and strongly disagreed with by 1%.				
9.3 Think-pair-share strategy	4	3	49	44
The think-pair-share strategy was agreed upon by 49% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 44%, strongly disagreed with by 4%, and disagreed with by three percents.				
9.4 Student Team Achievement Divisions Cooperative Learning Strategy	4	8	49	39
The Student Team Achievement Divisions was another method explored, and 49% of teachers agreed, followed by 39% who strongly agreed, 8% who disagreed, and 4% who strongly disagreed.				
9.5 Group discussion method	3	7	43	47
Group discussion was strongly agreed upon by 47% of the teachers, 43% agreed, 7% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed.				
9.6 Research method	6	8	54	32
The research method as a means to increase active participation was agreed upon by 54% of teachers, 32% strongly agreed, 8% disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed.				
9.7 Lecture method	19	32	30	19

The lecture method was disagreed with by 32% teachers, not to increase active participation; agreed with by 21% teachers to increase active participation; strongly agreed with and strongly disagreed with by 19% teachers in each category.				
9.8 Textbook method	12	31	36	21
The textbook as a method to increase active participation was agreed upon by 36% of teachers, disagreed with by 31% of teachers, strongly agreed with by 21% of teachers and strongly disagreed with by 12% of teachers.				
9.9 Flipped classroom method	10	14	56	20
The flipped classroom method was agreed upon by 56% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 20% of teachers, disagreed with by 14% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 10% of teachers.				
9.10 Simulation and role-playing method	6	6	56	32
Stimulation and role-playing were agreed upon by 56% of teachers to increase participation, while 32% of teachers strongly agreed, and the responses of 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' received equal votes of 6% each.				
9.11 Case study method	6	10	44	40
Case-study method 44% teachers agreed, 40% teachers strongly agreed, 10% teachers disagreed, and 6% teachers strongly disagreed.				
9.12 Small group discussion method	1	4	53	42
The small group method was found to be an effective method of increasing participation, with 53% of teachers agreeing, 42% strongly agreeing, 4% disagreeing, and 1% strongly disagreeing.				
9.13 Team-based learning method	3	7	50	40
The team-based learning method was agreed upon by 50% of the teachers as increasing active participation, 40% of the teachers strongly agreed with the method, 7% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed.				
9.14 Direct instruction method	7	17	47	29
The direct instruction method was agreed by 47% teachers, strongly agreed by 29% teachers, disagreed by 17% teachers and strongly disagreed by 7% teachers.				
9.15 Project-based teaching method	3	14	43	40

The project-based teaching method was agreed upon by 43% of teachers, strongly agreed upon by 40% of teachers, disagreed with by 14% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 3% of teachers.				
9.16 Field-based excursions method	6	6	54	34
The field-based excursions method was agreed upon by 54% of teachers as a way to increase active participation. About 34% of teachers strongly agreed with the method, while 6% strongly disagreed and 6% disagreed.				

In summary, the study shows that most Commerce teachers hold a Bachelor of Education (51), followed by Master of Education (13), with a few holding diplomas or post-doctoral qualifications, while 11 teachers did not specify their credentials. The teaching experience was highest among those with 1-5 years (30 teachers), followed by 6-10 years (24), with fewer teachers in the higher experience brackets and 12 unaccounted for. Class sizes varied across grades: Grade 10 had the largest classes with 31-40 learners (24 teachers), while Grade 11 saw most teachers handling 11-20 learners (21), and Grade 12 showed a shift to smaller classes. Teachers largely agreed that the Commerce curriculum prepares learners for the world of work (39 agreed, 14 strongly agreed), aligns with national goals, and is practical and relevant, though some expressed disagreement. Challenges identified included resource limitations (39 agreed), student diversity (43 agreed), and technological trends (39 agreed), while opinions on professional development and assessment methods were mixed.

Factors impacting teaching included lack of materials, curriculum changes and AI integration, with varied responses. Commerce subjects were generally perceived as professional and offering relevance to government and business, although opinions on performance and job opportunities were divided. Reasons for low learner intake included lack of awareness, peer influence, career preferences, perceived difficulty, and teacher attitudes, with examination structure and syllabus load also cited. Effective strategies to boost enrolment included positive feedback, showcasing work, assembly announcements, Commerce clubs, and competitions, all of which received strong support from most teachers.

5.3.2 Head of Departments Quantitative responses

Table 5.11: Head of Departments for Commerce Biographical Data

Personal particulars of the Head of Departments	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
	F	%
Gender		
Male	2	29%
Female	5	71%
71% female HoDs took part in the survey, and 29% were male.		
Region of employment		
Otjozondjupa	2	28.5%
Oshikoto	1	14.3%
Omusati	1	14.3%
Omaheke	1	14.3%
Khomas	1	14.3%
Hardap	1	14.3%
The HoD represents a total of six regions, and Otjozondjupa represents the highest, at 28.5%, while the rest of the regions, each of which participated, have a share of 14.3%.		
Professional training		
Accounting	7	100
Business Studies	3	43%
Economics		
Entrepreneurship	2	29%
100% all HoDs are professionally qualified in accounting, while only 43% are qualified in Business Studies and 29% in Entrepreneurship.		
Highest Qualification		
BETD		
Diploma in Education		

Personal particulars of the Head of Departments	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
B.Ed (Level 7)		
B.Ed Hons(Level 8)	4	57%
M.Ed	2	29%
Ph.D	1	14%
Post-doctoral studies		
The highest qualification indicated is a Doctor of Philosophy by 14% of the HoD, whilst 29% indicated that their highest qualification is a Master of Education and 57% of HoDs indicated Bachelor of Education Honours		
Years of overall teaching experience		
1-5 years		
6-10 years	3	42%
11-15 years	2	29%
16-20 years	2	29%
20 years +		
42% of the HoD indicated their overall teaching experience to be in the range of 6-10 years, whilst 29% are in the range of 11-15 years, and another 29% indicated 16-20 years of overall teaching experience.		
Years of experience as an HoD		
1-5 years		
6-10 years	4	57%
11-15 years	1	14%
16-20 years	2	29%
20 years +		
In their respective roles as HoDs, the highest experience is 16-20 years among 29% of the HoDs, followed by 14% of the HoDs with 11-15 years of experience, and the last group comprises 57% of the HoDs with 6-10 years of experience.		

Personal particulars of the Head of Departments	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
SECTION B CLASSROOM INFORMATION		
Table 5.12 Choosing the Commerce field of study		
Free will to choose a field of study		
Yes	5	72%
No	1	14%
Maybe	1	14%
72% of the HoDs indicated that learners have the free will to choose their desired field of study at grades 10-12. 14% of the HoDs indicated that learners do not have free will, while another 14% of the HoDs were unsure if learners have free will or not.		
Table 5.13 Commerce curriculum lived up to the expectations of the country		
Do you agree or disagree that the current Commerce curriculum lived up to the expectations of the country?		
Strongly disagree	2	29%
Disagree		
Neither agree nor disagree	2	29%
Agree	3	42%
Strongly agree		
42% HoDs agree that the current Commerce curriculum has lived up to the expectations of the country. However, 29% HoD could not agree nor disagree on that factor, while 29% strongly disagree that the current Commerce curriculum has lived up to the expectations of the country.		

Personal particulars of the Head of Departments	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
Table 5.14: Adequate professional development activities for Commerce teachers		
Do you agree or disagree that teachers in your department participate in adequate professional development activities?		
Strongly disagree	2	29%
Disagree	1	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	14%
Agree	1	14%
Strongly agree	2	29%
29% HoDs strongly agree that the teachers in their department receive adequate professional development activities, and another 29% strongly disagree that the professional development is not adequate. The remaining three split among disagree, neither agree nor disagree and agree, each having 14%.		
5.15 Effectiveness of the monitoring processes		
Do you agree or disagree that the current monitoring processes in your department are effective in supporting teacher performance?		
Strongly disagree	1	14%
Disagree		
Neither agree nor disagree	2	29%
Agree	3	43%
Strongly agree	1	14%
Monitoring processes showed that 43% HoDs agreed that the monitoring processes were effective in supporting teacher performance. About 29% HoDs were neutral as they neither agreed nor disagreed on the factor, whilst 14% strongly agreed has 14% and strongly disagreed 14% as well.		

Personal particulars of the Head of Departments	Respondents of SEOs Number of SEOs F=Frequencies

Table 5.16 Challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects

Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects? Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) , 2=Disagree (D); 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA)	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4SA%
3.1 Resource Limitations/lack of teaching materials			43	57
57% of the HoDs strongly agreed that resource limitations are a challenge when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects; in addition, 43% of the HoDs agreed with this challenge.				
3.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training.		29	42%	29
42% per cent of the HoDs agreed that there is insufficient teacher training; furthermore, 29% strongly agreed with this factor. However, 29% disagreed that teacher training is a challenge in the implementation of the Commerce curriculum.				
3.3 Student Diversity and Differentiated Instruction			57	43
Student diversity was agreed as a challenge in implementing the Commerce curriculum by 57% of the HoDs, while 43% strongly agreed with this assessment.				
3.4 Curriculum Relevance and New Technological Trends		14	57	29
The relevance of the curriculum and new technological trends as a challenge was agreed by 57% of the HoDs, while 29% HoDs strongly agreed to it as a challenge, and 14% of the HoDs disagreed with it as a challenge in the implementation of the Commerce curriculum.				
3.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning			71	29

Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects? Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) , 2=Disagree (D); 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA)	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4SA%
Assessment methods were agreed to be a challenge by 71% of the HoDs, and the remaining 29% strongly agreed with this factor as a challenge in implementing the Commerce curriculum.				
3.6 Lack of Parental Involvement	14	14	43	29
43% of the HoDs agreed to it as a challenge, while 29% strongly agreed. Conversely, 14% of the HoDs strongly disagreed, and another 14% disagreed.				

Do you agree or disagree with the following factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects?

Table 5:17 Factors that influence the impact of teaching of Commerce subjects

4 Do you agree or disagree with the following factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects? Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) , 2=Disagree (D); 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA)	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
4.1 Resource Limitations /lack of teaching materials (textbooks/laptop/overhead projector).	14	14	43	29
Lack of teaching materials was agreed by 43% of the HoDs as a factor that impacts the teaching of Commerce, and 29% of the HoDs strongly agreed with this factor. 14% HoD disagreed, and the last 14% strongly disagreed.				
4.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training (in-service training /subject matter training)		57	29	14
Subject matter training was disagreed with by 57% of HoDs, who believed it would have no impact on the teaching of Commerce subjects. About 29% of the HoDs agreed, and the remaining 14% strongly agreed that this factor has an impact.				

4 Do you agree or disagree with the following factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects? Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) , 2=Disagree (D); 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA)	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
4.3 Student diversity and differentiated instruction (classroom management and discipline).		14	57	29
Classroom management and discipline were agreed upon by 57% of the HoDs as a factor that impacts the teaching and learning of Commerce. 29% of the HoDs strongly agreed with this factor, while the remaining 14% disagreed.				
4.4 Curriculum relevance and new technological trends (update changes in curricula and training on new technologies).		14	72	14
Changes in curricula and training on new technologies were agreed by 72 % of the HoDs, while 14% disagreed, and another 14% strongly agreed.				
4.5 Assessment methods to measure student learning (innovative assessment/ authentic assessment).		14	43	43
Assessment methods get equal points of 43% of the HoDs each for agreed and strongly agreed, whilst 14% of the HoDs disagreed with this factor as an impact on teaching of the Commerce subjects.				
4.6 Lack of parental involvement (teacher-parent conferences or teacher-student conferences)		14	57	29
57% of the HoDs agreed that parental involvement was a factor, while 29% strongly agreed with this factor; however, 14% of the HoDs disagreed with it as a factor.				
4.7 Curriculum and policy changes (teaching/assessment/promotion of learners)		14	72	14
Curriculum and policy changes as a factor in the teaching of Commerce subjects received 72% agreement from HoDs, with an equal split between those who disagreed and those who strongly agreed, each accounting for 14% of the HoDs.				
4.8 AI tools (generative AI tools such as ChatGPT/Grammarly)		14	72	14

4 Do you agree or disagree with the following factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects? Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) , 2=Disagree (D); 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA)	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
Artificial Intelligence was agreed by 72% of the HoDs to impact the teaching of Commerce subjects; furthermore, this factor received an equal split between those who disagreed and those who strongly agreed, with each group accounting for 14%.				

Table 5.18 Activities to encourage more learners to take up Commerce subjects.

7 Do you agree that the following activities are effective or not in encouraging more learners to take up Commerce subjects in grades 10-12? Likert scale for Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D); Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA).	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
7.1 Field trips		14	29	57
Field trips as a strategy 57% of the HoDs strongly agreed to the strategy, whilst 29% agreed, 14% HoDs disagreed that it is not effective in encouraging learners to take up Commerce subjects.				
7.2 Commerce Clubs		14	29	57
57% HoDs strongly agreed that Commerce clubs are effective in encouraging learners, whilst 29% of the HoDs agreed that Commerce clubs are effective; however, 14% of the HoDs disagreed that it is an effective strategy.				
7.3 Parental engagement		14	29	57
Parental engagement indicates that 57% of the HoDs strongly agreed, 29% agreed whilst 14% disagreed that it is an effective strategy.				
7.4 Career Awareness Programmes		14	14	72
Career awareness as a strategy received the highest score, with 71.4% of the HoDs strongly agreeing, while 14.3% of the HoDs disagreed and 14.3% agreed.				

7 Do you agree that the following activities are effective or not in encouraging more learners to take up Commerce subjects in grades 10-12? Likert scale for Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D); Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA).	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
7.5 peer monitoring		14	29	57
57% of the HoDs strongly agreed that peer monitoring is an effective strategy, whilst 29% agreed; however, 14% HoDs disagreed that this factor is an effective strategy.				
7.6 Quizzes/Commerce competition		14	29	57
Commerce competition as a strategy to increase the number of learners to take up Commerce subjects points out that 57% of the HoDs strongly agreed, 29% agreed, and 14% disagreed.				

In summary, the survey of seven HoDs, comprising five females and one male, began with a gender discrepancy, as one respondent did not indicate their gender. HoDs from six regions participated and shared varied insights into Commerce education. Most HoDs are professionally qualified in accounting, with fewer in business studies and entrepreneurship, and none listed for economics, highlighting a data discrepancy. Qualifications range from a Bachelor of Education (Honours) (4) to a Master of Education (2), with one PhD. Teaching experience ranges from 6 to 20 years, with most HoDs having 6–10 years in their current role. The majority believe that learners have the freedom to choose their field of study from grades 10 to 12.

Opinions on the Commerce curriculum were mixed. Three HoDs agreed it meets national expectations, two were neutral and two strongly disagreed. Several participants viewed professional development as inadequate, and monitoring systems received moderate approval. Resource limitations, insufficient teacher training, student diversity, curriculum relevance, and assessment methods were widely acknowledged as challenges. Parental involvement was also noted, though

with some disagreement. Factors impacting Commerce teaching included a lack of materials, subject-matter training, classroom discipline, curriculum changes, and emerging technologies such as AI. Strategies to boost learner interest, such as field trips, Commerce clubs, parental engagement, career awareness, peer monitoring, and competitions, were mostly supported, with career awareness and Commerce clubs receiving strong endorsement.

5.3.3 SEOs Quantitative Responses

Table 5.19 Biographical data for SEOs

Personal particulars of principals	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
	F	**%**
Gender		
Male	2	50%
Female	2	50%
Two male and two female SEOs took part in the survey giving a 50% for each gender category.		
Region of employment		
Oshana	1	25%
Otjozondjupa	1	25%
Omusati	1	25%
Kavango West	1	25%
SEOs who participated come from each of the 14 regions, namely Oshana, Omusati, Otjozondjupa, and Kavango West; each region contributed 25%.		
Heading of which Commerce subject		
Accounting	3	33.33%
Business Studies	2	22.22%
Economics	2	22.22%

Personal particulars of principals	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
Entrepreneurship	2	22.22%
33.33% of the SEOs are responsible for heading accounting in their regions, 22.2% are responsible for business studies, 22.22% for economics and 22.22% for entrepreneurship.		
Professionally trained in which Commerce subject		
Accounting	2	33.33%
Business Studies	2	33.33%
Economics	2	33.33%
Entrepreneurship	0	0
The data show that the subjects the SEOs are professionally qualified in, 33.33% SEOs are qualified in accounting, 33.33% business studies and 33.33% economics, also have two people qualified in each. None of the SEOs is professionally qualified in Entrepreneurship.		
Highest Professional Qualification		
BETD		
Diploma in Education		
B.Ed (Level 7)		
B.Ed Hons(Level 8)	2	50%
M.Ed	2	50%
Ph.D		
Post-doctoral studies		
The highest qualification indicated by 50% of SEOs was a Master of Education, while the remaining 50% of SEOs indicated that their highest qualification was a Bachelor of Education (Honours).		
Years of experience as an SEO		
1-5 years	2	50%
6-10 years		

Personal particulars of principals	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
11-15 years	1	25%
16-20 years		
20 years +	1	25%
25% of the SEOs indicated experience ranging from 11 to 15 years, and 25% of the SEOs have experience of more than 20 years; 50% indicated experience ranging from 1 to 5 years.		
Table 5.20 Number of schools in your region offering Commerce		
The number of schools in your region offering Commerce		
20 years +		
5-10 schools		
11-15 schools	2	50%
16-20 schools	2	50%
20-25 schools		
+25 schools		
No SEO indicated more than 20 schools offering Commerce at the senior secondary phase. Fifty percent (50%) of the SEOs indicated a range of 11-15 schools, and 50% of the other regions indicated a range of 16-20.		
Table 5.21: Manageability of the workload for SEOs in providing effective support and monitoring teachers' work		
How manageable or not manageable is the workload for SEOs in providing effective support and monitoring teachers' work?		
Very manageable	1	25%
Neutral	2	50%
Difficult		
Very difficult	1	25%
50% of the SEOs indicated that the workload is neutral in providing effective support and monitoring teachers' work, very manageable and very difficult, each has 25%.		

