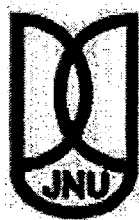


**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES OF SOUTH  
AFRICAN GOVERNMENT, 1994-2009**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru university  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the award of the degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**BIBI KIPGEN \***



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**DECLARATION**

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**Higher Education Policies of South African Government, 1994-2009**”, submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

  
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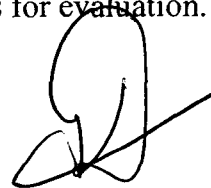
**CERTIFICATE**

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
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21<sup>st</sup> July, 2010.

  
Bibi Kipgen

## **Preface**

The Present study is a humble attempt to analyse the issues and significance of the Government Policies on Higher Education Post Apartheid, during the period of 1994-2009. This is a period when the government had taken full swing role to change the structure of racially divided higher education by the then apartheid policy.

Higher education system of South Africa during the apartheid era was highly fragmented and Universities were divided along racial lines and this resulted in the creation of thirty six higher education system in the country. However, keeping in mind the disadvantage Black majority, the post apartheid Government Policy stretch out to destroy the racially divided higher education and bring equality among Historically Advantage University(White University) and Historically Disadvantage University(Black University).

Therefore, my first Chapter-The '*Introduction*' would begin with the study of the historical Background of South Africa as well as the Higher education system during the Apartheid Regime. The second chapter, "*Objective and Context of Higher educational Reform under Democratic South Africa*" deals with the various objectives of the new Government's to reform and transform Higher education which was handicapped and represented the cry of the black population due to divided system of apartheid. The Third Chapter, "*Programmes and Policies of Higher Education in South Africa*" presents the overview of the various programmes and policies undertaken by the post apartheid government of South Africa. The Fourth Chapter, "*Assessment of Government's policies and its impact on Black Population*" will analyse and assess the outcome and limitation as well as achievements of the policies and challenges it faced while implementing the Policies.

Though a sincere effort have been made to make the study meaningful, lack of adequate materials have been a severe constraint. Last but not the least; though there are many individuals who must be credited for the success of the study, I owe complete responsibility for all errors and weaknesses. Thank You.