Personal particulars of principals	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
Table 5:22 Commerce curriculum meets the needs of the Namibian economy		
Do you agree or disagree that the current Commerce curriculum meets the needs of the Namibian economy?		
Strongly Disagree		
Disagree	2	50%
Neutral		
Agree	2	50%
Strongly Agree		
Fifty percent (50%) of the SEOs indicated that they disagree that the current Commerce curriculum meets the needs of the Namibian economy. On the contrary, the other 50% SEOs agree that the current Commerce curriculum does meet the needs of the Namibian economy.		
Table 5:23 Ongoing training for teachers is crucial to keep the Commerce curriculum up-to-date		
Do you agree or disagree that ongoing training for teachers is crucial to keep the Commerce curriculum up-to-date?		
Strongly Disagree		
Disagree	1	25%
Neutral		
Agree	1	25%
Strongly Agree	2	50%
50% of SEOs strongly agreed that training for teachers was crucial to keeping the Commerce curriculum up to date, while 25% of SEOs agreed that training for teachers was also crucial. Meanwhile, 25% SEO disagreed that training for teachers is not crucial to keep the Commerce curriculum up-to-date.		
Table 5.24 Current enrolment number of learners in the Commerce field grade 10-12		

Personal particulars of principals	**Respondents of SEOs** **Number of SEOs** **F=Frequencies**	
How satisfied are you with the current enrolment number of learners in the Commerce field, grades 10-12?		
Very Dissatisfied	1	25%
Dissatisfied	2	50%
Neither satisfied nor Dissatisfied	0	
Satisfied	1	25%
Very Satisfied	0	0
The enrolment in the Commerce field for grades 10-12, 25% of the SEOs indicated that they were very satisfied with the enrolment in their respective region. However, 50% of the SEOs indicated that they were dissatisfied, and 25% indicated that they were very dissatisfied.		

Table 5.25: Challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects

Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects? **Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA).**	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
4.1 Field trips			50	50
About 50% of the SEOs agreed that field trips can be an effective strategy when implementing Commerce, while the other 50% strongly agreed that field trips can revive the Commerce field.				
4.2 Commerce Clubs		25	25	50

Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects? **Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Agree (A), 4=Strongly Agree (SA).**	1SD%	2D%	3A%	4 SA%
About 50% of the SEOs strongly agreed that a Commerce club is an effective strategy to revive the field of Commerce study, while 25% agreed, and the remaining 25% disagreed with that strategy.				
4.3 Parental engagement		50	25	25
About 50% SEOs disagreed that parental engagement can revive the Commerce field, while the other 25% agreed, and the other 25% strongly agreed that parental involvement can revive the Commerce field				
4.4 Career Awareness Programmes			50	50
Career awareness scored 50% for both 'agreed' and 'strongly agreed'.				
4.5 Peer monitoring		50	50	50
Peer monitoring as a strategy to revive Commerce, 50% SEOs indicated that they agree that they agreed it is a possible and effective strategy to revive Commerce, leaving a tie between disagree and strongly agree, each scoring 25%.				
4.6 Quizzes/Commerce competition		25	50	25
About 50% SEOs agreed that Commerce competition is an effective strategy to revive Commerce, and another 25% strongly agreed; however, 25% SEO disagreed that this strategy is effective.				

In summation, four SEOs participated in the survey. They head subjects such as Accounting (3), Business Studies (2), Economics (2), and Entrepreneurship (2), though none are professionally qualified in Entrepreneurship. Each of Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics has two professionally qualified SEOs. Two hold Master of Education degrees, and two hold Bachelor of Education (Honours); their experience ranges from 1-5 years (2 SEOs), 11-15 years (1), and over 20 years (1).

Commerce is offered in 11-20 schools per region, with no region exceeding 20. Opinions on the relevance of the Commerce curriculum to Namibia's economy were split evenly, while most SEOs emphasised the importance of teacher training. Satisfaction with Commerce enrolment from grades 10-12 was generally low, with only one SEO being very satisfied. Strategies to revive the field elicited mixed responses: Commerce clubs and competitions received the most support, while field trips, parental engagement, career awareness, and peer monitoring received varying levels of support and opposition.

5.3.4 Inferential Statistical Analysis

5.3.4.1 Independent Samples t-test: Gender Differences

Table 5.26: Comparison of Male and Female Respondents on Commerce Subjects

Group	N	Mean	SD	T	df	P	Cohen's d
Male	14	3.22	0.56				
Female	67	3.78	0.67	-2.49	28	0.019	0.90

Table 5.26 reports the results of an independent-samples t-test conducted to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in perceptions of the Commerce subjects among Namibian secondary school respondents, between males and females. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups, $t(28) = -2.49$, $p = 0.019$. Female respondents (M = 3.78, SD = 0.67) reported more positive perceptions of the stakeholders (SEOs, HoDs and Teachers) compared to male respondents (M = 3.22, SD = 0.56). The magnitude of the difference was large, with a Cohen's d of 0.90, indicating a substantial practical difference in perceptions between gender groups.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in perceptions of the status of Commerce subjects between male and female respondents. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups, $t(28) = -2.49$, $p = 0.019$. Female respondents (M = 3.78, SD = 0.67) reported significantly more positive perceptions of the future of Commerce subjects compared to male respondents (M = 3.22, SD = 0.56). The effect

size was large (Cohen's d = 0.90), indicating a substantial practical difference between the two groups.

5.3.4.2 One-Way Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)

Differences by Qualification

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether perceptions of the status of Commerce subjects in secondary schools differed significantly across qualification levels. The results showed no statistically significant differences between qualification groups, $F(2, 27) = 0.67$, $p = 0.52$. Although respondents with Bed/BCom qualifications (M = 3.79, SD = 0.69) and BCom hons qualifications (M = 3.77, SD = 0.66) reported slightly higher mean scores than those with Master's qualifications (M = 3.48, SD = 0.59), these differences were not statistically significant. The effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.047$), suggesting minimal practical differences across qualification levels.

Differences by Professionally Trained in Commerce Subjects

A one-way ANOVA was also conducted to examine whether perceptions of the teachers differed across subject matter/discipline (Accounting, Business Studies, Economics or Entrepreneurship). The results indicated no statistically significant differences, $F(2, 20) = 1.34$, $p = 0.28$. Although respondents (Accounting) (M = 3.70) reported slightly more positive perceptions than those from Entrepreneurship (M = 3.20), these differences were not statistically significant. The effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.118$) suggested a moderate practical effect, although this did not reach statistical significance.

Differences by Educational Region

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether perceptions of the Jigsaw teaching strategy differed across Namibia's educational regions (Omusati, Oshikoto, Omaheke, Khomas and Otjozondjupa). The results revealed no statistically significant differences, $F(2, 25) = 0.28$, $p = 0.76$. Although respondents from Khomas (M = 3.72) reported slightly higher mean scores than those from Omaheke (M = 3.58), the differences were negligible. The effect size was very small ($\eta^2 = 0.022$), indicating

that district affiliation had little to no influence on perceptions of curriculum implementation in Commerce subjects.

The overall findings indicate that respondents hold positive perceptions of the SEOs, HoDs and Commerce teachers for the increase in learners in Commerce subjects. Descriptive results suggest strong agreement on future strategies to enhance learner enrolments.

Inferential statistics revealed that:

- There was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents, with females reporting more positive perceptions.
- No statistically significant differences were found across qualification levels, school types or educational regions.

A series of one-way ANOVAs was conducted to determine whether stakeholders' perceptions (SEOs, HoDs, and teachers) regarding current enrolments and future strategies differed across qualification levels, school types and educational districts. The results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences across qualification groups, $F(2, 27) = 0.67$, $p = 0.52$, school types, $F(2, 20) = 1.34$, $p = 0.28$, or educational districts, $F(2, 25) = 0.28$, $p = 0.76$. Although minor variations in mean scores were observed across groups, these differences were not statistically meaningful.

Effect size analysis revealed small-to-moderate effects for qualification ($\eta^2 = 0.047$) and school type ($\eta^2 = 0.118$), while district had a negligible effect ($\eta^2 = 0.022$). Overall, the findings suggest that perceptions among stakeholders (SEOs, HoDs, Commerce teachers, and SGBs) are consistent across demographic and institutional contexts.

5.3.4.3 Pearson Correlation Matrix (r)

This matrix assesses the strength and direction of linear relationships among your continuous sub-scales in the respondents' views about the current status of enrolments in Commerce subjects.

Table 5.27: Pearson Correlation Matrix (r)

Construct Variables		**Factors of low-intake of learners in Commerce**	**Teaching methods and strategies in teaching Commerce**	Challenges identified for the low intake in enrolments
Factors of low-intake of learners in Commerce	Pearson Corr. (r) Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 81	**.684**** .000 81	**.412*** .024 81
Teaching methods and strategies in teaching Commerce	Pearson Corr. (r) Sig. (2-tailed) N		1 81	**.513**** .004 81
Challenges identified for the low intake of enrolments	Pearson Corr. (r)			1

Construct Variables		**Factors of low-intake of learners in Commerce**	**Teaching methods and strategies in teaching Commerce**	Challenges identified for the low intake in enrolments
	Sig. (2-tailed) N			81

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

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

Table: A value of 0.684 indicates a strong, positive, statistically significant linear relationship ($p < .001$) between how active the strategy is used and actual accounting skill enhancement.

5.3.4.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy **was computed to assess whether the survey items are likely to factor well** based on correlation patterns. It checks the ratio of the squared correlations to the squared partial correlations among variables, yielding a metric between 0 and 1.

Statistical Benchmarks

0.90 or above: Marvelous / Excellent

0.80 to 0.89: Meritorious / Good

0.70 to 0.79: Middling / Acceptable

0.60 to 0.69: Mediocre / Poor

Below 0.50: Unacceptable (EFA should not be conducted)

Table 5.28: KMO and Bartlett's Test (Data Suitability)

Statistical Test Measure	**Value**
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy	**0.782**
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: Approx. Chi-Square	314.52
Df	435
Sig. (p-value)	**0.000**

The computed KMO value is **0.782**, which is classified as **"middling" or acceptable**. It shows that your sample size (N=81) and item distributions are sufficient to yield distinct, stable factors. The sample possesses a strong enough pattern of correlations to proceed with EFA safely.

Bartlett's test is a hypothesis test that examines the overall correlation matrix of the study variables. The **Chi-Square (2 = 314.52)** measures the magnitude of the divergence from an identity matrix. A value of 314.52 is quite large relative to the study sample, indicating a strong correlation. Therefore, the **significance (p = 0.000)** is the definitive metric because the p-value is less than the standard significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). In sum, **Bartlett's Test (p < 0.001)** proves that there are statistically significant, non-zero linear relationships among your questionnaire items regarding the implementation and challenges of learner enrolments in Commerce subjects. The **KMO score (0.712)** confirms that these relationships are strong and clustered enough to be condensed down into the broader underlying themes (like factors of low-intake of learners in Commerce, teaching methods and strategies in teaching Commerce and challenges identified for the low intake in enrolments) that were extracted in the Rotated Pattern Matrix.

An exploratory factor analysis was computed on Section B for Commerce teachers to compute factor loadings for each factor analysis (scale for factor loadings).

Table 5.29: Loading value and interpretation

Loading value	Interpretation
≥ 0.70	Very strong relationship (excellent indicator of the factor)
0.50 – 0.69	Moderate to strong relationship (acceptable)
0.30 – 0.49	Weak relationship (may be retained cautiously)
< 0.30	Very weak (usually not meaningful)

Table 5.30: Factor loadings on section B: Current status of Commerce in Namibia

Statements related to the relevance and implementation of Commerce	Factor loadings
2.1 It lived up to the expectations of the country	.059
2.2 It prepares learners for the world of work	.068
2.3 It is relevant and aligned with the National Development Plan of the country	0.89
2.4 It is a specialist and practical skills-focused subject which is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society	0.57
3.1 Resource Limitations/lack of teaching materials	0.45
3.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training.	0.39
3.3 Student Diversity and Differentiated Instruction	0.55
3.4 Curriculum Relevance and New Technological Trends	0.78
3.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning	0.67
3.6 Lack of Parental Involvement	0.34
3.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes	0.39
4.1 Resource Limitations /lack of teaching materials (textbooks/laptop/overhead projector).	0.31
4.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training (in-service training /subject matter training)	0.67
4.3 Student Diversity and differentiated instruction (classroom management and discipline).	0.51

Statements related to the relevance and implementation of Commerce	**Factor loadings**
4.4 Curriculum Relevance and new technological trends (update changes in curricula and training on new technologies).	.059
4.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning (innovative assessment/ authentic assessment).	.068
4.6 Lack of Parental Involvement (teacher-parent conferences or teacher-student conferences)	0.89
4.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes (teaching/assessment/promotion of learners)	0.57
4.8 AI tools (generative AI tools such as ChatGPT/Grammarly)	0.45
5.1 Rated as highly professional by learners and parents	0.39
5.2 Commerce subjects outperformed other subjects	0.55
5.3 Give prominent status in business and government	0.78
5.4 Obtain more accessible job opportunities compared to other subjects	0.67
5.5 Prepare learners for the world of work	0.34
6.2 Lack of awareness and promotion of commercial subjects to the learners	0.39
6.3 Influence from parents and friends	0.31
6.3 Different career preferences	0.67
6.4 Teachers' workload and preferences of learners in class sizes	0.51
6.5 Assuming that Commerce subjects are difficult	.059
6.6 Learners have a perception that Commerce does not have opportunities for a future career	.068
6.7 Negative attitudes and teaching methodology of teachers were demotivating for learners,	0.89
6.8 Unfavourable examination structure for Commerce subjects causes learners to perform poorly	0.57
6.9 The Commerce syllabus is too packed, making paying attention to the learning objectives difficult.	0.45

Statements related to the relevance and implementation of Commerce	Factor loadings
6.10 A teacher shortage contributes to poor teachers' and learners' performance.	0.39
6.11. Lack of exposure to appropriate teaching methods, insufficient time for syllabus coverage, and lack of commitment	0.55
7.1 Give positive feedback in class	0.78
7.2 Showcasing work in the classroom display	0.67
7.3 Announcements at assembly	0.44
7.4 Give career guidance on Commerce	0.79
7.5 Forming Commerce Clubs	0.61
7.6 Commerce quizzes and competition	0.67
8.1 Teacher-centred approach	0.51
8.2 Learner-centred approach	.059
9.1 Cooperative learning method	0.68
9.2 Jigsaw Cooperative Learning Strategy	0.89
9.3 Think-pair-share strategy	0.77
9.4 Student Team Achievement Divisions Cooperative Learning Strategy	0.65
9.5 Group discussion method	0.79
9.7 Research method	0.55
9.7 Lecture method	0.78
9.8 Textbook method	0.67
9.9 Flipped classroom method	0.64
9.10 Simulation and Role-playing method	0.49
9.11 Case study method	0.31
9.12 Small group discussion method	0.67
9.13 Team-based learning method	0.51
9.14 Direct instruction method	0.59
9.15 Project-based teaching method	0.68
9.16 Field-based excursions method	0.89

The factor loadings for Section B indicate several well-defined underlying dimensions of the current status of Commerce in Namibia. Generally, loadings above 0.70 show strong relationships, while moderate loadings (0.50–0.69) indicate acceptable contributions and lower values suggest weaker associations.

The **relevance of Commerce** is strongly supported by item 2.3 (0.89), showing that Commerce is perceived as aligned with national development priorities, while items such as skills development (0.57) also contribute moderately. However, weaker loadings (0.059; 0.068) suggest limited agreement that Commerce fully meets national expectations or world-of-work readiness.

The **implementation challenges** factor shows mixed strengths, with strong loadings for curriculum relevance and technology trends (0.78) and assessment methods (0.67), while weaker items include parental involvement (0.34) and teacher training (0.39), indicating uneven implementation constraints.

In terms of **teaching conditions and support**, resource limitations (0.31–0.45), teacher training (0.67) and curriculum changes (0.57) indicate moderate to strong influence, while AI tools and technological adaptation also appear relevant.

The **perception of Commerce outcomes** is strongly reflected in status and career opportunities, with high loadings of 0.78 and 0.67, indicating that Commerce is viewed positively for employability and recognition.

For **reasons for low intake**, strong loadings (0.89; 0.57) highlight negative teaching attitudes, assessment challenges and syllabus overload, while weaker perceptions include lack of awareness and parental influence (0.31–0.39).

Finally, **teaching and learning methods** show very strong loadings for cooperative and interactive strategies such as jigsaw learning (0.89), think-pair-share (0.77) and field excursions (0.89), confirming their importance in effective Commerce instruction. Traditional methods like lectures (0.78) remain prominent but are complemented by learner-centred approaches. Overall, the results show a multidimensional structure with both strong pedagogical and systemic influences shaping Commerce education in Namibia.

Table 5.31: Rotated Pattern Matrix (Factor Loadings)

Survey Statement Code	Factor 1: Relevance of Commerce	Factor 2: Challenges when implementing the curriculum	Factor 3: Factors that influence teaching Commerce	Factor 4: Perception of the Commerce teacher	Factor 5: Reasons for low intake in Commerce	Factor 6: Teaching methods
Table 5.7 Q2 (Relevance of Commerce)	**0.824**	0.102	-0.054	0.801	**0.805**	-0.054
Table 5.8 Q3 (Challenges when implementing curriculum)	**0.791**	0.045	0.112	-0.071	**0.732**	0.108
Table 5.9 Q4 (Factors that influence teaching Commerce)	0.114	**0.865**	0.031	-0.060	0.072	0.131
Table 5.10 Q5 Perception of Commerce teacher)	-0.021	**0.742**	0.150	-0.021	0.181	**0.804**
Table 5.11 Q6 (Reasons for low intake in Commerce)	0.088	0.012	**0.811**	-0.043	**-0.065**	**0.791**

Survey Statement Code	Factor 1: Relevance of Commerce	Factor 2: Challenges when implementing the curriculum	Factor 3: Factors that influence teaching Commerce	Factor 4: Perception of the Commerce teacher	Factor 5: Reasons for low intake in Commerce	Factor 6: Teaching methods
Table 5.14 Q6, Q8, Q9 (Teaching methods)	0.134	0.141	**0.695**	0.756	**0.742**	**0.844**

In Table 5.31, a rotated pattern matrix output of an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was computed. It displays the factor loadings, which represent the unique partial contribution of each survey item to a specific latent (hidden) construct. A critical analysis of a Rotated Pattern Matrix showed that items group together based on three primary criteria: loading strength, cross-loadings and conceptual alignment. The evaluation of loading strength showed that each factor loading fluctuates between -1.0 and +1.0. A higher absolute value indicates that the survey item is a strong indicator of the underlying factor. The rotated pattern matrix indicates a six-factor solution that explains the underlying dimensions shaping respondents' views on Commerce education. Each factor represents a distinct but sometimes interrelated construct, with several items showing strong loadings across multiple factors, suggesting overlap in perceptions.