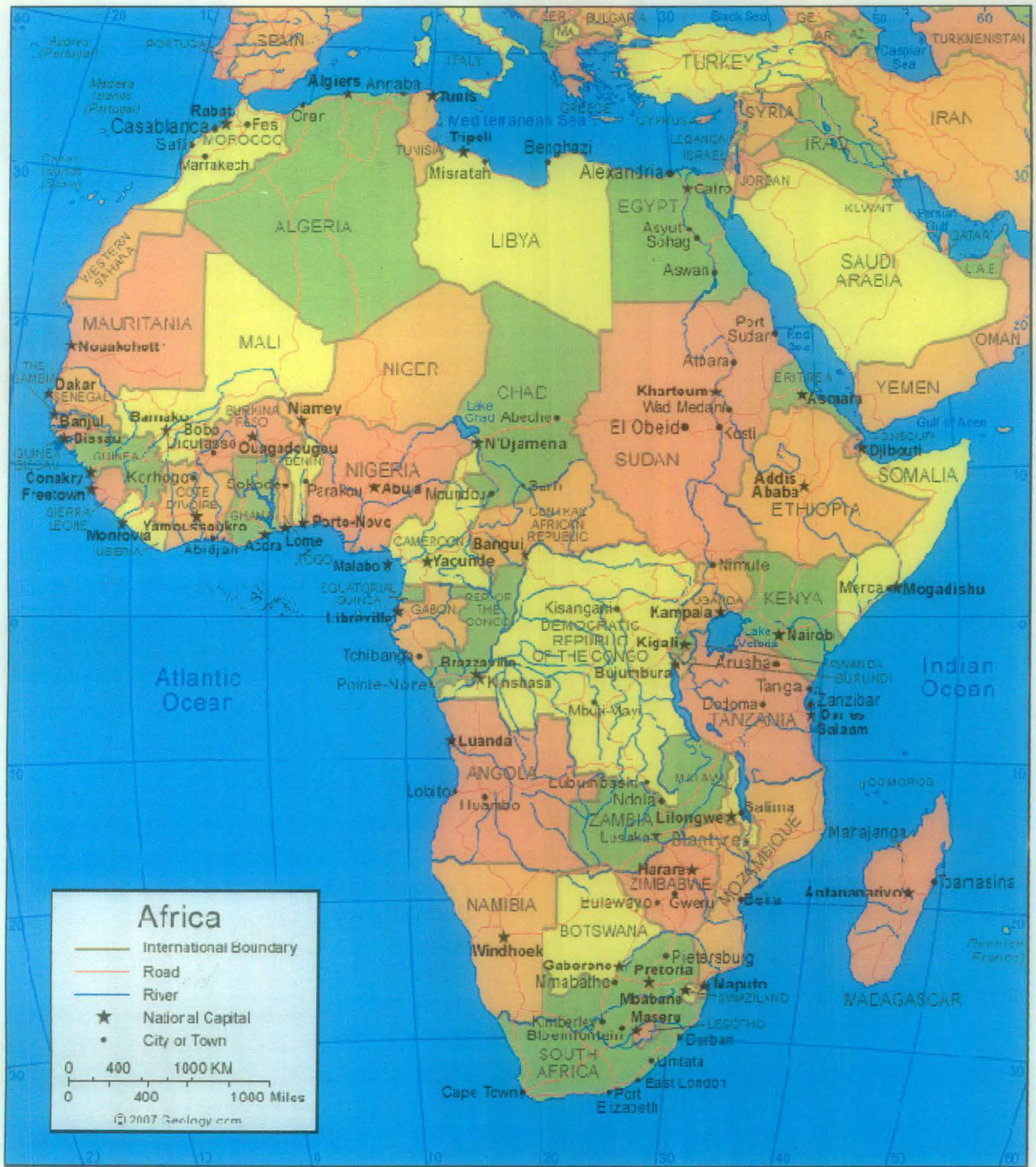
**JNU, New Delhi, July 2010**

  
**Bibi Kipgen**

## **ACRONYMS**

ANC	African National Congress
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CTP	Committee on Technikon Principals
DET	Department of Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
FET	Further Education and Training
GATs	General Agreement on Trade
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HE	Higher Education
HEB	Higher Education Branch
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information Service
HAI	Historically Advantage Institution
HDI	Historically Disadvantage Institution
HWU	Historically White University
HBU	Historically Black University
HBT	Historically Black Technicons
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRDS	Human Resource Development Strategy
NECC	National Education Policy Initiatives

NEPH	National Plan on Higher Education
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid scheme
NWG	National Working Group
MoE	Minister of Education
PQM	Programme and Qualification Mix
QA	Quality Assurance
R&D	Research and Development
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SA	South Africa
SACTE	South African College for Teacher Education
SACOL	South African College for Open Learning
SAPSE	South African Post Secondary Education
SASCO	South African Students' Congress
SAUVCA	South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
UDUSA	Union of Democratic University Staffs Union



Map of Africa

## SOUTH AFRICAN MAP





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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### ***Introduction***



## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

*The journey we are embarking on is long and hard. The educational problems of our country run deep, and there are no easy or quick-fix solutions. But this framework maps a way towards the transformation and reconstruction of the education and training system and the opening of access to lifelong learning for all South Africans. We need to walk this path together in confidence and hope. — African National Congress, 1994.<sup>1</sup>*

Education serves as the means to bring the desired change in any given society, in order to develop a generation of virtuous individuals and thus contribute to the development of good human beings. It acts as a guiding principle in helping a nation achieved its national goal in terms of development or determining its position in the international affairs. For the first time in the history of South Africa, the government has mandate the plan for development of the higher education system for the benefit of the people as a whole.

The South African Higher Education system was constructed, on racial segregation of Apartheid policy. During the nineteenth century, a number of secular and religious institutions of higher education were established in South Africa to serve the interests of the Europeans who resided there. The establishment of the South African College at Cape Town in 1829 for people of European descent marked the beginning of tertiary education in South Africa. The provision of higher education for Europeans was accelerated after the formation of the Union of South Africa to provide equitable training for both the English and the Afrikaners. The University Act was passed in 1916, the same year the Joint Matriculation Board was established to design the matriculation curriculum and regulate examinations for entry into university. The board members were invariably drawn from among the white representatives of provincial, university, and other educational authorities. In 1918, the University of South Africa was established with its six constituent colleges.