Factor 1: Relevance of Commerce is primarily represented by strong loadings from items related to the perceived importance and usefulness of Commerce (e.g., Q2 and Q3). This factor reflects the extent to which respondents view Commerce as relevant for learners' future studies, employability and everyday economic understanding.

Factor 2: Challenges in Curriculum Implementation is strongly associated with Q4 and Q5, indicating issues such as resource constraints, content difficulty and instructional limitations that hinder effective curriculum delivery. This factor highlights structural and classroom-level barriers experienced by teachers.

Factor 3: Factors Influencing the Teaching of Commerce emerges from moderate to strong loadings on items related to contextual and institutional influences (notably Q4 and Q6). It captures elements such as teacher preparedness, learner ability and school support systems that shape how Commerce is taught.

Factor 4: Perception of the Commerce Teacher is reflected in items that relate to how teachers are viewed in terms of competence, motivation and professional standing. The loadings suggest that perceptions of teacher effectiveness significantly influence attitudes toward the subject.

Factor 5: Reasons for Low Intake in Commerce is defined by items explaining why learners choose not to pursue Commerce, including lack of interest, career awareness or subject difficulty. This factor highlights demand-side issues affecting subject enrolment.

Factor 6: Teaching Methods shows strong loadings from items linked to instructional strategies such as learner-centred approaches, group work and pedagogical techniques. It underscores the importance of how Commerce is taught in shaping learner engagement.

Overall, the factor structure suggests that perceptions of Commerce education are multidimensional, spanning relevance, implementation challenges, teacher-related perceptions, learner uptake and pedagogical practices, with notable overlaps indicating interconnected influences across the factors.

5.4 Summary of Findings

Chapter 5 presented findings from qualitative research, including interviews, and from quantitative data collected using a closed, structured questionnaire. The interviews revealed several reasons for the declining interest in Commerce subjects, including the perception that science fields offer better career prospects, a lack of teacher confidence and limited promotion of Commerce as a viable academic path. To address these challenges, the participants suggested strategies such as enhancing

teacher training, introducing engaging teaching methods, such as case studies and role-play, and increasing awareness of career opportunities in Commerce. The study also highlighted the impact of inadequate funding and insufficient resources on teaching quality and learner performance. Furthermore, it identified key factors such as limited promotion of Commerce fields, learner perceptions favouring science and a lack of teacher confidence. The study also found a lack of Commerce-related extracurricular activities and national-level support, contributing to the subject's low visibility and appeal.

Through the closed-ended questionnaire, it was found that Commerce subjects were generally perceived as professional and relevant to government/business, although opinions on performance and job opportunities were divided. Reasons for low learner intake included lack of awareness, peer influence, career preferences, perceived difficulty, and teacher attitudes, with examination structure and syllabus load also cited. The analysis revealed that Commerce clubs and competitions received the most support, while field trips, parental engagement, career awareness, and peer monitoring garnered varying levels of agreement and disagreement.

5.5 Conclusion

The chapter analysed the data collected through interviews using thematic analysis and closed structured questionnaires. It presented protocols for five participants, namely: Principals, HoDs, teachers, SEO and school board chairpersons. Moreover, it presented the closed-ended questionnaire analysis, completed by teachers, HoDs and SEOs. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The research aimed to develop a futuristic curriculum framework to revive the field of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools. This chapter serves as the culminating synthesis of the study, providing a comprehensive discussion of the key findings that demonstrated the critical challenges facing Commerce education in Namibian secondary schools. Guided by the research questions, the discussion systematically analyses the alarming decline in learner enrolment, identifies the complex reasons behind this decline and examines stakeholder perceptions on implementation and teaching methods. By integrating quantitative data and qualitative insights from teachers, principals, HoDs, school board chairpersons and SEOs with the existing literature, this chapter creates a whole narrative of a subject field in crisis. This discussion of the study's findings provides a crucial foundation for the practical recommendations and the new, forward-looking curriculum framework proposed to revive Commerce subjects.

6.2 Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1: Orientation to the Study

This chapter presented an introduction to the nature of the study. An introduction and background of the study, which focuses on low intake in Commerce subjects in secondary schools. The chapter further presented the problem statement for the study, the main research question and sub-questions, the aim and objectives of the study, the definition of key terms, the research methodology, and the division of chapters. This is done to provide the reader with a comprehensive view of the entire study.

Chapter 2: Contextual, Theoretical and Conceptual framework for the study

The chapter discussed the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. It further reviewed on (a) related literature on the status of Commerce subjects (b)

related literature on the determinants of low intake in Commerce (c) related literature The perception of SEOs, school principals, HoDs and teachers' perceptions on the status of Commerce subjects in Namibian Secondary Schools (d) related literature on teaching methodologies teachers use in the classrooms when teaching Commerce subjects. (e) related literature on the strategies that can be implemented to retain learners in the commercial subject and grow the field. The use of artificial intelligence was also explored, as well as information communication in Commerce classrooms and how it enhances teaching and learning in the classroom.

Chapter 3 Curriculum change and Commerce subjects from a Namibian perspective

The chapter explored and discussed the theoretical framework of Organisational Development Theory, which underpins this study. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and ICT was also discussed, and its use in a Commerce classroom. The chapter discusses the curriculum changes and reforms in Namibia, both before and after independence. The four Commerce subjects that are the focus of this study were deliberated, along with their importance and the potential career paths they present. The provision of CPD to teachers was discussed, and finally, the learner-centred approach and how teachers can enforce it in their classrooms.

Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology

The chapter discussed pragmatism as the research paradigm for the study and explained why it was considered suitable for this study. It further detailed the convergent parallel mixed methods design. All essential concepts related to the measurement of trustworthiness and reliability were explained, along with how they were ensured during the research process. All limitations that the researcher experienced during the research process were outlined. The next chapter presents and analyses the data.

Chapter 5 Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

Chapter 5 presents findings from qualitative research, including interviews, and from quantitative data collected using a closed, structured questionnaire. The interviews revealed several reasons for the declining interest in Commerce subjects, including

the perception that science fields offer better career prospects, a lack of teacher confidence, and limited promotion of Commerce as a viable academic path. To address these challenges, participants suggested strategies such as enhancing teacher training, introducing engaging teaching methods like case studies and role-playing, and increasing awareness of career opportunities in Commerce. The study also highlighted the impact of inadequate funding and insufficient resources on teaching quality and learner performance. Furthermore, it identified key factors such as limited promotion of Commerce fields, learner perceptions favouring science and a lack of teacher confidence. The study also found a lack of Commerce-related extracurricular activities and national-level support, contributing to the subject's low visibility and appeal.

Chapter 7: A proposed design of a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects

Based on the literature review, empirical investigation, and the results of data collection, as well as the recommendations in the study, the aim is to design a futuristic curriculum framework for the future of Commerce subjects and strategies that can be utilised to revive the field of Commerce subjects in Namibia. Therefore, Chapter 7 presents a futuristic framework for Commerce subjects in Namibia.

6.3 Discussion of Findings as Guided by Research Questions

For the remainder of Chapter 6, the researcher aims to answer the five secondary research questions (SRQs). Each SRQ will be answered individually with specific issues highlighted. It is also important to note that some SRQs extend beyond a single theme and/or sub-theme, depending on how they emerged during the analysis. Other significant findings have been included as they contribute to the richness of the data, shedding light on factors that can potentially inhibit or enhance the design of a futuristic curriculum framework for the future of Commerce subjects, as well as strategies that can be utilised to revive the field of Commerce subjects in Namibia.

SRQ1 What is the current status of schools offering Commerce subjects in Namibia?

Results on the number of learners in Commerce classrooms showed that teachers have more learners in grade 10, but the number decreases drastically as they progress to grade 12. (*cf.* Table 5.6) shows the number of intakes for grades 10,11, and 12. The intake in grade 10 indicated that the highest number, 36%, of teachers selected to have a range of 31-40 learners, followed by 34% of teachers who indicated 31-30 learners. In contrast, 18% of the teachers indicated 11-20, while 5-10 learners and approximately 40 learners; these two ranges both received 6% of the teachers. In Grade 11, the highest number of teachers indicated 34% in the range of 11-20 learners, followed by 21-30 learners in a class, at 26%. The range of 31-40 learners was selected by 22%, while the lowest range was 05-10 learners from 18% of the teachers.

On the contrary, grade 12 results show that 49% of the teachers recorded the highest number, with 5-10 learners, followed by 34% of the teachers who indicated 11-20 learners. In contrast, 15% of the teachers indicated 21-30 learners, and lastly, 2% of the teachers indicated the range of 31-40 learners in their grade 12 class. NIED (2021) articulates that the promotional requirement for a learner to proceed to grade 12 is that they need to have three Cs and above in three subjects out of the six subjects they take in grade 11. This requirement is a contributing factor to the low number of learners in grade 12, indicating that the performance in Commerce subjects is even lower in this grade level. The results for SEOs support the results for teachers. SEOs indicated that (*cf.* Table 5.24) there were not more than 20 schools offering Commerce at senior secondary phase in their regions, 50% of the SEOs indicated a range of 11-15 schools and another 50% other regions indicated a range of 16-20. This shows that there are few schools offering Commerce in the regions.

Findings indicated that Commerce subjects are the least offered of other subjects in Namibian secondary schools (*cf.* Theme 5.2.8). Based on this finding, the school principal (P1) alluded that "*Commerce is the least offered subject in the school, whether in terms of the number of teachers or the number of learners. Traditionally,*

it has been a subject attracting low learners." Additionally, one of the participants (T4**)** pointed out that Commerce subjects "*have a very low intake".* In view of the latter findings, studies on Commerce teaching have shown that it is less popular and receives less attention than other school subjects (Williams, 1948; Gawde, 2014). The current status is that Commerce is attracting a limited number of learners into its field of study in the Namibian education system. This raises the question of why Commerce subjects are becoming unpopular in schools.

Secondly, there is a decrease in the number of learners registered in Commerce subjects *(cf.* Sub-theme 5.2.13.1). Based on these findings, the Head of Department (HoD3) mentioned that "*We have 33 learners in grade 10. And then 13 learners in grade 11. And yes, we have 4 from the Advanced Subsidiary level."* This is a worrisome trend, as the current status of Commerce in Namibia is not favourable. Therefore, education stakeholders and policymakers must make drastic changes before these subjects become extinct. A study by Muliaina, Tautofi and Seve (2020) showed a decline in the number of learners studying Commerce at the high school level. The study further revealed that, for the period from 2006 to 2019 and especially from 2009, the learners' enrolment in the Commerce field has been on a downward trend.

Finally, the academic performance of some Commerce subjects, such as economics and accounting, in grades 10-12 is not as good as that of entrepreneurship, which also falls within the Commerce stream (*cf*. Sub-theme 5.2.13.2). For example, HoD3 alluded that *"But then I have taught economics for quite some years, but the performance is below average. Performance is bad for economics."* A study by Mwansa (2020) and Kaniita (2020:77-103) found that absenteeism of Commerce learners, coupled with poor reading culture among learners and unfavourable examination structure for Commerce subjects, causes learners to perform poorly and, in the end, discourages learners from taking Commerce subjects.

Based on the discussion, Commerce subjects in Namibian schools are facing a critical decline in popularity and viability. This is evidenced by a drastic reduction in learner numbers from grade 10 to grade 12, primarily attributed to promotional

requirements to grade 12 that many learners fail to meet. Furthermore, the subjects are offered in very few schools, and the academic performance in core subjects, such as economics and accounting, is poor, further discouraging enrolment. This combination of low intake, high attrition and unsatisfactory results creates a worrying trend that threatens the future of Commerce education.

SRQ2 What are the reasons for the low intake of learners in the Commerce field of study in Namibian secondary schools?

Fear of subjects, packed syllabi and unfavourable examination structure.

It emerged that there has been a decrease in learner registrations in Commerce subjects. Reasons for the low intake in the Commerce field in Grades 10-12 indicated fear of accounting, a core subject in the field of Commerce (*cf*. Theme 5.2.3). SEO (SEO2) expressed that **"***Some learners feel that accounting is too difficult; so, they would rather opt for a different field." This concurs with what Principal 2 (P2) expressed that* "*fear of uncertainty, of things that they don't even know, and they've not even started with the subjects."* The foregoing sentiment resonates with those of Mwansa (2020), who reported that the Commerce syllabus is too packed, making it difficult for attention to be given to the learning objectives, and further gives the impression that the subjects are difficult, which is not the case. The above results are further supported by more than 50% of the teachers in the quantitative results (*cf.* Table 5.11) which showed that "Unfavourable examination structure was disagreed as a reason for the low enrolment by 34% of the teachers, strongly agreed by 29% of the teachers, agreed by 26% of the teachers and strongly disagreed by 11% of the teachers.

The role of parents or guardians in the choice of subjects

By virtue of their positions, school principals noted that parents, as well as guardians of learners, play a significant role in decisions about which subjects their children pursue *(cf.* Theme 5.2.9). Moreover, this Principal 1 (P1) states that "*Commerce is under-marketed, but it is the bone of the economy. One challenge you may notice is the perception and understanding of parents regarding continuity. Because learners are coming from a primary school where there's no accounting. It's not like life*

science; they are building on natural science. So, they come to meet accounting for the first time in Grade 8." In addition, it was supported by (P4) that "*These learners, they all just believe science, physics and chemistry. This is what parents are telling them. Every parent wants their child to become a doctor. Every parent wants their child to become a lawyer.*

In view of the latter, Mathiba (2021) concurs that teachers and the communities are not doing enough to promote commercial subjects to the learners, especially those in grade 9 who are faced with making the most important decision about their careers, which lies in which subjects they are going to take in grade 10. Parents are observed to play a significant role in preparing their children for their chosen careers, as evidenced by their discussions with children about how to achieve their forthcoming career goals (Ngussa & Rehema, 2019).

The national policies such as the strategic plan for the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture is aligned as a strategic initiative to the sixth National Development Plan 2025/2026 to 2029/30 makes reference and highlights only English, Mathematics and Physical Science (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2025). Based on this report, there is a clear indication that omitting Commerce subjects not only highlights the lack of support for these subjects but also demotivates learners, who view them as less important. The results indicate that a lack of awareness of the commercial field is evident in national policies, which is supported by the quantitative results (*cf.* Table 5.11). Findings show that 53% of the teachers agreed that a lack of awareness was a reason for the low intake, and 37% strongly agreed; however, 9% strongly disagreed, and 1% disagreed.

Other factors influencing the choice of Commerce subjects

Results show that other school-based professions, not those teaching Commerce, also influence learners' decisions not to choose the Commerce field of study. (*cf*. Theme 5.2.14) HoD 1 shares that "*you will also find some external factors that others are trying to impose on learners. There is no career in Commerce. There are no job opportunities.* This finding aligns with Mathiba's (2021) results, which indicate that learners perceive Commerce as lacking opportunities that would enable them to advance in life, leading to their avoidance of Commerce subjects (Mathiba, 2021). Moreover, the quantitative findings (*cf. Table 5.11)* show that influence from parents and friends was strongly agreed upon by 44% of teachers, agreed upon by 40% of teachers, disagreed with by 9% of teachers, and strongly disagreed with by 7% of teachers. The influence of teachers and parents was investigated in a study conducted by Makhoba and Qoyi (2024), which revealed that teachers have a significant impact on their learners, particularly when they identify them as strong candidates for a specific field of study. Furthermore, the study also found that parents play a significant role in deciding which career route and streams their children will follow, and demonstrated that parents decide which stream their children should enrol in, working with the teachers to do so. Meanwhile, 14% teachers disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed with it as a challenge. The lack of parental involvement was strongly agreed upon by 46% of teachers as a challenge, while 40% agreed that it was a challenge; both strongly agreed and strongly disagreed received 7% each.

Chordia, Birla and Bhanawat (2024) found that introducing Commerce in middle and high school (classes 6-10) can build learners' awareness and spark an interest in the subject, in return assisting them and their guardians to make informed decisions later in their high school years. On the contrary, in South Africa, accounting is taught in Grades 7-9 as a learning area, after which it is taught in Grades 10-12 (Ifunyana, 2016). This practice in South Africa is commendable, as learners are aware of the various subjects early on, enabling well-informed subject choices in grade 10 due to that exposure.

Academic performance in Commerce subjects

Results show that there is a link between the academic performance of Commerce and the number of intakes in the Commerce classroom (*cf*. Theme 5.2.20) (T2) pointed out reasons why there is a low intake: "*I think the reason may be the poor performance. We don't perform like grade 11. Grade 11, the performance is very low. That's why when they are going there, they do not manage to get the three Cs from the three subjects."* This aligns with what Thaba-Nkadimene (2020) found that teachers' performance threatens the extinction of Commerce subjects, as fewer learners are willing to pursue these subjects. Academic performance can be enhanced through training and constant support provided to teachers; however, a study by Johnson (2024) found that while some value its hands-on and flexible nature, others point to problems such as minimal teacher support, inadequate training, and limited materials. Another study conducted by Oleabhiele and Oko (2018) confirms the poor performance of economics. The aforementioned study concludes that effective implementation of the economics curriculum is the remedy for the poor performance of economics students in both internal and external examinations.

To sum up, the decline in Commerce learner intake from grades 10 to 12 is driven by a complex interplay of factors. A primary reason is the widespread fear and perception of difficulty, particularly around core subjects like accounting, which are encountered for the first time in secondary school without a prior foundation. This is compounded by parental and societal influences, in which parents, often unaware of Commerce career paths, steer children towards traditionally prestigious fields like medicine and law. This lack of advocacy is mirrored at the national policy level, where key documents highlight only STEM subjects, implicitly marginalising Commerce. Furthermore, poor academic performance in subjects such as economics and accounting, partly due to pedagogical challenges and a packed syllabus, creates a vicious cycle in which low results deter new enrolments and prevent learners from meeting the promotional requirements to advance to Grade 12.

SRQ3: What are the perceptions of SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?

Regional in-service training for Commerce teachers

Literature reported that in-service training forms an essential part of the successful implementation of Commerce subjects. Results show that SEOs conduct in-service training to ensure that teachers are well-prepared and able to execute their duties effectively. For example, SEO 2 echoed that (*cf* Sub-Theme 5.2.4.2) "*We hold annual workshops in the regions and also in partnership with NIED, which really helps them, ensuring that these teachers receive quality training first of all, but the challenge sometimes is that teachers are not willing to request assistance."* This core duty for SEOs is emphasised by Tjozongoro (2019), who found that SEOs are responsible for training teachers to prepare them for curriculum implementation . In the same vein, Florence (2006) concurs that teachers should receive ongoing training and meet with experts regularly to acquire the specific skills they need.

Quantitative results show that (cf. Table 5.27) 50% of the SEOs strongly agreed that training for teachers was crucial to keeping the Commerce curriculum up to date, while 25% of the SEOs agreed that training for teachers was also crucial. Meanwhile, 25% SEO disagreed that training for teachers is not crucial to keep the Commerce curriculum up to date. Regional in-service training is important to allow teachers to keep abreast of developing knowledge in their respective Commerce subjects, and this is cemented by Smith, et al. (2019: 293-303), who recommended in the study that teachers should be motivated to acquaint themselves with the curriculum and be trained periodically on how to use the curriculum when planning their lessons and teaching.

Appropriate teaching resources for effective teaching of the subject

Results show that resources are crucial in implementing the Commerce curriculum, and without them, it becomes challenging (cf. Table 5.20). Furthermore, 57% of the HoDs strongly agreed that resource limitations are a challenge when implementing

the curriculum for Commerce subjects. In contrast, 43% of the HoDs agreed with this challenge. Furthermore, HoDs noted that the relevance of the curriculum and new technological trends were agreed upon as a challenge by 57% of the HoDs, while 29% strongly agreed with it as a challenge, and 14% disagreed with it as a challenge in the implementation of the Commerce curriculum. The above is in line with what the teachers expressed (cf. Table 5.8). The challenge of resource limitation was agreed upon by 56% of teachers as a challenge, and 23% strongly agreed (Mudulia, 2012). The study revealed a disparity in the availability of teaching and learning resources between high- and low-performing schools, prompting the recommendation that the Ministry of Education implement more training on how to effectively obtain, create, and utilise these resources. The findings are consistent with Ndou (2023:97), who identified a lack of strategic school resources as a reason why Commerce subjects are being phased out and experiencing decline.

Lack of technological equipment and infrastructure

The qualitative results showed that equally, **HoD2** points out a lack of technological equipment in schools, which is a major factor that could enhance teaching and learning in schools (*cf*. Sub-theme 5.2.15.3). **HoD1** points out that "*Technological products like smart screens, there is only one in the whole school; so, it is limited'' (cf.* Sub-theme *5.2.21.1)* **T1** highlights technological needs for Commerce teachers as "*projectors, maybe the interactive boards, or whatever you can use, even the screen, at least if you do not have the interactive screens. There is only one interactive board for AS level, but for a big school like this, you will not really have access to that"*. Dhiman and Gera (2021) found an improvement in learners' performance when using blended e-learning instruction in economics, positively enhancing the academic achievement of XI class Commerce learners in the economics subject through video lessons and live online teaching. These findings are consistent with those of Ndou (2023:97), who identified a lack of strategic school infrastructure as the reason Commerce subjects are being phased out and experiencing decline.

Results showed divided feeling on the use of AI in Commerce. (*cf*. Table 5.9). AI as a tool for teaching Commerce subjects was agreed upon by 30% of teachers, 28%

disagreed, while 26% strongly agreed, and 16% strongly disagreed. A study by Sharma, Mistry and Thakar (2024) revealed that the use of AI technologies in Commerce classrooms saves teachers time by quickly producing custom-made content like case studies and interactive learning aids. By simply specifying details such as student level and tone, teachers can generate relevant materials in moments.

In summation, the effective implementation of the Commerce curriculum is severely hampered by systemic challenges in teacher development and resource allocation. While regional in-service training is recognised as crucial by education officers, its impact is limited by inconsistent teacher participation and a lack of ongoing, practical support. Furthermore, the critical shortage of suitable teaching resources, including basic materials and essential technological equipment such as projectors and interactive boards, creates a significant barrier to effective teaching and learning. This resource gap hinders the adoption of modern, blended learning methods that have been proven to improve student performance. In this study, Commerce teachers expressed both positive and negative views about the Commerce curriculum.

While some appreciated its practical orientation and relevance to real-world skills, others criticised the lack of teacher involvement in its development and rollout. Moreover, the school board chairpersons generally supported the inclusion of Commerce subjects but lacked a detailed understanding of the curriculum's goals and requirements. This limited their ability to advocate for resources or monitor progress. The divided feelings toward AI further highlight a technological readiness gap, where potential tools are available but cannot be leveraged owing to a lack of infrastructure, access and training.

SRQ4: What are the perceptions of SEOs, heads of departments and teachers regarding the teaching methods used for Commerce subjects in Namibia secondary schools?

Increase learner-centeredness approaches and strategies

Learners learn better when they are actively involved in their own learning and in the formation of knowledge and teachers teaching Commerce are embracing this

approach. This is shown in the findings (*cf*. Table 5.14) that the learner-centred approach was strongly agreed to be used by 60% of the teachers, 33% of the teachers agreed to be using learners' learner-centred approach, while 6% of the teachers have strongly disagreed with this approach and 1% of the teacher also disagreed to be using this approach. These results resonate with those of Norman and Sphor (1996:24-27), who found that at the heart of a learner-centred approach is the idea that people learn best when engrossed in the topic, motivated to seek out new knowledge and skills because they need them to solve the problem at hand.

There are several methods to the learner-centred approach, and peer teaching is one of them (*cf*. Theme 5.2.16) (HoD 2) shares that "*The teachers mostly use peer teaching. We ensure that learners in the senior secondary phase have a syllabus, and at most, they are given topics to research and come and present to the class".* Furthermore, Teacher 3 highlights another method of learner-centred approach *(cf.* Theme *5.2.22)* (T3) alluded that "*I make use of group work"*. On the contrary, (*cf*. Table 5.14), in the quantitative results, group discussion was strongly agreed by 47% teachers, 43% teachers agreed, 7% teachers disagreed, and 3% teachers strongly disagreed. This shows that group work as a method of a learner-centred approach is commonly used in the Commerce classroom. The learner-centred approach acknowledges the fact that a learner is not a *'tabula rasa',* which translates to a blank slate, but rather an individual with past knowledge and experiences that can contribute to classroom learning (Abiogu, 2016). The approach invites the learner to be an active participant in their learning. In contrast to the traditional approach of teaching that assumes that the teacher is the only knowledgeable person in the classroom and that all information can only come from them.

Flipped pedagogy is an active and team-based learning approach

Another method of a learner-centred approach is the flipped classroom pedagogy (cf. Table 5.14). Flipped classroom pedagogy was agreed by 56% teachers, strongly agreed by 20% teachers, 14% teachers disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed. The results on the flipped classroom are consistent with those of Van Wyk (2018), who found that the FCP enhanced the academic performance and perceptions of

economics students in an online open distance learning environment. A study by Galindo-Dominguez (2021) found that the flipped classroom method may be more beneficial for learning than traditional methods. As a result, the flipped classroom approach allows for more interactive teaching and learning, with less time spent on lecturing and more on active participation. This is similar to Elmaadaway's (2018) findings. This model repositioned the instructor away from lecturing, allowing them to circulate and provide individualised guidance and support to learners during class time. Furthermore, this preparation enabled them to engage more productively in sessions by asking informed questions and collaborating on problem-solving tasks.

Field-based excursions as an experimental strategy

Results from field-based excursions show that (cf. Table 5.14) the method was agreed by 54% of teachers to increase active participation, 34% strongly agreed with the method, while 6% strongly disagreed and 6% disagreed. Odike (2016) found that the field trip/excursion method, which involves taking learners outside the classroom to learn concepts and experiences as they occur in their natural state, is an effective learning method. The large percentage of HoDs concurs with Ayyapparajan, Vijayakumar, and Jayashree (2024:49) on the need for exposure in the Commerce field, namely that a strategy to revitalise Commerce subjects through exposure should be emphasised, and that exposure for Commerce learners should be improved. In addition to fostering active learning, teachers should integrate field trips into the curriculum to promote intrinsic motivation and enable learners to construct meaningful knowledge (Sitali-Mubanga, Lukonga and Denuga, 2018). This exposure will enable learners to receive a practical and relevant education, preparing them to become global citizens who can compete effectively in the job market.

Case study method as an effective teaching approach

The use of case studies to present to learners real-life situations and contextualise concepts and content was found to be relevant (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.5.1) (SEO 2). This perspective echoed the idea that "*For economics, I always prefer that they use case studies and the learners have to debate on case studies. That's what happens after they have taught that lesson. The teacher must get the case study and divide the*

group into two. One group has to discuss the case study from 1 angle and the other one has to oppose the views of the other group". Ngwenya (2014) further supports these findings, which suggest that learners need to be actively involved in their learning through methods such as case-study analysis, individual and group projects, problem-based presentations, problem-solving, real-life scenarios, role-playing, discussions, and simulations.

Findings show that role play is being utilised in Commerce classrooms when teaching and this is being expressed by (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.5.2) (SEO 2) "*And now there are some of the accounting concepts that they can do role play, yes, but that is only now limited to, let's say, chapter one of grade 8, where you want to really make learners understand what a transaction is. How does purchasing work? Where does the source document come from, or how do sales come in, just for them to really understand the nature of accounting, so I always recommend it for the first few weeks of Grade 8.''* The use of role play in Commerce classrooms was agreed by Odike (2016). Simulation and role play is a method of teaching where the learner plays the roles of the person being talked about. This is consistent with what Dhere (2014) found: role-playing is an effective methodology for teaching Commerce, in the form of a dramatic skill that emphasizes individual performance.

Teacher-centred approaches

A teacher-centred approach is an instructional method in which the teacher plans lessons that are controlled by the teacher, who holds a position of authority (Johnson and Van Wyk, 2016:104). (*cf*. Table 5.14). The lecture method, as a method under the teacher-centred approach, was disagreed with by 32% of teachers, agreed with by 30% of teachers to increase active participation, and strongly agreed with and strongly disagreed with by 19% of teachers in each category. The lecture method received less than 50% agreement, making it a less popular method among Commerce teachers. The teacher is the primary focus in implementing the lesson plan to achieve the lesson's objectives. The role of a learner in this approach is that of a passive listener, whose task is limited to responding to what the teacher has asked of them.

Otukile-Mongwaketse (2018) found that teachers' delivery of instruction using teacher-centred methods leaves some learners out, benefiting them minimally from the teaching and learning process, especially those with learning difficulties. Teachers who practice a learner-centred approach do not accommodate the different needs and pace of the learners, hindering them from reaching their objectives. Briggs (2019) found that no teaching method is inherently better than another, and teachers should continue to hone their skills by attending workshops and being aware of the appropriate teaching methods to apply when a method is not effective.

In conclusion, the findings indicate a strong and positive shift towards learner-centred pedagogy in Commerce education, with most teachers reporting the use of strategies like group work, peer teaching and case studies. These methods are recognised for actively engaging students, building on their existing knowledge and improving academic performance. Specific approaches, such as the flipped classroom, field-based excursions and role-playing, are also being adopted to make learning more interactive and relevant to real-world contexts. In contrast, traditional teacher-centred methods, such as the lecture, are less favoured and seen as less effective in promoting active participation. The literature consistently supports this transition, emphasising that active involvement is crucial for knowledge formation and deeper understanding.

SRQ5: What strategies can be implemented to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?

Advocacy of the Commerce field of study

Findings indicate that advocacy plays a significant role in creating awareness about the field of Commerce (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.11.1). Principal 1 (P1) narrates that "*we need to do some aggressive advocacy on creating awareness on how content is designed at the entry grade, particularly Grade 8. Maybe only then can we increase, because if we can increase the intake at Grade 8, obviously, when we go to the*

secondary grade 10, we will have a large volume of learners that we must take up." Another form of creating awareness identified is also in *(cf.* Sub-Theme 5.2.17.1*).*

On the other hand, door-to-door advocacy was proposed by (HoD4), who stated that "*We come up with plans to say mostly when the school reopens, we try to go introduce the commercial teachers to learners and explain what the Commerce field is all about"*. Reddy (2007) suggested advocacy strategies to raise awareness of the Commerce department by building rapport with the industry and ensuring that it is represented on the syllabus board for Commerce subjects.

Career awareness in Commerce

Another strategy to revive the Commerce field identified in the results is career awareness (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.11.2) (P1) states that *"we need to venture into things such as career fair, because if you expose them to career fair, the career fair kind of opens them up to say, And we also maybe look for a corporate entity, a career fair, where these corporate or commercial entities come and market what it takes for one to land a job with them, so that when that comes, it kind of prompts interest from them." (cf.* Theme 5.2.27*).* (SB2) suggested that "*Make learners understand about Commerce on career choice, make use of parents' meetings to make parents understand about Commerce and relatives."* Singh et al. (2023) outlined that guiding learners' career paths can help boost subject performance when carried out correctly, as they gain a better understanding of career possibilities within each subject. On the contrary, Ibrahim et al. (2014) conducted research among secondary school learners and found that learners who were aware of careers were able to make informed career decisions, while those who were not aware of careers had difficulty making career decisions. This calls for effective career guidance to help learners be aware of different careers, enabling them to make the right career choices.

Establishment of school Commerce clubs and conferences/competitions

Findings show that Commerce clubs are not present in schools, despite them proving to be effective strategies to retain learners if implemented (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.11.5). P4 said: *"We used to have a Commerce club. But it has died, and it does not look like our teachers are planning to revive it"* (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.17.1). Furthermore, HoD4

submitted that "*Commerce club provided that if it's well-planned, teachers are well aware and equipped with what they need to be doing in this Commerce club with the learners. I think that if the others are able to see what the Commerce club is doing, then it will really motivate, especially the juniors, to be interested and consider it a field we can join."*

The quantitative results cement the effectiveness of Commerce clubs and quizzes (*cf*. Table 5.12). Commerce clubs as a strategy to encourage more learners to pursue a career in Commerce were strongly agreed upon by 47% of the teachers, 43% agreed, 6% disagreed, and 4% strongly disagreed. The SEOs share the same sentiments as teachers (cf. Table 5.29). Fifty percent (50%) of the SEOs strongly agreed that a Commerce club is an effective strategy to revive the Commerce field of study, while 25% agreed and 25% disagreed. Fugate (1942) created a blueprint for Commerce clubs in schools and concluded that such clubs are generally desirable as an extracurricular activity. Similarly, Pence and Dymond (2015) conducted research on extracurricular activities in schools and found that school clubs are the most organised activity in which learners can participate. For school clubs to function effectively, Commerce clubs need to be well-defined and to have a framework for their mode of operation.

The results on quizzes and competitions for Commerce (*cf*. Table 5.12) were agreed upon by 47% of the teachers, strongly agreed by 43%, strongly disagreed by 6%, and disagreed by 4%. Ozturk and Debelak (2008) suggested that academic competitions have the potential to deepen learners' knowledge of subject matter and provide an opportunity for above-average learners to learn beyond what is covered in the classroom.

Parental advocacy and awareness on Commerce

The role parents play in choosing the field of studies cannot be overlooked (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.23.1). (T2) recommends that "*intrinsic motivation from Commerce learners should come from home".* Additionally, (*cf*. Sub-Theme 5.2.23.1) Teacher 3 (T3) opined that *"I have to go to feeding schools to create awareness to abolish the myth that they have that accounting is a very tough subject."* This is supported by school board chairperson 1 *(cf.* Sub-Theme *5.2.27)* (SB1) who highlighted as follows:

“My focus point was the involvement of parents in their learners' teaching system. For me, in the future, I plan to have a committee for the people where we are going to discuss these Commerce subjects, so that we share ideas, and how we are going to introduce this subject to learners.” Singh et al. (2023:450-451) outlined improved parental involvement as a means to enhance students' literacy and numeracy skills in Commerce subjects, which, when implemented effectively, will assist in boosting these subjects.

Field trips

The last strategy in the results is field trips (*cf*. Table 5.22). Regarding field trips as a strategy, 57% of the HoDs strongly agreed, while 29% agreed. However, 14% of the HoDs disagreed that it is ineffective at encouraging learners to take up Commerce subjects. The large percentage of HoDs concurs with what Ayyapparajan, et al. (2024:49) state on the need for exposure in the Commerce field, namely that a strategy to revitalise Commerce subjects through exposure is necessary, and that exposure for Commerce learners should be improved. In addition to fostering active learning, teachers should integrate field trips into the curriculum to promote intrinsic motivation and enable learners to construct meaningful knowledge (Sitali-Mubanga, et al., 2018). This exposure will enable learners to receive a practical and relevant education, preparing them to become global citizens who can compete effectively in the job market. Briggs (2019) found that no single teaching method is better than others, and teachers should continue to hone their skills by attending workshops and being aware of the appropriate methods to apply when a method is not effective.

In sum, improving enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools requires a multifaceted approach. One key strategy is enhancing the relevance and visibility of Commerce subjects by linking them to real-world applications and career opportunities. This can be achieved through entrepreneurship projects, business simulations and guest lectures from local professionals and entrepreneurs, which help learners see the practical value of these subjects. Ongoing teacher training and support are also critical. Many teachers feel underprepared to deliver learner-centred and interactive lessons. Providing ongoing

professional development, mentorship and access to teaching resources can empower teachers to use engaging methods such as gamification, collaborative learning and ICT integration. To boost enrolment, schools can run awareness campaigns targeting both learners and parents, emphasising the economic and entrepreneurial benefits of Commerce education. Furthermore, early exposure to Commerce concepts, possibly in open days at school, can also spark interest. For subject retention, fostering a sense of belonging and achievement is vital. Recognising learner progress through clubs, competitions and public acknowledgment can motivate continued participation.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 SRQ1 Current Status of Schools Offering Commerce Subjects in Namibia

6.4.1.1 It is recommended that the school management team should increase advocacy and marketing strategies for Commerce subjects

- The school management should plan yearly activities to create awareness, advocacy campaigns and career awareness campaigns, such as career fairs and outreach to parents and feeder schools, to promote Commerce subjects.
- The school management should have a marketing plan to visit feeder primary schools, promoting the Commerce field. This will create much-needed awareness at the grassroots before learners enter the secondary school phase.
- The school management should develop and execute a Commerce Career Pathways campaign targeting grade 9 and 10 learners, including testimonials from past learners and professionals in business, finance and entrepreneurship.