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<sup>1</sup>African National Congress, "An Implementation Plan for Education and Training", (Johannesburg, 1994a)

Over the next 40 years new universities came into being, increasing the Europeans power over the indigenous population, as majority of university were available only to whites. In 1955, control of European education was divided between the union government and the provincial legislatures, with the provinces governing primary and general secondary education and agricultural and teacher training colleges while vocational and technical training at the secondary level and higher education were placed in the central government's hands. The Vocational Education Act was also passed that year, which placed tertiary education under the control of the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Sciences. In 1965, the University of Port Elizabeth was established, offering medium of instruction in both English and Afrikaans. Two years later, the Rand Afrikaans University was also opened. UNESCO figures from 1968 showed that after the United States, South Africa had the second largest number of white university students per 100,000 inhabitants in the world. At the time 30,000 students were enrolled in the segregated English language Historically White Universities alone while only 3,000 Africans studied in all the Historically Black Universities put together. Before the demise of Apartheid, eleven universities in South Africa served predominantly white students. They were, as divided according to the language of instruction: five Afrikaans universities (Stellenbosch, Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Orange Free State, and Rand Afrikaans); four English language universities (Cape Town, Witwatersrand, Natal, and Rhodes); and two bilingual universities (Port Elizabeth and the University of South Africa). Several segregated colleges for advanced technical training also were created, mainly in the major urban areas, preparing students directly for work and offering a wide variety of programs in the agricultural sciences, commerce and industry, public service, military, and health sectors. Job reservation laws passed in the mid 1950s protected most of these professions for whites and ensured the employability of graduates of these programs.

The idea of higher education for Africans was first come up around 1880 in the Eastern Cape by James Stewart, head of the Lovedale Mission Station of the United Free Church of Scotland. Stewart was the first to forcefully articulate the need for an institution, run on Christian lines that would provide university education for Africans. He gathered support for his idea from the churches, government, business, and some African leaders,

notably John Tengo Jabavu (founder of *Imvo zabantsundu*, "African Opinion," an isiXhosa newspaper) and the Reverend Walter B. Rubusana. In 1916 the South African Native College at Fort Hare (across the river from Lovedale) was opened as the first university for Africans south of the equator. The college was subsidized by the government of South Africa, like that of the secondary schools in the country that served as feeder institutions to the university, Fort Hare became a university of African leaders in east and southern Africa, producing in a single generation the heads of state of Botswana (Sir Seretse Khama), Lesotho (Dr. Ntsu Mokhehle), Uganda (Professor Yusuf Lule), Zimbabwe (Robert Mugabe), and South Africa (Nelson Mandela). Many of the first cabinet ministers appointed after independence in Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Zambia had been educated at Fort Hare. Before 1959, all of South Africa's English language universities, referred to as the "open universities," had admitted in all disciplines a small number of African students and others who were not of European descent. In 1950, a medical faculty for Africans, including those of mixed and Asian descent, was opened at the University of Natal, becoming the only medical school to admit them following their exclusion from the other open universities until the segregated Medical University of South Africa was founded. The University of South Africa continued to admit an increasing number of Africans who could not raise enough funds or who could not afford to attend a residential university.

Self-governing status was granted in the mid-1970s and early 1980s to the territories of the Transkei, Ciskei, Venda, and Bophuthatswana, and three new ethnic universities were built for these newly "independent countries:" the University of Transkei, originally a satellite campus of Fort Hare later taken over by Ciskei; the University of Venda, similarly set up under the University of the North; and the University of Bophuthatswana. Vista University was established with campuses in South Africa's sprawling dormitory towns in the segregated African townships around Johannesburg, Pretoria, Benoni, Port Elizabeth, and Bloemfontein to accommodate urban Africans the government had wished to pretend did not exist.