6.4.2 SRQ2 Reasons for the Low Intake of Learners in Commerce Courses in Namibian Secondary Schools

6.4.2.1 It is recommended that the Commerce SEOs, in conjunction with the Ministry of MEIYSAC and businesses, promote career fairs, “expos”, awareness, and exposure for parents and prospective learners.

- Commerce SEOs, in conjunction with teachers, should develop a yearly information pamphlet and distribute it to all grades 8 and 9.

- Commerce SEOs should plan and organise annual career fairs targeting future grade 8 and 9 learners and parents to make informed decisions for registering Commerce subjects.
- The Ministry (MEIYSAC) should establish long-term partnerships (MoUs) with corporates (businesses) and universities for career paths for learners.
- Commerce Education Officers to host yearly career expos or open days for existing and prospective Commerce learners in collaboration with universities and businesses.

6.4.2.2 It is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC), through the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), introduce foundational Commerce subjects in Senior Primary (grade 4-7) and Junior Secondary (grade 8-9).

- NIED should introduce foundational Commerce in senior primary during the next major syllabus review to introduce learners to Commerce concepts before they start secondary school. This subject can be an elective subject, similar to elementary agriculture and design technology.
- NIED, as the custodian of syllabus development in Namibia, should introduce a new syllabus, Business Education (Business Studies and Economics), in the Junior **Secondary phase as an introductory subject.**

6.4.2.3 It is recommended for SEOs to strengthen teacher capacity through targeted Professional Development

- Regional office-based SEOs should conduct quarterly mandatory, practical workshops for Commerce teachers focused on pedagogical strategies for simplifying difficult concepts in accounting and economics, and for managing the packed syllabus effectively.
- SEOs should visit teachers at least once per term to assess and support their teaching methodologies and quality of work.
- SEOs should plan on a quarterly basis to empower teachers with digital literacy skills using emerging technologies ethically to develop material and enrich their subject content knowledge.

- SEOs should use social media platforms such as regional WhatsApp groups daily for communication and attend to teacher enquiries on subject content delivery to render immediate support to teachers.
- Weekly, SEOs should identify teachers of concern based on results analysis and work hand in hand to offer monitoring services in the areas of need.

6.4.3 SRQ3 What are the perceptions of SEOs, school governing bodies, school principals, heads of departments and teachers regarding the implementation of Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?

6.4.3.1 It is recommended that SEOs and Commerce Heads of Departments establish a Regional Commerce Teaching Resource Hub.

- SEOs should create a resource hub for their region for teachers can have easy access to resources and any teaching materials they might need.
- SEOs should update the resource hub monthly with the latest documents for efficiency.
- The HoDs should work together with SEOs to submit tasks and tests on a monthly basis that can be shared on the resource hub for other teachers to make use of.
- HoDs should ensure the creation of awareness for this resource hub among their teachers and ensure full utilisation thereof.

6.4.4 SRQ4 What are the perceptions of SEOs, heads of departments and teachers regarding the teaching methods used for Commerce subjects in Namibia secondary schools?

6.4.4.1 It is recommended for School Management and teachers to plan an Industry Field Trip for grade 10.

- The School Management should have it on their yearly calendar of activities for the school for a field trip for grade 10 Commerce learners.
- The School Management should always ensure compliance with Ministry's *Circular 7/2023,* which guides schools on how to carry out school excursions and trips for educational purposes.

- The Head of Department for Commerce and teachers must assist yearly in selecting and thoroughly planning the industry place to be visited.

6.4.4.2 It is recommended that SEOs and teachers implement a structured Flipped Pedagogy approach

- Teachers should utilise the Flipped Pedagogy approach weekly in some of their lessons to enhance learner involvement in the classroom.
- SEOs should train teachers yearly on the use of Flipped Pedagogy in the classroom for better subject delivery and improved subject academic performance.

6.4.5 SRQ5 What strategies can be implemented to improve enrolment, retention and learner engagement in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools?

6.4.5.1 It is recommended for the Head of Departments and teachers to establish Commerce Clubs and Commerce competitions in schools

- The HoDs or Subject Heads needs to ensure the establishment of active Commerce clubs in their schools. Guidelines on how the club should be established and run will form part of the framework in Chapter 7 of this study. This will provide practical exposure for learners and retention of learners in the Commerce field.
- The HoDs and the Commerce teachers in their departments need to spearhead intra-school Commerce quizzes and competitions to stimulate interest and showcase the subject's value. In addition, circuit and later on regional competitions should be hosted for Commerce subjects.
- The Ministry should integrate 21st-century Skills such as digital literacy, financial technology (FinTech), and entrepreneurship into Commerce subjects.
- The Ministry needs to train Commerce teachers to plan and implement project-based learning as an authentic assessment to encourage real-world problem-solving through case studies and simulations.
- The Ministry should create awareness and support digital transformation in Commerce subjects related to E-learning Platforms through blended learning and interactive tools (e.g., Google Classroom, Moodle).

- The Ministry needs to allocate a budget for more virtual business labs with businesses and stakeholders to create simulated business environments for practical experience for Commerce teachers and learners.
- The Ministry, in partnership with the educational region, establish a regional coordinator for Commerce Career Guidance and Awareness to showcase opportunities in accounting, marketing, entrepreneurship, and digital business.
- The Ministry and Industry needs to revitalise their partnership for collaboration with local businesses for internships and guest lectures.

6.4.5.2 It is recommended for the revision of the five-year' strategic plan for the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture.

- It is recommended that the Executive Director within the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC) should include Commerce subjects as part of the Ministry's matrix targets in the strategic plan. Subjects that are currently included and identified as key subjects are English as a second language, physics, chemistry, and mathematics at both ordinary level and advanced subsidiary level.

6.4.5.3 It is recommended that the Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce be monitored by the researcher.

- The researcher needs to continuously advocate for the usage of this framework and disseminate the framework to all Directorates of Education in the country for implementation.
- The researcher needs to train the HoDs and teachers once, after the study is completed, on the successful implementation of the curriculum.

6.5 Limitations

The researcher is a self-funded student and, therefore, financial constraints were hindering the successful completion of this study, travelling through the five selected regions to conduct face-to-face interviews. Moreover, the researcher is also a full-time employee, and time constraints were a factor in balancing research and a full-time job.

There is limited literature in Namibia focusing on either developing a futuristic curriculum framework or studying the phenomenon of low learner intake in the

commercial field, which impacted the literature review by limiting its context to Commerce and Namibia.

In addition to the foregoing limitations, during the data collection process, the researcher encountered difficulties when one of the scheduled schools was closed owing to a water crisis in the town where they reside. This made it challenging for the researcher to contact participants, as they were not at their work station. However, the researcher eventually managed to arrange meetings at times that were convenient for them.

The targeted number for the interview sample could also not be reached owing to selected participants not being available. Despite further arrangements made by the researcher to conduct the interviews telephonically, the participants still could not attend the telephonic interviews. The target was 25 participants, but only 19 participants were interviewed.

The target respondents for the online closed structured questionnaire were 200; however, only 81 respondents participated. The researcher has attempted to share the link widely on various social platforms for teachers, principals, SEOs, and to further engage potential respondents one-on-one; however, the number still has not reached the desired target.

6.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Building upon this study, which aimed to develop a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce education in Namibia, several targeted avenues for future research have been identified:

- **Implementation and Impact through Pilot Studies:** Future research should undertake a pilot testing initiative in a selection of schools across different regions. A key focus of this pilot would be to assess the framework's impact on learner retention and engagement within the Commerce field of study, providing tangible data on its effectiveness in revitalising student interest.

- **The Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Commerce Pedagogy:** While this study acknowledged the influence of AI on teaching and learning, a deeper, more specialised investigation is needed. Future research could focus on evaluating specific AI tools and pedagogical strategies for the Commerce classroom. This would explore how AI can be leveraged not just as a general tool, but as a dedicated assistant for subjects such as accounting, business studies, economics, and entrepreneurship, creating personalised and dynamic learning experiences.

- **Revitalising Other Endangered Commerce Subjects:** This study concentrated on core Commerce subjects, namely accounting, business studies, economics and entrepreneurship. A significant opportunity exists to apply the principles of the futuristic framework to other Commerce subjects facing declining enrolment, such as office practice. Research focused on re-imagining and modernising the office practice curriculum is essential to prevent its potential extinction and to align its content with the demands of the modern and digital office environment, thereby ensuring the holistic development of the Commerce stream.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has woven together the study's central findings to present an interconnected reality: the status of Commerce education is in danger, driven by low enrolment, perceived difficulty, inadequate resource allocation, and gaps in pedagogical support. To reverse this decline, the findings show that a concerted strategy is needed, one that simultaneously addresses advocacy, foundational learning, teacher capacity, resource provision and engaging pedagogy. The recommendations provided a targeted call to action for all stakeholders, from classroom teachers and school management to SEOs and national policymakers. This conclusive analysis firmly establishes the urgent need for the intervention proposed in the subsequent chapter, where a futuristic curriculum framework is presented as a viable blueprint for rescuing and revitalising the Commerce field in Namibia.

CHAPTER 7

A PROPOSED DESIGN FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECTS.

7.1 Introduction

Based on the literature review, empirical investigation and the results of data collection, as well as the recommendations in the study, the aim is to design a futuristic curriculum framework for the future of Commerce subjects in Namibia and to develop strategies that can be utilised to revive the field of Commerce subjects in Namibia.

7.2 Scholarly Contribution

7.2.1 Curriculum Policy Contributions

- The study contributed to curriculum policy, which includes resource allocation policies that prioritise ICT integration, teacher training and infrastructure for Commerce education within the Namibian context. Furthermore, resource allocation policies that prioritise ICT integration, teacher training and infrastructure are a holistic and interdependent strategy to reform Commerce education. Ultimately, both infrastructure and trained teachers serve the overarching goal of ICT integration, which weaves these resources directly into the curriculum to transform passive learners into digitally literate learners capable of navigating the complexities of e-Commerce. Therefore, investing in these three areas simultaneously is a coordinated effort to build a sustainable ecosystem that bridges the critical gap between traditional Commerce theory and the dynamic demands of the modern digital economy.
- Curriculum policies should support early exposure to Commerce subjects and promote entrepreneurship education aligned with Namibia’s economic goals. Implementing early exposure to Commerce and entrepreneurship from the primary level is a critical investment for Namibia's future. By integrating foundational financial literacy and business concepts into the curriculum for young learners, we can spark curiosity and cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset from a formative age. This approach is crucial not only to boost enrolment in senior-level Commerce streams, but also to ensure that the

cultivated talent is directly aligned with national economic goals. When entrepreneurship education is purposefully tailored to address local priorities such as economic diversification, agro-processing and the digital economy, it transforms students into agile, solution-oriented citizens. This creates a powerful pipeline, ensuring that the next generation not only seeks jobs but is empowered to create them, directly contributing to sustainable economic development and innovation.

7.2.2. Theoretical Contributions to a Futuristic Framework

- The study contributed to a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects that included the Organisational Development Theory and learner-centred theories, emphasising active learning, real-world application and critical thinking. Organisational Development Theory entails a process of increasing organisational effectiveness and facilitating personal and organisational change through the use of interventions driven by social and behavioural science knowledge. Moreover, Organisational Development Theory maintains three tenets as guiding principles for organisational development, namely: the provision of adequate training, improved learning processes and enhanced teachers' performance. This approach to learning requires teachers to be aware of their learners' backgrounds and interests, making learning easier to grasp . The Namibian education system aims at producing a knowledge-based society that requires ownership of teaching and learning. This means that the point of departure when teaching is always what the learners already know and can do.

7.2.3. Practical Contributions to teach Commerce subjects

- The framework offers strategies for improving enrolment and retention, such as career awareness campaigns, social clubs and experiential learning. Career awareness campaigns serve as a critical first step by proactively rebranding Commerce, shifting its perception from dull number-crunching to an exciting field of innovation, entrepreneurship and digital finance, thereby attracting a broader range of students initially. Once interest is captured, social clubs and mentorship programmes foster a vital sense of community and

belonging, providing peer support and industry role models that combat isolation and keep learners engaged and motivated.

- The study contributed to effective learner teaching methods, such as case studies and flipped pedagogy, to enhance engagement. The framework's contribution of pedagogical methods, such as case studies and flipped pedagogy, is fundamental to transforming Commerce education from a passive, theoretical exercise into an active, engaging and relevant experience. The use of case studies, specifically those grounded in Namibian contexts, brought to life abstract concepts by illustrating real-world local business scenarios, forcing learners to critically analyse and devise solutions for the very same economic landscape. They are a part of directly enhancing engagement by demonstrating the tangible power and creativity of Commerce in action.
- The study contributes to encouraging school-community partnerships to support entrepreneurship and financial literacy. Encouraging school-community partnerships means moving beyond the traditional isolation of the classroom to create a dynamic, two-way relationship where local businesses, banks, entrepreneurs and community leaders become active co-educators in the learning process. This involves formally integrating external stakeholders into the educational framework to provide real-world context and resources that the school system alone cannot offer. For entrepreneurship, this translates into local business owners mentoring student start-ups, sponsoring business plan competitions and community markets providing a platform for learners to sell their products. For finances, it means having banking personnel run practical workshops on budgeting and savings, or accountants teaching students how to manage a small business' finances. Ultimately, these partnerships bridge the critical gap between theory and practice, ensuring that the skills students acquire are not abstract concepts but directly applicable, market-relevant competencies that are validated by the very community in which they will eventually live and work.

7.2.4. Research Methodology contributions to reliable and trustworthy data collection instruments

- The study contributed to reliable and trustworthy data collection instruments, which are face-to-face interviews and closed structured questionnaires, to triangulate the results of the study. The value of the explanatory mixed-methods design research approach in the Commerce subject lies in its ability to combine qualitative insights with quantitative data, thereby triangulating the study's results. The exploratory mixed methods design enables the phenomenon to be well explained and a thorough understanding to be obtained, as two methods are combined; hence, their strengths, when well utilised, can complement each other to enhance and support the research.
- The study contributed to the design of reliable and trustworthy empirical data collection instruments that can be used in a similar context or can be replicated. The closed-ended was empirically sound and highly reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82. The closer a scaled coefficient is to 0.7, the greater the instrument. To maximise credibility, the researcher spent time with each study participant to gain a thorough understanding of the individuals, their experiences and the phenomenon under investigation, thereby building a trusting relationship.
- The study provided an empirical model for stakeholder-driven educational research, ensuring findings are grounded in classroom realities and policy contexts.

7.3 A proposed futuristic curriculum policy framework

In the context of this study, a **futuristic curriculum policy framework in the age of AI** refers to a curriculum that prepares learners not only for current jobs but also for emerging careers, technologies, and societal challenges. It integrates artificial intelligence, digital literacy, critical thinking, creativity, entrepreneurship, ethical reasoning, and lifelong learning skills into teaching and learning. Rather than focusing primarily on content memorisation, a futuristic curriculum emphasizes problem-solving, innovation, adaptability, collaboration, and the responsible use of AI technologies.

Organisation Development Theory assumes that educational improvement occurs through planned change, continuous professional learning, stakeholder participation, and organisational capacity building. These assumptions provide a useful futuristic curriculum framework for examining the factors influencing the implementation, sustainability, and enrolment in Commerce subjects in Namibian secondary schools.

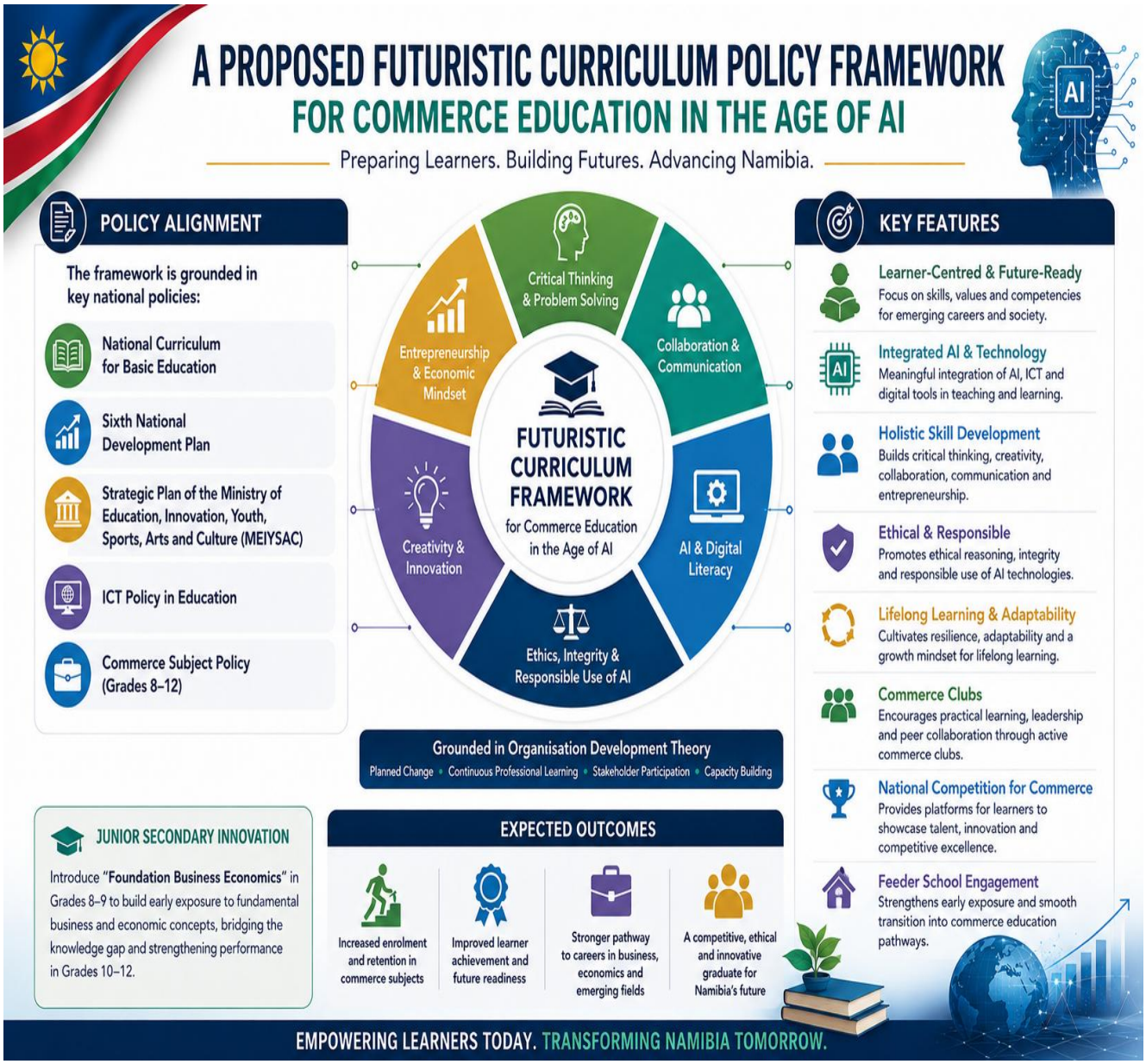


Figure 6.1: Proposed Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects

Source: Author's own framework, developed with AI-assisted visualisation (ChatGpt)

The proposed Futuristic Curriculum Framework is grounded in existing national policies that guide curriculum implementation and development in Namibia. The policies are essential to maintaining the framework's relevance and coherence within the broader education system. The policies aligned with this framework are the National Curriculum for Basic Education, the Sixth National Development Plan, the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts, and

Culture (MEIYSAC), the ICT policy in Education, and the Commerce subject policy for grades 8-12.