As the Apartheid system has ended in 1994, the imbalances in higher education across racial groups created through the unequal education system of the Apartheid years are being addressed but will be difficult to correct. The official languages of instruction at the tertiary level, for example, are English and Afrikaans, the two principal languages of the European colonizers, yet many South African students speak an alternative mother tongue. Figures for the mid-1990s released by South Africa's Human Science Research Council (HSRC) showed that even with the demise of the Apartheid system, groups describing themselves as white accounted for 85 percent of all university graduates in South Africa, despite the fact that their proportion as a percentage of the population was no more than 15 percent. The impact of the segregated educational system established under white majority rule and the Apartheid years has been enormous. The HSRC survey indicated that by the mid-1990s the unemployment rate in South Africa was around just 2 percent for white graduates of tertiary institutions but was nearly 25 percent for black tertiary graduates. Statistics released in August 1999 from the Ministry of Education 1999, show that a growing number of South Africans are opting to study at *technikons* rather than universities, a phenomenon that may be attributed to a variety of factors including the vocational nature of most *technikon* qualifications and the lower entrance requirements at the *technikons*. Between 1993 and 1997, enrollments at the *technikons* increased by 46 percent, while at the universities they increased by only 8 percent. Overall enrollments in higher education grew from 496,000 in 1993 to 594,000 in 1997. African students enrolling at historically white institutions of higher learning rose from 41 percent to 57 percent but enrollments at the historically black universities began to fall quite considerably, causing concerns over their future viability. Private universities also have drawn off students from the historically black universities. Technical colleges also offer post secondary vocational training in a wide range of subjects, attracting career-oriented students and adult learners interested in improving their qualifications in marketable skill areas.

In 1998 the Ministry of Education started a process that is continuing and will take a few years to complete, namely, to incorporate colleges of education, agriculture, and nursing into the higher education system. A number of such colleges have chosen to affiliate with

specific universities, thus enabling their students to earn college credits toward university degrees. Articulation among the various sectors of education is improving in South Africa with the National Qualifications Framework and the South African Qualifications Authority providing growing opportunities for cumulative learning and continuing accreditation.

In South Africa, social inequalities were and are deeply rooted and reflected in all sphere of social life. The higher education system was and is no exception. Social, political and economic inequalities of a class, race, gender, institutional and stature were generated during the apartheid period profoundly shaped and continue to shape South African education. South Africa transformed from apartheid to democratic government, where existing practices, institutions and values needs restructured according to the terms of the new era. Education plays a central role in the social, cultural and economic development of any modern societies. Therefore, in South Africa, the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve the new social order, to meet national needs and to respond to new realities and opportunities. Higher education must lay the foundations for the development of a learning society which can stimulate, direct and mobilize the creative and intellectual energies of all the people towards meeting the challenges of reconstruction and development. However, the education of South Africa faced many challenges due to the legacy of its historically separated education system. Even after independence, the higher education system was still fragmented along the lines of race and ethnicity, where white and male and female and black subordination still persisted in all spheres of society and these challenges were because of South African apartheid history.

A radical reform of South Africa Higher Education (HE) started concomitantly with other social changes after the first democratic elections of 1994. The new democratic government established the national higher education plan with a vision to increase overall growth and participation rates among the masses and create a system that will fulfill the vision to open the doors of learning to all without any discrimination on the ground of race and gender. In a society undergoing rapid political, social, and economic

change, there is an urgent need for transformation of the higher education system, as an important aspect of social life. Moreover, higher education is also seen as a powerful engine for transformation, 'particularly suited to powering wider social change' (Jonathan: 2001, 37). However, one needs to acknowledge the contradictions in the role of higher education. Castells(2001:206) describes universities as 'dynamic systems of contradictory functions'. These functions have developed historically in response to different social interests, yet they take place simultaneously within the same structure. Universities are required to perform functions which are part of the traditional role of universities. They have to meet the demands of a changing global context as well as specific local, national and regional needs. The combination of implicit and explicit pressures and of different social functions results in a 'complex and contradictory reality'. Universities in developing countries need to manage the contradictions in proactive and strategic ways in order to contribute most effectively to national and regional economic and social development.

Brennan *et al* (2004) argue that higher education institutions have played both reproductive and transformative goals in society. The reproductive role of universities has been linked to preserving traditional values and in legitimizing existing structures of society. Thus in societies undergoing change, there are multiple and contradictory roles within individual institutions as well as within individual academic departments. The most explicit role that higher education is required to play in current international contexts is that of contributing to economic development and global competitiveness through developing a highly skilled labour force and through innovative knowledge production. A central feature of South Africa's economic policy since 1994 has been the recognition that in order to achieve a high rate of economic growth, it was essential to develop the capacity to participate and compete in the global knowledge economy. As mentioned above, the South African economy was experiencing growth in sectors that demanded highly skilled professionals which were in short supply. Thus one of the major roles that the HE system has been required to play has been to develop highly skilled professionals in scientific, technological and business fields (CHE, 2004). World policy agencies such as the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

(OECD) have further promoted the importance of technological development, knowledge and information in economic development and emphasised the need for highly skilled knowledge workers, with a capacity to learn and adapt to changing contexts, and the ability to contribute to innovation (Olssen and Peters: 2005).

Discussion about higher education as a public good and higher education's role in delivering the public good emerged in relation to developing countries in the mid 1990s (Lebeau: 2008). In South Africa a concern was expressed that HE institutions were shifting in the direction of greater responsiveness to societal needs, which were defined narrowly in terms of the market (Singh 2001). In striving to reinsert the public good into HE transformation, a group of HE leaders and academics identified a need to develop a sharper analytical foundation for understanding the public good and HE responsiveness. They noted that there are different conceptions of the public good. Jonathan (2001) observes that the rightward shift in the global HE climate 'reflects an individualistic/economist vision of the public well' in terms of increased national prosperity and opportunities for citizens to compete in the market. The understanding of the public good informing the South African debate was outlined by Mala Singh (2001) as 'a set of societal interests that are not reducible to the sum of interests of individuals or groups of individuals. It demarcates a common space within which the content of moral and political goals like democracy and social justice can be negotiated and collectively pursued'. She argued that transformation in South Africa 'in fidelity to its claimed radical roots must incorporate goals and purposes which are linked, even if indirectly, to an emancipator and broad-based social and political agenda.' (Singh: 2001,).

There are many different ways in which universities can contribute to such a transformatory agenda: for example, Saleem Badat, Vice Chancellor of Rhodes University, emphasizes the contribution that universities make to the transformation of society through socially relevant critical scholarship. He argues that rigorous scholarship of this nature is a necessity in order to 'protect our freedoms and so deepen South African democracy' (Badat, 2008a). It is needed to 'investigate the theoretical foundations and the empirical analyses that define the country's direction'. Furthermore universities play

an important role in developing intellectuals and promoting open and critical intellectual debate in society. They can contribute to a vibrant and engaged civil society, which increases the possibility of civil society participation in decision-making (Singh, 2001, CHE, 2004).

More specifically, universities can contribute to development and poverty alleviation through relevant research drawing on different disciplines within universities (Hall, 2007). They can contribute through quality teaching and learning by developing the capabilities of students to contribute to transforming society. Through professional education universities play a significant role in developing professionals both in government and in civil society. They are instrumental in improving the quality and skills level within public services, such as schooling, health care and welfare at national, provincial and local levels. Development of the capabilities of professionals working in institutions of government is needed to transform these institutions and improve capacity for social delivery. As well as providing pre-service education, there is a need for continuing education opportunities to upgrade professional knowledge and technical skills. Capacity development includes the ability to critique, monitor and evaluate implementation of policy (CHE, 2004).

The vision informing the democratic transition in South Africa since prior to the change of government in 1994 has been centred on the goals of equity and redress on the one hand and of economic development on the other (Badat, 2001, Jonathan, 2001). In the policy development process, higher education was seen to play a central role in advancing both of these goals and becoming a “key engine driving and contributing to the reconstruction and development of South African society” (MoE, 2001, 1.1). However, with regard to the role of achieving equity in society, many scholars points out that removing inequities from the higher education system would not in itself delivery social equity in the country, although it would enhance the life chances of large numbers of previously disadvantaged individuals. Thus there is a need to clarify what is understood by social equity and for more attention to be paid to how higher education can contribute to facilitating a more equitable society beyond its institutions (Jonathan, 2001).



## **1.2 South Africa**

### **1.2.1 People**

Until 1991, South African law divided the population into four major racial categories: Africans (black), whites, coloreds, and Asians. Although this law has been abolished, many South Africans still view themselves and each other according to these categories.