7.3.1 National Curriculum for Basic Education

The National Curriculum for Basic Education (NCBE) is the official policy governing teaching, learning and assessment, providing direction for planning and implementing teaching and learning activities. The Commerce learning area is defined in the policy as a skills-focused area that is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society. Learners acquire and apply commercial knowledge in practical situations and develop the particular communication skills, work attitudes and practices that are essential in effective business life.

The NCBE regulated that the Junior Secondary (grades 8 to 9) phase continue to offer English, another language, Physical Science, Life Science, Geography, History, and Mathematics as core subjects. In addition, learners may take any two of the following elective pre-vocational subjects: Agricultural Science, Accounting, Office Practice, Entrepreneurship, Computer Studies, Design and Technology, Visual Arts, Integrated Performing Arts, Home Economics, Fashion and Fabrics, Hospitality, Technical Drawing, and Technical Studies A, B, or C.

As highlighted by the recommendation in subsection 6.4.2.2, at the Junior Secondary Phase, Economics and Business Studies must be included in the futuristic framework to expose learners to the commercial subjects early in the secondary phase. Learners who choose these two subjects for the first time in grade 10 often do so without prior knowledge, leading them to underperform due to a knowledge gap from grades 8 and 9. This creates a need to introduce a subject in grades 8-9 that combines foundational knowledge from Business Studies and Economics into Junior Secondary Phase as a subject, Foundation Business Economics, thereby laying a strong foundation for learners before they proceed to grade 10.

7.3.2 Commerce subject policy

The National Commerce Subject Policy Guide is the official policy that provides guidelines for subject managers in controlling teaching and learning activities in

Commerce. Furthermore, it guides teachers in organising their administrative duties and in planning teaching and learning. The Commerce policy articulates that learner-centred education sometimes requires learners to have space to move around or work in small groups. This might be challenging in overly large classes, and teachers will need to be creative to ensure that teaching and learning are learner-centred.

As the official policy for Commerce subjects, it does not emphasise strategies to retain learners in the Commerce field, despite the matter having affected the field of study over the years. The Commerce subject policy should deliberately contain strategies for teachers to implement in their schools. Having them in the subject policy guide will grow the field. The Commerce subject policy must be revised to address the current issues affecting the Commerce sector. Strategies such as mandatory Commerce clubs, Commerce competitions, field trips and the use of learner-centred practices must be incorporated into the policy and given significant emphasis and clear directions for effective implementation.

7.3.3 The sixth National Development Plan

This plan is founded on four key pillars, and education, as an integral part of any society, falls under pillar two, namely Human Development and Community Resilience. The plan outlines that the Junior Secondary Phase (grades 8 to 9) allows learners to explore subjects while developing knowledge, skills and values, preparing them for the senior secondary phase. Afterward, in Grades 10-11, learners specialise in subjects aligned with their career interests, resulting in them obtaining the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary level. The plan aims to strengthen career guidance and subject choice systems and train Life Skills and subject teachers to offer meaningful career counselling.

The sixth National Development Plan emphasises that learners explore subjects in the Junior Secondary before the senior secondary, where they will select their field of specialisation. However, the current curriculum does not offer any exploration for learners who wish to become economists, business analysts or pursue careers related to Economics and Business Studies. These two subjects are offered for the first time in grades 10-11 in the current curriculum. This proposal introduces a

foundational subject in grades 8-9, Business Economics, which teaches learners the basics of economics and the business world. This will improve academic performance in grades 10-11, as these subjects are currently underperforming, according to the findings, and will also enhance learner retention in the Commerce field. It is possible that the low enrolment in Commerce can be attributed to the absence of these two subjects in the Junior Secondary phase as they form part of the package for Commerce, either one of them or both and learners will be resistant to choose the Commerce field of study because of the fear of taking two brand new subjects in grade 10, which were not done at the Junior Secondary.

7.3.4 Strategic Plan of the Ministry of MEIYSAC

This Strategic Plan (2025–2030) serves as a comprehensive roadmap to address the nation's dynamic needs through integrated efforts in education, innovation, youth development, sports, arts and culture. The strategic plan highlighted Continuous Professional Development for staff members as critical in enhancing skills and competencies, and ensuring the effective execution of this strategy. The Ministry should, therefore, prioritise the investment in CPD (Both qualifying and non-qualifying courses) of its staff members.

The strategic plan acknowledges that we are living in the technology and information age, and technology is advancing rapidly, influencing the day-to-day lives of people and organisations. As part of their priorities to provide CPD to staff members, it has become essential for all teachers to be capacitated in the usage of ICT in their respective subjects through professional development opportunities. These trainings, if rolled out successfully to all regions, targeting most, if not all, teachers, will ensure the full integration of ICT in education and align implementation with the expectations of our national policies.

7.3.5 Learner-Centred Education Policy

The policy seeks to improve the quality of learning in the classroom through a more considered and consistent approach to learner-centred education. Democracy is a main goal for the Namibian educational system. Learner-centred education aims to develop each learner’s ability to construct their own understanding. The teacher must establish a relationship of care with the learners; if this relationship does not exist,

learning will be inhibited. Therefore, the learner-centred approach requires the teacher to possess a good understanding of the subject matter and to understand why and how to teach in a learner-centred way. The learner-centred approach ensures that all materials for the teacher or learner are primarily there to support learning, not to dominate it.

7.4 Proposed Design of a Futuristic Curriculum for Commerce Subjects

7.4.1 Vision

To establish a forward-looking framework that leverages ICT integration and innovative strategies to cultivate critical thinking, creativity and entrepreneurial competence among learners, thereby fostering sustained interest in Commerce through early exposure to Commerce subjects and contributing to Namibia's socio-economic advancement in the digital era.

7.4.2 Rationale

- To enhance learners' enrolment, retention and engagement in the Commerce field of study.
- To bridge the gap between education and the world of work.
- Aligning education with national development priorities.
- Cultivating a positive attitude and career awareness in Commerce.
- Promoting learner-centred and interactive learning approaches.
- Leveraging ICT to modernise Commerce education.

7.4.3 Aspects to be implemented for a futuristic curriculum framework.

Aspect 1: Commerce Club

The primary purpose of the Commerce Club is to bridge the gap between theory and practice and to ignite enthusiasm for Commerce among learners. In a nutshell, the Commerce club will aim to.

- Make Commerce subjects less intimidating through interactive activities such as peer teaching on difficult topics, quizzes and competitions.
- The Commerce club can serve as a platform where learners receive career guidance on Commerce.

- Cultivate real-world skills like financial literacy, teamwork and problem-solving through interaction with other learners.
- Provide a peer-support network for learners in the field of Commerce, boosting retention and morale.
- Provide an opportunity for learners to discuss key business and economics current affairs to broaden learners' understanding of issues pertaining to Commerce.

2. Club Coordinator

The club coordinator should be a Commerce teacher who is passionate about and knowledgeable in the field of Commerce. The teacher should possess good planning skills, as they will be planning the club's activities with the learners, leading meetings, and securing resources for the club.

3. Managing or Running the club

The club is open to all Commerce learners from grades 8-12, and meetings can be held weekly on a selected date agreed upon by all members. The club should establish leadership roles, and learners should vote for the club's leadership, which should be changed annually. Positions in the club can include chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, secretary, advisor, or any other role deemed suitable by the club, informed by the school's unique needs.

4. Commerce Club activities

The coordinator, along with the members, should create a dynamic and engaging calendar of activities. The club's calendar should be dynamic and engaging, featuring a mix of:

- Trainings: Learners can be given training by the coordinator teacher or any expert invited to host the training on issues identified by learners or the coordinator teacher as essential. Items such as Public Speaking for Presentations, Creating a Basic Business Plan, and others.
- Practical Simulations: A stock market investment challenge (using virtual money), a mini-enterprise fair where students create and sell products.

- External Engagement: Inviting guest speakers from local businesses, banks and former learners to motivate learners in pursuing the Commerce field of study and sharing their own career journeys.
- Competitions: Intra-school and inter-school Commerce quizzes, and participation in regional and national Commerce competitions such as the Namibian Scholars Investment Challenge.
- Hosting annual excursions for Commerce learners.
- Running the school tuck shop to gain real-life experiences and entrepreneurial skills.

Aspect 2: Leveraging ICT to modernise Commerce education

To contribute to the foundation of a knowledge-based society, it is essential that in the Commerce classroom, learners are enhanced with skills that enable them to use ICT processes and the ability to present clear information. The world is in a digital era, and as such, Commerce learners should be able to be creative and innovative using ICT. In subjects such as accounting, the use of spreadsheet software like Excel is used for real-time budget analysis. Commerce teachers are encouraged to utilise video conferencing tools to host guest speakers in instances where distance has become a barrier and they cannot be physically there owing to time or resource limitations. All schools that offer Grade 12 Advanced Subsidiary have smart screens, and these resources can be utilised through initiatives such as these. Furthermore, integrating Generative AI tools can personalise learning; for instance, learners can use AI to generate and critique business plans or create realistic case studies for analysis, thereby developing critical thinking and digital literacy skills essential for the modern economy.

There are several AI platforms that Commerce teachers should be able to explore to enhance access to information and create innovative teaching methods in their classrooms. Platforms such as Quizoot can be utilised to upload lessons and create interactive quizzes. Unifire and Pixelfox are ideal platforms as Commerce education mostly uses case studies in subjects such as Entrepreneurship and Business Studies. Kahoot! is an equally strong platform that can be utilised in classrooms for live

competitions and quizzes, providing immediate feedback to learners and teachers. All the platforms mentioned, and more, if used effectively, have the potential to turn teaching into an interactive experience for learners, helping them retain what they learn and increasing their interest in Commerce subjects.

Aspect 3: Promoting learner-centred and flipped learning pedagogy

There is a need to effectively implement learner-centred and flipped pedagogy in the Commerce classrooms. In a practical flipped approach, learners first encounter core concepts, such as balance sheets or the marketing mix, outside of class through short, focused video lessons, thereby saving classroom time for activities. This foundational knowledge is then actively applied within the classroom through learner-centred activities such as collaborative projects where groups create financial statements for a hypothetical student business, role-playing simulations of business transactions to make accounting tangible, or analysing and debating real-world case studies. In this pedagogy, the teacher shifts from lecturer to facilitator, providing support as learners engage in problem-solving, thereby deepening their understanding through hands-on experience.

Example: Using flipped-classroom learning to introduce new concepts.

The teachers' role is to facilitate the learning process and determine how well the learners have grasped the content. The teacher provides a 10-15-minute video rather than a single long lecture. Learners will watch a video at home on a selected topic, for instance, accrued income and expenses. After watching the video, learners will use guided notes provided by the teacher and an activity template that categorises accrued income and accrued expenses.

In the classroom, the teacher starts by projecting common errors from the homework. The class discusses why it is not correct, reinforcing the underlying principle. The teacher will prepare the main activity in class. This activity can be conducted in groups; each group is provided with detailed business information on the topic. In groups, learners must identify what needs to be adjusted, prepare the correct adjusting journal entry, and write a one-sentence justification citing the matching principle or revenue recognition principle. The groups post their completed entries

and justifications on the wall. Other groups rotate, acting as judges, checking for accuracy and asking clarifying questions.

Aspects 4 Parental involvement and feeder school engagement

Awareness among Commerce parents about their children's future prospects can be cultivated through strategically framed communications that outline the career pathways associated with Commerce education. This calls for an in-depth illustration of Commerce as a foundational discipline that develops financial and strategic competencies. Outreach should aim to showcase Commerce not as a narrow stream but as a versatile and dynamic field of study that creates pathways to a bright future for learners. When reaching out to feeder schools, parents must be showcased emerging sectors such as sustainable business and entrepreneurial enterprise, all of which are underpinned by core Commerce principles. Presentations to parents should feature alumni testimonials and industry partnerships, visually mapping the journey from secondary-level Commerce studies to tertiary and onto prestigious, high-demand professions.

When engaging grade 7 parents, the feeder school strategy must be positioned as a proactive educational investment. The discourse should focus on the significant academic advantage of early, sustained exposure to the discipline's methodological rigour. This strategy frames the choice as one of building a strong foundational platform, thereby ensuring smoother progression and greater confidence through Grades 10-12.

Aspect 5: Foundational Business Economics in grades 8-9

The strategic introduction of a foundational subject in grades 8 and 9, is a critical intervention to revive the Commerce field of study. Currently, learners encounter Economics and Business Studies as entirely new and complex subjects in grade 10, often leading to cognitive overload and poor results owing to a lack of prior knowledge. This proposed subject would systematically address this gap by laying an essential conceptual groundwork, revealing core principles before senior-grade rigour is required. By transforming abstract concepts into relatable ideas, it aims to

foster early economic and business awareness, thereby reducing the initial barrier and building learners' confidence. This proactive approach ensures that when learners enter Grades 10-12, they do not start from scratch but build on a familiar foundation, which is directly correlated with improved academic performance and sustained interest in the Commerce stream.

The curriculum for this foundational subject would be carefully sequenced to progress from the immediate to the global. In grade 8, the focus would be on personal economics and the local business environment, covering foundational topics such as wants versus needs, opportunity cost, personal budgeting and the basic principles of entrepreneurship and profit through simple simulations. In grade 9, the scope would expand to engage with the broader economic system, introducing learners to market forces of demand and supply, the role of government in the economy, basic financial concepts like inflation, and an introduction to globalisation and trade. For this strategy to be effective, it is non-negotiable that the subject be delivered by qualified Economics and Business Studies teachers. Their specialised content knowledge is essential for ensuring conceptual accuracy and for employing the correct pedagogical methods, such as case studies and economic simulations. Furthermore, these teachers are best equipped to deliver the curriculum, consciously building knowledge from Grade 8 to 12, and serving as passionate advocates who can inspire learners to pursue the Commerce stream with confidence and a clear sense of future possibility.

Aspect 6 Commerce Competition and Quizzes

Commerce Competition and Quizzes aims to promote critical thinking, competitive learning and entrepreneurial thinking by fostering these skills among learners. Furthermore, the competition and Quizzes will be an opportunity to engage the community and stakeholders in supporting education while developing a deep understanding of Commerce subjects. The competition is proposed to occur at three levels: School, Circuit and Regional.

The schools and regional office will collaborate with local businesses, entrepreneurs and investors to secure sponsorship and funding for specific aspects of the competition, including campaigning and increased visibility. The judges at the regional competition will be local community members and stakeholders.

1. School-Level Competition

Part 1

Quiz/Competition

The competition will take the format of multiple-choice questions, timed questions or responses, case studies or any format that best suits the teacher coordinating. The quiz can cover a range of Commerce subjects' content. The competition should not exceed two hours in total. The five best learners will be selected from this quiz. These selected learners will proceed to the circuit-based competition; the facilitator needs to prepare intensively with possible content for the circuit competition.

Part 2

Business Idea Showcase:

Each participant/team presents a unique business idea that addresses a societal problem. The team or individual will get ten minutes to present their business ideas. The teachers should assess originality, creativity, the practical execution of the idea, and whether the idea solves real problems in society. The coordinator assists selected learners in refining their business ideas, creating props, and crafting their business plans for circuit-level presentations.

Evaluation Criteria:

Quiz Results: Accuracy, speed and critical thinking.

The top five learners (individuals or teams) are selected to represent the school in the circuit competition.

2. Circuit-Level Competition

Each school will be represented by a total of ten learners, five for the quiz/competition, who will be assessed on advanced questions covering broader Commerce topics and five for the innovative/business idea. The teachers will be trained in evaluating

business ideas and competition, as well as the criteria to be used. At the circuit level, learners must present a greater depth and clarity in their business ideas.

3. Regional Competition

The top ten learners from each circuit will participate in the regional competition. Challenging questions for the quiz may include current events in Commerce, global business trends and ethical considerations. Detailed presentations with a business model, financial plan, and impact assessment could be made. For the business idea, learners must present it in a comprehensive and persuasive manner. Possible awards for the competition at the regional level may include scholarships, acknowledgment certificates and financial support for the best business ideas.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter presents the main contributions of this research, specifically the reliable and trustworthy data-collection instruments employed: face-to-face interviews and closed-ended questionnaires. Moreover, the main aim of the research was achieved which was to develop a framework for Commerce subjects in Namibia. The framework offers six aspects, which are: Commerce Club, Foundational Business Economics, Parental Involvement and Feeder School Engagement, Promoting Learner-Centred and Flipped Learning Pedagogy, Leveraging ICT to Modernise Commerce Education, and recommended strong platforms that can be used in the classroom, including Commerce Competitions and Quizzes. The suggested aspects, if thoroughly understood and implemented, have the potential to retain learners and increase intake in the Commerce field of study, which was the ultimate aim of this study.

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APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



INFORMATION SHEET TO PARTICIPANT

DATE: 20 MARCH 2025

TITLE: A FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECTS: A NAMIBIAN PERSPECTIVE.

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is Joyce Ester Amakali and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor Van Wyk, a Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a Doctor of Philosophy at the University of South Africa. I am inviting you to participate in a study titled A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects: A Namibian Perspective.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study is expected to collect important information that could positively contribute to the field of Commerce in Namibia and increase the number of intakes in Commerce classrooms. In the end a futuristic curriculum framework will be developed from this research that will assist Commerce teachers to teach better and improve performance ultimately inviting more learners to the field.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited as a Commerce teacher to take part in this interview, online questionnaire and for the researcher to observe your classroom.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating I this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, please sign this to give a written consent below. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The only risks that a participant might possibly face by partaking in this research are the risk of convenience, and the researcher will try her level best to ensure that arrangements are made well in advance and not during school hours, not to disrupt teaching and learning activities at the school.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The names of the participants will not be recorded anywhere in the findings but will be given code numbers and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Furthermore, the researcher is the only one involved in this study except the supervisor, which makes it easy to ensure confidentiality of the data as opposed to group studies.

When the need arises, it is possible that data collected from this study may be used for other purposes such as a report, conference proceedings or journal articles. It will be ensured that even when being utilised for other purposes confidentiality is maintained by keeping the participants anonymous by not making individual participants identifiable in such a report.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

The interview records will be recorded with my personal phone; records will be copied into the personal computer as soon as the interview is done and files on the personal phone deleted. Both my personal phone and computer have password protection within the researcher is the only one that have access to it. Observation checklist will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a safe space. Future use of data will be subjected to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After a period of five years have lapsed hard copies will be shredded and electronic copied will be permanently deleted from the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no financial rewards of any work to the participant and the researcher will try level best to always reach participant in doing so reducing any form of transport cost or other miscellaneous expenses.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you wish so.

HOW I WILL BE INFORMED OF THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Joyce Amakali on 0818962013 or alternatively 22584935@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact my supervisor Prof Michael Van Wyk, on Tel: 012 429 4775/Cell: 0835445217

Thank you for taking to time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

I have read and understood the information provided above. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study and understand that I can withdraw any time from this study.

Participant's name:

_____

Signature:

_____

Date:_____

RESEARCHER'S STATEMENT

I confirm that I have explained the purpose, procedures, and risks of this study to the participant and answered all their questions.

Participant's name:

_____

Signature:

_____

Date:_____

APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SELECTED DIRECTORATES OF EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA

DATE: 17 MARCH 2025

TO: REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
ERONGO REGION

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SELECTED NAMIBIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND REGIONAL DIRECTORATES OF EDUCATION, ARTS, AND CULTURE FOCUSING ON COMMERCE GRADES 10-12.

THESIS TITLE: A FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECTS: A NAMIBIAN PERSPECTIVE.

Dear Ms. Stephanus

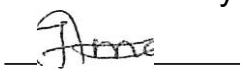
I Joyce Ester Amakali, SEO for Accounting and Business Studies in Otjozondjupa Directorate of Education, Arts, and Culture. I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies at the University of South Africa under the supervision of Prof. Michael Van Wyk. I seek approval to conduct research at Kolin Foundation Secondary School and regional Directorates of Education Arts, and Culture specifically in the Professional Development Sub-division.

My study aims to design a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects and identify strategies to revive the field of Commerce subjects in Namibia while fostering creativity. During the researcher's tenure as a SEO in the Otjozondjupa region for an exceeding two-year period, the researcher observed that several schools within the region have ceased to offer Commerce subjects or have never offered this field of study, while the intake for the schools offering is relatively low.

The study's sample will comprise teachers teaching Commerce subjects at the senior secondary level, the school board chairperson of the selected school, the Head of the Commerce Department, the principal of the selected school, and the SEO for Commerce in the Professional Development sub-division. The study will be conducted in a manner that minimises disruption to teaching and learning by scheduling data collection at times convenient for participants, ensuring timely communication, and properly coordinating interviews. Participation in the research is entirely voluntary, and no reimbursements or incentives will be provided.

Thank you in advance for granting me this opportunity to achieve my goals and contribute meaningful research findings to the field of Commerce in Namibia. I am confident that my research findings will provide valuable insights to inform future decision-making regarding Commerce subjects in our country.

Yours Sincerely



Joyce Ester Amakali

SEO: Accounting and Business Studies Otjozondjupa Region

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS, SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSONS, PRINCIPALS, HEAD OF DEPARTMENTS AND SEOS



Questions for interviews

Good morning Sir/Mam, and thank you for taking time to participate in this interview. My name is Joyce Amakali , and I am PhD researcher from the University of South Africa exploring ways to develop a Futuristic Curriculum framework for Commerce in Namibia. This research aims to understand how we can teach and better prepare learners for the evolving demands of the Commerce industry and the future job market.

Your insights and experiences are incredibly valuable to this study. The interview is designed to be a conversation where I seek to understand you your perspectives so please feel free to share openly. Everything you share will remain confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

Now, before we begin, I would like to ask for your permission to record this interview for accuracy. The recording will remain confidential and used only for research purposes. If you are comfortable with that I will start recording now. Do I have your consent?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

- How long have you been a chairperson of the school board?

- Are you aware of the status of Commerce subject at this school for grade 10-12 In terms of its intake?

- Are you satisfied and if not what would you like to see different?

- What strategies can you give the school to help grow the field?

- As school board chairperson/member do you play any role to ensure the fields of study at the school?

- How does the school board allocate resources to ensure Commerce receives equal attention compared to other fields?

- How can the school board work more closely with teachers and parents to make Commerce a more appealing subject?

- What role does the school board play in encouraging learner participation in Commerce-related extracurricular activities or competitions?

- How can the school board contribute to raising awareness among parents and learners about the value and future prospects of Commerce-related careers?

PRINCIPAL

- QUALIFICATION and Areas of Specialisation?

- Years of experience?

- Have you ever received training in the subjects you are overseeing/teaching

- What is the status of Commerce in the school?

- How would you describe the performance of Commerce in the school?

- As a leader of this institution do you encourage Heads of Departments for Commerce together with your teachers in an attempt to increase the intake and how?

- Are the learners in this school given a free will to choose their fields of study in grade ten?

- Do you this the performance is linked to the low intake of learners in this field?

- What strategies would you recommend as a principal to the field in order for the intake to grow

- Are there professional development opportunities provided for Commerce teachers to enhance their teaching skills and stay updated on industry trends?

- How does the school board allocate resources to ensure Commerce receives equal attention compared to other fields?

- How does the school help learners learn about Commerce before they choose their subjects?

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

- QUALIFICATION and Areas of Specialisation?
- Years of teaching experience?
- Have you ever received training in the subjects you are overseeing
- What is the current status quo of Commerce intake in your school for grade 10-12. Give numbers
- What is the reason for the low intake of Commerce at grade 10-12.
- What efforts do you as a Head of Department for Commerce take to increase intake at the senior secondary level
- How is the performance of Commerce at your school and are you satisfied?
- What strategy can you implore to revive Commerce at your school grade 10-12?
- Are there ways to engage learners in real-world social impact projects related to Commerce?

- What specific skills do you think students will need to thrive in Commerce-related careers 10-20 years from now?

- What do learners enjoy most about the current Commerce subjects, and what do they find challenging?

- Are there any extracurricular activities or clubs that could support students' interest in Commerce?

- What teaching strategies have been most effective in engaging students in Commerce subjects?

- Are there any specific resources or materials that your department lacks however you believe that it would make teaching and learning Commerce more effective?

- How can we better support learners who might struggle with Commerce subjects,

- What practical activities, like field trips or hands-on projects, could enhance learners' understanding of Commerce concepts?

- Are the learners in this school given a free will to choose their fields of study in grade ten?

TEACHERS FOR COMMERCE

- Qualification and Areas of Specialisation?

- Years of teaching experience?

- Have you ever received training in the subjects you are overseeing/teaching

- What is the current status quo of Commerce intake in your school for grade 10-12. Give numbers

- What is the reason for the low intake of Commerce at grade 10-12.

- What efforts do you as a teacher for Commerce take to increase intake at the senior secondary level

- How is the performance of Commerce in your subjects and are you satisfied?

- What strategy can you recommend to revive Commerce at your school grade 10-12?

- What specific skills do you think learners will need to thrive in Commerce-related careers 10-20 years from now?

- What do learners enjoy most about the current Commerce subjects, and what do they find challenging?

- Are there any extracurricular activities or clubs that could support students' interest in Commerce?

- What teaching strategies have been most effective in engaging students in Commerce subjects?

- Are there any specific resources or materials that your department lacks however you believe that it would make teaching and learning Commerce more effective?

- How can we better support learners who might struggle with Commerce subjects,

- What practical activities, like field trips or hands-on projects, could enhance learners' understanding of Commerce concepts?

SEOS

- Qualification and Areas of Specialisation?

- Years of teaching experience?

- Have you ever received training in the subjects you are overseeing/teaching

- What is the current status of Commerce in your region?

- Are the intake relatively low or average in the senior secondary phase?

- Which teaching methods do you mostly recommend teachers to teach Commerce in the region?

- What challenges have you encountered this far in your attempt to encourage schools to have Commerce field grade 10-12?

- Do you think the manner in which the curriculum is implemented has an impact on the status quo/low intake

- How does the regional office support schools with resources (e.g., textbooks, training) to improve Commerce education?

- Are there any regional success stories or best practices in Commerce education that could be used in other schools?

- How do you ensure that Commerce teachers in the region are adequately trained and supported?

- Are there any regional partnerships with businesses or organizations that help promote the importance of Commerce?

- What initiatives have been taken by the regional office to raise awareness about the importance of Commerce education among students and parents?

- How does the regional office monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Commerce curriculum in schools?

APPENDIX D: CLOSED STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS, HEAD OF DEPARTMENTS AND SEOS

QUANTITATIVE DATA CLOSED-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

TEACHERS

SECTION A BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR COMMERCE TEACHERS

1	Gender	1.1	Male	
		1.2	Female	
2	Region of employment	2.1-2.14	***Electronically insert all 14 regions here for the teacher to choose***	
3	Currently, I am teaching the following Commerce subject.	3.1	Accounting	
		3.2	Economics	
		3.3	Business Studies	
		3.4	Entrepreneurship	
4	Professionally, I was trained in subject methodology.	4.1	Accounting	
		4.2	Economics	
		4.3	Business Studies	
		4.4	Entrepreneurship	
5	Highest professional qualification	5.1	BETD	
		5.2	Diploma in Education	
		5.3	B.Ed (Level 7)	
		5.4	B.Ed Hons(Level 8)	
		5.5	M.Ed	
		5.6	Ph.D	
		5.7	Post-doctoral studies	
6	Years of overall teaching experience	6.1	1-5 year	
		6.2	6-10 years	
		6.3	11-15 years	
		6.4	16-20 years	
		6.5	20 years +	
7	Teaching experience in the Commerce subject you are currently teaching	7.1	1-5 year	
		7.2	6-10 years	
		7.3	11-15 years	
		7.4	16-20 years	
		7.5	20 years +	
8	How many learners are in your grade 10, 11 and 12 class	8.1	05-10 learners	
		8.2	11-20 learners	

		8.3	21-30 learners	
		8.4	31-40learners	
		8.5	+50 learners	

SECTION B RELEVANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMERCE CURRICULUM

Please indicate your opinion about each statement below according to how you perceive them in class. Respond to each item as it pertains to you in your Accounting class. **How to Answer Each Question.** There are xx statements. Indicate your response by making a tick/cross corresponding to your answer.

Likert Scale:
Strongly Agree = (SA) 4
Agree =(A) 3;
Disagree = (D) 2;
Strongly disagree= (SD) 1

2. Do you agree or disagree with the statement that the **relevance of the current Commerce curriculum** has lived up to the expectations of the country				
2.1 It lived up to the expectations of the country	1	2	3	4
2.2 It prepares learners for the world of work	1	2	3	4
2.3 It is relevant and aligned with the National Development Plan of the country	1	2	3	4
2.4 It is a specialist and practical skills-focused subject which is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society	1	2	3	4
3 Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when **implementing the curriculum for Commerce** subjects?				
3.1 Resource Limitations/lack of teaching materials	1	2	3	4
3.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training.	1	2	3	4
3.3 Student Diversity and Differentiated Instruction	1	2	3	4
3.4 Curriculum Relevance and New Technological Trends	1	2	3	4
3.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning	1	2	3	4
3.6 Lack of Parental Involvement	1	2	3	4
3.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes	1	2	3	4
4 Do you agree or disagree with the following **factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects**?				
4.1 Resource Limitations /lack of teaching materials (textbooks/laptop/overhead projector).	1	2	3	4
4.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training (in-service training /subject matter training)	1	2	3	4

4.3 Student Diversity and differentiated instruction (classroom management and discipline).	1	2	3	4
4.4 Curriculum Relevance and new technological trends (update changes in curricula and training on new technologies).	1	2	3	4
4.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning (innovative assessment/ authentic assessment).	1	2	3	4
4.6 Lack of Parental Involvement (teacher-parent conferences or teacher-student conferences)	1	2	3	4
4.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes (teaching/assessment/promotion of learners)	1	2	3	4
4.8 AI tools (generative AI tools such as ChatGPT/Grammarly)	1	2	3	4
5. Do you agree or disagree with the following perception as a **Commerce teacher on the status of Commerce** subjects?				
5.1 Rated as highly professional by learners and parents	1	2	3	4
5.2 Commerce subjects outperformed other subjects	1	2	3	4
5.3 Give prominent status in business and government	1	2	3	4
5.4 Obtain more accessible job opportunities compared to other subjects	1	2	3	4
5.5 Prepare learners for the world of work	1	2	3	4
7. Do you agree or disagree that the following reasons are valid for the **low intake of learners enrolled in the Commerce subject**?				
7.1 Lack of awareness and promotion of commercial subjects to the learners	1	2	3	4
7.2 Influence from parents and friends	1	2	3	4
6.3 Different career preferences	1	2	3	4
6.4 Teachers' workload and preferences of learners in class sizes	1	2	3	4
6.5 Assuming that Commerce subjects are difficult	1	2	3	4
6.6 Learners have a perception that Commerce does not have opportunities for a future career	1	2	3	4
6.7 Negative attitudes and teaching methodology of teachers were demotivating for learners,	1	2	3	4
6.8 Unfavourable examination structure for Commerce subjects causes learners to perform poorly	1	2	3	4
6.9 The Commerce syllabus is too packed, making paying attention to the learning objectives difficult.	1	2	3	4
6.10 A teacher shortage contributes to poor teachers' and learners' performance.	1	2	3	4
6.11. Lack of exposure to appropriate teaching methods, insufficient time for syllabus coverage, and lack of commitment	1	2	3	4
7.1. Do you agree or disagree that a **Commerce teacher can use these methods to encourage and motivate** more learners to pursue Commerce subjects in grades 10-12 ?				

7.1 Give positive feedback in class	1	2	3	4
7.2 Showcasing work in the classroom display	1	2	3	4
7.3 Announcements at assembly	1	2	3	4
7.4 Give career guidance on Commerce	1	2	3	4
7.5 Forming Commerce Clubs	1	2	3	4
7.6 Commerce quizzes and competition	1	2	3	4
8 Which **teaching approach** do you **mainly prefer** in teaching the Commerce subject for which you are currently responsible?				
8.1 Teacher-centred approach	1	2	3	4
8.2 Learner-centred approach	1	2	3	4
9. Do you agree or disagree with the teaching methods **you mainly use** in teaching the Commerce subject to **increase active participation**?				
9.1 Cooperative learning method	1	2	3	4
9.2 Jigsaw Cooperative Learning Strategy	1	2	3	4
9.3 Think-pair-share strategy	1	2	3	4
9.4 Student Team Achievement Divisions Cooperative Learning Strategy	1	2	3	4
9.5 Group discussion method	1	2	3	4
9.8 Research method	1	2	3	4
9.7 Lecture method	1	2	3	4
9.8 Textbook method	1	2	3	4
9.9 Flipped classroom method	1	2	3	4
9.10 Simulation and Role-playing method	1	2	3	4
9.11 Case study method	1	2	3	4
9.12 Small group discussion method	1	2	3	4
9.13 Team-based learning method	1	2	3	4
9.14 Direct instruction method	1	2	3	4
9.15 Project-based teaching method	1	2	3	4
9.16 Field-based excursions method				

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

----------End of Questionnaire ----------

APPENDIX E: COMMERCE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS CLOSED-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR COMMERCE: HOD

1	Gender	1.1	Male	
		1.2	Female	
2	Region of employment	2.1	***Electronically insert all 14 regions here for the teacher to choose***	
3	Currently, I am heading the following Commerce subject.	3.1	Accounting	
		3.2	Economics	
		3.3	Business Studies	
		3.4	Entrepreneurship	
4	Professionally, I was trained in subject methodology.	4.1	Accounting	
		4.2	Economics	
		4.3	Business Studies	
		4.4	Entrepreneurship	
5	Highest professional qualification	5.1	BETD	
		5.2	Diploma in Education	
		5.3	B.Ed (Level 7)	
		5.4	B.Ed Hons(Level 8)	
		5.5	M.Ed	
		5.6	Ph.D	
		5.7	Post-doctoral studies	
6	Years of overall teaching experience	6.1	1-5 year	
		6.2	6-10 years	
		6.3	11-15 years	
		6.4	16-20 years	
		6.5	20 years +	
7	Years of experience as an HoD for Commerce	7.1	1-5 year	
		7.2	6-10 years	
		7.3	11-15 years	
		7.4	16-20 years	
		7.5	20 years +	
8	The number of schools in the circuit offering Commerce (grades 10-12).	8.1	5-10 schools	
		8.2	11-15 schools	
		8.3	16-20 schools	
		8.4	20-25 schools	
		8.5	+25 schools	

SECTION B CLASSROOM INFORMATION

Please assist in answering the following questions and indicate your opinion about each of the statements below according to how you perceive them in class/in your school.