Black Africans comprise about 80% of the population and are divided into a number of different ethnic groups. Whites comprise just over 9% of the population. They are primarily descendants of Dutch, French, English, and German settlers who began arriving at the Cape of Good Hope in the late 17th century. Coloreds are mixed-race people primarily descending from the earliest settlers and the indigenous peoples. They comprise about 9% of the total population. Asians are descended from Indian workers brought to South Africa in the mid-19th century to work on the sugar estates in Natal. They constitute about 2.2% of the population and are concentrated in the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

### **1.2.2 Geography and climate**

South Africa occupies the southern tip of Africa, its long coastline stretching more than 2,500km from the desert border with Namibia on the Atlantic coast, southwards around the tip of Africa, then north to the border with subtropical Mozambique on the Indian Ocean.

The low-lying coastal zone is narrow for much of that distance, soon giving way to a mountainous escarpment that separates it from the high inland plateau. In some places, notably the province of KwaZulu-Natal in the east, a greater distance separates the coast from the escarpment.

### **1.2.3 Size and Province**

South Africa is a medium-sized country, with a total land area of slightly more than 1.2 million square kilometers, making it roughly the same size as Niger, Angola, Mali and Colombia. It is one-eighth the size of the US, twice the size of France and over three times the size of Germany. South Africa measures some 1,600km from north to south,

and roughly the same from east to west. The country has nine provinces, which vary considerably in size. The smallest is tiny and crowded Gauteng, a highly urbanized region, and the largest the vast, arid and empty Northern Cape, which takes up almost a third of South Africa's total land area.

### **1.3 South African political and socio-economic context**

#### **1.3.1 During apartheid**

South Africa has been deeply affected by a history of political exclusion, racial and class discrimination and inequality. These patterns of social relations had their roots in colonialism and were deepened by the form of economic growth in the mining and manufacturing sectors in the first half of the twentieth century and the way that labour was utilised to meet economic needs (Gelb, 2004). Racially based discrimination and exclusion were further entrenched in government policy in the form of 'apartheid' when the Nationalist government came into power in 1948. Apartheid policies were implemented in political, economic and social spheres. They aimed to ensure a cheap black labour force for mining, manufacturing and agriculture, while restricting political power to whites and building up a white middleclass. Migrant labour and influx control laws were implemented to control the number of Africans<sup>2</sup> coming to cities, and restrict their movement. Apartheid laws and regulations were introduced which affected the right to vote; freedom of movement; ownership of land and property; and residential areas for different racial groups, amongst other restrictions. A rigid, massively unequal system of education was established, which prepared people for different (and unequal) roles in society. In turn, professional education was deeply racialised.

The Nationalist government and its system of apartheid were resisted through a long struggle waged against it. This organised resistance emanated from political and civil society organisations within South Africa, the trade union movement and the African National Conference (ANC) in exile, both through its political and armed wing. A

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<sup>2</sup>While problematic for their origins in apartheid classification categories, social/population groups are nonetheless still required to monitor change. The four groups are commonly described as Africans, coloureds, Indians/Asians and whites. The term 'black' is commonly used as a broader category, including blacks, coloureds and Indians

combination of this resistance by these groupings together with international support for opposition, economic sanctions against the government and a declining economy led to a settlement which enabled a transition to a democratic government led by the ANC (Karis, 1997, McKinley, 1997, Rantete, 1998, Morris, 2004).

### **1.3.2 Post apartheid**

When apartheid officially came to an end with the democratically held elections in 1994, it left behind a population with vast inequalities across racial groups. In 1995 at least 58% of all South Africans and 68% of the African population were living in poverty, while very few whites experienced equivalent hardships. South Africa was one of the most unequal countries in the world. Furthermore there were high inequalities in regard to education, health and welfare services, as well as basic infrastructure, such as housing, water, sanitation and electricity.<sup>3</sup>