1. Do you agree or disagree that the current Commerce curriculum lived up to the expectations of the country?

1] Very dissatisfied,
2] Dissatisfied,
3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,
4] Satisfied,
5] Very dissatisfied

2. Are the learners free to choose their desired field of study at grade 10-12 in your school,?
    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Only some learners

3. Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects? Use the Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree , 2=Disagree; 3=Agree 4=Strongly Agree

3 Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects?	1 SD	2D	3A	4 =SA
3.1 Resource Limitations/lack of teaching materials	1	2	3	4
3.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training.	1	2	3	4
3.3 Student Diversity and Differentiated Instruction	1	2	3	4
3.4 Curriculum Relevance and new technological trends	1	2	3	4
3.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning	1	2	3	4
3.6 Lack of Parental Involvement	1	2	3	4
3.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes	1	2	3	4

4. Do you agree or disagree with the following factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects?

4 Do you agree or disagree with the following factors that impact/influence the teaching of Commerce subjects?	1 SD	2D	3A	4 =SA
4.1 Resource Limitations /lack of teaching materials (textbooks/laptop/overhead projector).	1	2	3	4
4.2 Insufficient Professional Teacher Training (in-service training /subject matter training)	1	2	3	4

4.3 Student Diversity and differentiated instruction (classroom management and discipline).	1	2	3	4
4.4 Curriculum Relevance and new technological trends (update changes in curricula and training on new technologies).	1	2	3	4
4.5 Assessment Methods to measure student learning (innovative assessment/ authentic assessment).	1	2	3	4
4.6 Lack of Parental Involvement (teacher-parent conferences or teacher-student conferences)	1	2	3	4
4.7 Curriculum and Policy Changes (teaching/assessment/promotion of learners)	1	2	3	4
4.8 AI tools (generative AI tools such as ChatGPT/Grammarly)	1	2	3	4

5. Do you agree or disagree that teachers in your department participate in adequate professional development activities

1] Very dissatisfied,

2] Dissatisfied,

3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,

4] Satisfied,

5] Very dissatisfied

6. Do you agree or disagree that the current monitoring processes in your department are effective in supporting teacher performance.

1] Very dissatisfied,

2] Dissatisfied,

3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,

4] Satisfied,

5] Very dissatisfied

7. Do you agree the following activities are effective or not in encouraging more learners to take up Commerce subjects in grade 10-12? Use the Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree , 2=Disagree; 3=Agree 4=Strongly Agree.

7 Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects?	1 SD	2D	3A	4 =SA
7.1 Field trips	1	2	3	4
7.2 Commerce Clubs	1	2	3	4
7.3 Parental engagement	1	2	3	4
7.4 career awareness programs	1	2	3	4
7.5 peer monitoring	1	2	3	4
7.6 Quizzes/Commerce competition	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX F: SEOS CLOSED-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR COMMERCE: SEOS

1	Gender	1.1	Male	
		1.2	Female	
2	Region of employment	2.1	***Electronically insert all 14 regions here for the teacher to choose***	
3	Currently, I am heading the following Commerce subject.	3.1	Accounting	
		3.2	Economics	
		3.3	Business Studies	
		3.4	Entrepreneurship	
4	Professionally, I was trained in which subjects.	4.1	Accounting	
		4.2	Economics	
		4.3	Business Studies	
		4.4	Entrepreneurship	
5	Highest professional qualification	5.1	BETD	
		5.2	Diploma in Education	
		5.3	B.Ed (Level 7)	
		5.4	B.Ed Hons(Level 8)	
		5.5	M.Ed	
		5.6	Ph.D	
		5.7	Post-doctoral studies	
6	Years of overall teaching experience	6.1	1-5 year	
		6.2	6-10 years	
		6.3	11-15 years	
		6.4	16-20 years	
		6.5	20 years +	
7	Years of experience as an SEO for Commerce	7.1	1-5 year	
		7.2	6-10 years	
		7.3	11-15 years	
		7.4	16-20 years	
		7.5	20 years +	
8	The number of schools in the region offering Commerce (grades 10-12).	8.1	5-10 schools	
		8.2	11-15 schools	
		8.3	16-20 schools	
		8.4	20-25 schools	
		8.5	+25 schools	

SECTION B CLASSROOM INFORMATION

Please assist in answering the following questions and indicate your opinion about each of the statements below according to how you perceive them in your region.

1. Do you agree or disagree that the current Commerce curriculum meets the needs of the Namibian economy?

1] Very dissatisfied,
2] Dissatisfied,
3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,
4] Satisfied,
5] Very dissatisfied

2. Do you agree or disagree that ongoing training for teachers is crucial to keep the Commerce curriculum up-to-date?

1] Very dissatisfied,
2] Dissatisfied,
3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,
4] Satisfied,
5] Very dissatisfied

3. How manageable or not manageable is the workload for SEOs in providing effective support and monitoring teachers work

1] Very manageable

2] Neutral

3] Difficult

4] Very difficult

4. Do you agree the following activities are effective or not in encouraging more learners to take up Commerce subjects in grade 10-12? Use the Likert scale for 1=Strongly Disagree , 2=Disagree; 3=Agree 4=Strongly Agree.

3 Do you agree or disagree with the following challenges when implementing the curriculum for Commerce subjects?	1 SD	2D	3A	4 =SA
4.1 Field trips	1	2	3	4
4.2 Commerce Clubs	1	2	3	4
4.3 Parental engagement	1	2	3	4
4.4 Career Awareness Programmes	1	2	3	4
4.5 peer monitoring	1	2	3	4
4.6 Quizzes/Commerce competition	1	2	3	4

5. How satisfied are you with the current enrolment number of learners in the Commerce field grade 10-12.

1] Very dissatisfied,
2] Dissatisfied,
3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,
4] Satisfied,
5] Very dissatisfied

APPENDIX G: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

EDITING AND PROOFREADING CERTIFICATE

22 Osche Street

The Reeds

Centurion

0157

27 November 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This certificate confirms that I have edited JE Amakali's thesis, titled "**A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects: A Namibian Perspective."**

I found the work easy and intriguing to read. Much of my editing basically dealt with obstructionist technical aspects of language, grammar and syntax, which could have otherwise compromised smooth reading as well as the sense of the information being conveyed. I hope that the work will be found to be of an acceptable standard. I am a member of Professional Editors' Guild.

Hereunder are my contact details:



Jack Chokwe (PhD – University of Leicester (United Kingdom)

Contact numbers: 072 214 5489

jackchokwe@gmail.com

www.academicproeditor.co.za

Professional EDITORS Guild



APPENDIX H: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNISA university of south africa

UNISA COLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 08 January 2025

Ref: **2024/11/15/000000389/07/RB**
Name: **Ms Joyce Ester Amakali**
Student No.: **22584935**

Decision: Ethics Approval form

Dear **Ms Joyce Ester Amakali**

Researcher(s): Name: **Ms Joyce Ester Amakali**
E-mail address: **22584935**@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: **+264 818962013**

Supervisor: Name: **Prof MM van Wyk**
E-mail address: vwykmm@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: **0835445217**

Title of research: ***A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects: A Namibian Perspective.***

Qualification: **PhD**

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above-mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period **2025/01/08** to **2030/01/08**.

*The **low risk level** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on **15 November 2024** in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

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Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. The study's risk level is Category 2- Low risk: Human participants are involved and there is foreseeable risk of inconvenience. Non-vulnerable adult participants and non-sensitive information is involved.
9. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2030/01/08.** Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2025/01/08/00000389/07/RB** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

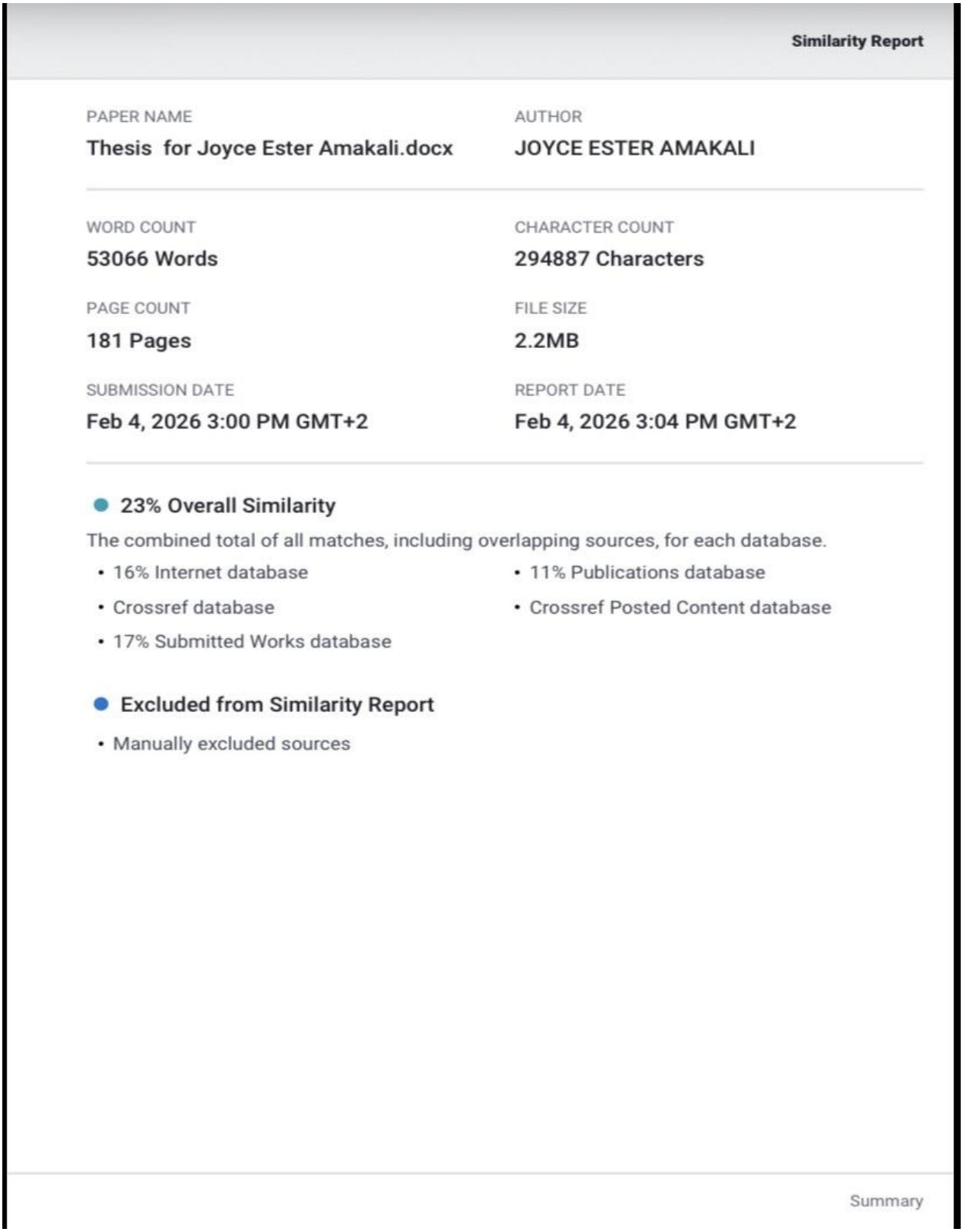
Kind regards,

Prof RB Monyai
Acting Head: CEDU Research
monyarb@unisa.ac.za

Prof Mpine Makoe
Executive Dean: CEDU
qakisme@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa
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APPENDIX I: TURNITIN REPORT



Similarity Report

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53066 Words

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294887 Characters

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181 Pages

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Summary

APPENDIX J: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH RESPONSES

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
OTJOZONDJUPA REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

"Committed and Dedicated For Quality Education"

Tel no: 264 67 308052
Fax no: 264 67 304871
Enq: Gerhard Ndafenongo
Email: ndafenongogs@gmail.com
Ref no.• 13/2/9/1

Private Bag 2618
Erf 280, Sonweg Street
OTJIWARONGO
Namibia

Ms Joyce Ester Amakali
UNISA, Student No: 22584935
E-mail: 22584935 nmylife.unisa.ac.za cell: +264 81 896 2013

Dear Ms Amakali

SUBJECT: RESEARCH STUDY TITLED: A FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECTS: A NAMIBIAN PERSPECTIVE

1. We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 17 March 2025 regarding the above-mentioned research study.

2. Permission is hereby granted to conduct the academic study involving teachers of Commerce subjects at the Senior Secondary level, the school board chairperson of the selected schools, the heads of the Commerce departments, and the principals of the selected schools. The study, titled "A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce Subjects: A Namibian Perspective". The research will take place at Senior Secondary Schools in the Otjozondjupa Region. Please present this letter of approval to the principals of the selected schools to confirm that the research is authorized and that all procedures are being followed.

3. This permission is subject to the following conditions:
   - There should be minimal or no interruption to the normal workday; interviews or engagements should preferably be conducted in the afternoon.
   - Ethical issues of confidentiality and anonymity must be respected and maintained throughout the study, including voluntary participation and obtaining consent from participants.
   - The permission is valid for the Financial Year 2025.

4. We kindly request that you share your research findings with the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture — Otjozondjupa Regional Council. You may contact Mr. UC Tjivikua, the Deputy Director: Programs and Quality Assurance (PQA), for a summary of your research findings.

5. We wish you the best in conducting your study.

19.03.2025

Gerhard Ndafenongo
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Cc: Mr UC Tjivikua, DD - PQA

OTJOZONDJUPA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
2025 -03- 19
Tel: 067-306 000 / Fax: 067-304871
Private Bag 2618, Otjiwarongo

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
ASPIRING TO EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION FOR ALL

Tel., 065 - 229800/25
Fax: 065 - 229834
Enquiries: Hilma Nuunyango-George
Ref: 13/2/9/1

Private Bag 5518
Oshakati

Ms. Joyce Ester Amakali
22584935@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Cell: 0818962013

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN OSHANA REGION
Your letter dated 17 March 2025 on the above caption bears reference.

Kindly be informed that permission is hereby granted to conduct a research study at Iipumbu Secondary School in Oshakati Circuit, Oshana Region.

Research Topic: A FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECT: A NAMIBIA PERSPECTIVE.

This permission is subject to the following strict conditions; (i) There should be minimal or no interruption on normal working schedule (ii) Ethical issues of confidentiality and anonymity should be respected and retained throughout this activity i.e. Voluntary participation, and consent from participants

Both Parties should understand that this permission could be revoked without explanation at any time.

Furthermore, we humbly request you to share your research findings with the Directorate of Education, Arts and"Culture, Oshana Region. You may contact Mrs. Hilma Nuunyango-George, Chief: Education Officer; Programs and Quality Assurance (PQA) for the provision of summary of your research findings.

We wish you the best in conducting your study.

Yours sincerely,

24/03/2025

PAULINE SHAPUMBA
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS & CULTURE
OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR
24 MAR 2025
PRIVATE BAG 5518
OSHAKATI
REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Cc:

cc: Inspectors of Education:
Oshakati Circuit

ERONGO REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: 064-4105000'
Fax: 064-4105136
Email: pseac@erongorc.gov.na
File no. 13/2/9/1

Private Bag 5024
Swakopmund

18 March 2025

To: Joyce Ester Amakali
P.O.Box 19724
Omuthiya
Cell:0818962013
Email: 22584935@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Dear Ms Amakali

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SELECTED NAMIBIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND REGIONAL DIRECTORATES OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE FOCUSING ON COMMERCE GRADE 10 - 12

The Executive Director has granted approval to you to conduct academic research for your Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational research titled "A Futuristic Curriculum Framework for Commerce subjects.

However, you are requested to adhere to the following restrictions:

- Teaching and learning during normal working hours should not be disrupted.
- Participation is voluntary.

Furthermore, you are kindly requested to share your research findings after the completion of the research project. Please present this letter to the principal of the school you intend to use for your research project.

Your research findings should be shared with the Ministry through the Regional Office as requested.

Wishing you all the best with your studies.

18/08/25

Ms. E. J. Stephanus
Regional Director



Republic of Namibia

KAVANGO EAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Tel. (066) 258 9000/2589201
Fax (066) 267 707
Enquiries:S. N Kandjoni
Ref No. 13/2/8/1

Private Bag 2 1 34
Rundu
Namibia

Date: 24 March 2025

Ms. Joyce Ester Amakali
Dear Ms. Amakali

SUBJECT : REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SELECETED NAMIBIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND REGIONAL DIRECTORATES OF EDUCATION , ARTS AND CULTURE FOCUSING ON COMMERCE GRADE 10-12 .

I . The above matter bears reference.

2. This letter serves to inform you that permission is hereby granted to you to conduct a research at Rundu Secondary School and Regional Directorates of Education Afts, and Culture specifically in the Profèssi6nal Development Sub-division, Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture, Kavango East Rcgion.The study aims to design a futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce subjects and identify strategies to revive the field of con-tmerce subjects in Namibia while fostering creativity.

3. However, necessary arrangcments should be made with the management of the school and the head of sub-division of the Directorate of Education Arts

and Culture so that activity does not interfere with the normal programmner of the school and compromise on teaching and learning .

4. You are kindly requested to report yourself to the office of the inspector of Education, before undertaking the research.

5. The Principasl and management of the identified school are therefore requested to accord their usual support as well as the inspector of Education.

Yours sincerely,

KAVANGO EAST REGIONAL COUNCIL
Directorate of Education. Arts & Culture

2 4 MAR 2025

DIRECTOR
and Culture: KERC
PRIVATE BAG 2134,RUNDU

24 MAR 2025

24/3/2025
Date

Christine S. Shilima
Regional Director

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OSHIKOTO REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE: EDUCATION, INNOVATION, YOUTH, SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE

Tel: (065) 281901
Fax: (065) 240315
Enquiries: Ms Rauha Mundjele

Private Bag 2028
ONDANGWA
08 April 2025

Ref: 13/2/9/1

Joyce Amakali
0818962013

Dear Ms. Joyce Amakali

RE: **FUTURISTIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE SUBJECTS: A NAMIBIAN PERSPECTIVE IN OMUTHIYA-IIPUNDI SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OSHIKOTO REGION.**

The Office of the Director acknowledges receipt of your letter seeking permission to conduct research on the Futuristic curriculum framework for Commerce Subjects: Namibian Perspective in Omuthiya-lipundi Secondary School in Oshikoto Region.

Kindly be informed that permission has been granted to carry out the research at the selected School in the Oshikoto region. Please be guided by the following:

> You have to contact the school principal well in advance to make appointments

> The research should not interfere with the normal teaching and learning process at the school.

> Participation in the research should be on a voluntary basis.

> The information to be collected should be treated as confidential and only for research purposes. Thank you for showing interest to do the research in the Oshikoto Region. It is our sincere hope that the information you gather will be useful towards the completion of your

hope that the information you would gather qualification.

Sincerely yours



.....

MS ALETTA A. EISES
DIRECTOR