Breaking with the apartheid past, the South African Constitution, approved in 1997, enshrined the ideals of improving the quality of life of all citizens and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.<sup>4</sup> However, while there have been significant gains in 'first generation' human rights political and civil rights there has not been equivalent realisation of 'second generation' socio-economic rights (Robins, 2006). Despite the government's stated commitment to reducing poverty, levels of poverty and inequality have increased since 1994.<sup>5</sup> Between 1995 and 2001, despite national economic growth, poverty increased, particularly among Africans. Furthermore there was an increase in overall income inequality. While inequality between racial groups declined slightly, inequality within racial groups increased substantially (Bhorat and Kanbur, 2006, Hoogeveen and Özler, 2006). This is related to the growth of a black middle-class, at the same time as an increasing level of marginalisation and unemployment among the poorest 50% of the population (Robins,

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<sup>3</sup>J.G.Hoogeveen and B.Özler, Poverty and Inequality in Post Apartheid South Africa: 1995-2000. In H. Borat and. Kanbur(Eds.),Poverty and policy in Post Apartheid South Africa.(Cape Town:HSRC,2006).

<sup>4</sup> W.Magasela, Towards a constitution based definition of Poverty in post-apartheid. In S.Buhlungu,J.Daniel,R.Southall and J.Lutchman (Eds.),State of the National South Africa 2005-2006. (Cape Town:HSRC,2006)

<sup>5</sup>Bhorat and Kanbur et al.

2006). In the post-apartheid period, the unemployment rate grew dramatically from 18% in 1995 to 31% in 2002 (Bhorat and Oosthuysen, 2006). It declined slightly to 25.5% in 2007 (Hausmann, 2008, Treasury, 2008). These figures are based on a narrow definition of unemployment which excludes those members of the population not actively seeking employment, referred to as 'discouraged workers'. According to a broad definition, the unemployment rate was 31% in 1995 and rose to 42% in 2002 (Bhorat and Oosthuysen, 2006).

### **1.3.3 from RDP to GEAR**

When the ANC government came into power in 1994, it introduced the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which aimed to provide a coherent socio-economic framework to steer economic growth and redistribution. It set ambitious goals, such as job creation through public works programmes, redistribution via land reform, and major infrastructure projects in housing, services and social security (Hoogeveen and Özler, 2006). In 1996, the ANC government initiated a change in direction in macroeconomic policy with the adoption of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme. GEAR aimed to increase growth and stimulate job creation within a neoliberal economic framework. It was an export-led strategy that included anti-inflationary policies and emphasized fiscal restraint. It privileged the attainment of these monetary policy objectives at the expense of other important features of the RDP's broad socio-economic policies, particularly those elements premised on a developmental state and strategies that prioritized the provision of basic needs (Kraak, 2001, Reddy, 2004).

At the inception of GEAR, the government set a target of reaching a 6% annual growth in GDP in 2000, and an average increase in jobs of 270,000 per year (DOF, 1996). However, the outcomes in growth and employment have lagged behind target, and there was an increase in unemployment in the period up to 2002. While there was a growth in jobs between 1995 and 2002, there was a massive growth in the supply of labour, particularly unskilled labour. This led to a substantial rise in national unemployment levels<sup>6</sup>. The pattern of economic growth has led to a severe imbalance in the needs and supply of

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<sup>6</sup> Bhorat and Kanbur, 2006, Banerjee *et al*, 2007

types of labour. The parts of the economy that have grown the most, such as finance and business services, demand a high level of skills, while there has been a decline in the agriculture, mining and manufacturing sectors which required large numbers of low-skilled workers (Hausmann, 2008). Thus, a serious shortage of highly skilled labour, together with a large excess supply of unskilled labour emerged. There has been a very high level of unemployment in rural areas, highlighting the lack of economic activity in these areas. While government attempts to facilitate job-creation, and to address poverty and inequality have been inadequate, there have nonetheless been important shifts in allocation of resources to address severe backlogs in social spending. There was an increase in social service expenditure after 1994 with more resources being channeled to education, health, housing and social security. Furthermore, there was increase in access of poor, black households to water, sanitation and electricity (Bhorat and Kanbur, 2006, Hoogeveen and Özler, 2006).

#### **1.4 Literature Review**

The Higher Education Policies of South African Government in the period 1994-2009, has many characteristics and particularity. The ideology of the New Government on Higher Education was to implement a policy such as to uplift the blacks' conditions and bring them into equal front with the minority White population. Many authors and Scholars attention has captured the post apartheid Higher education scenario of South Africa and their significant works, contribute to the relevant secondary sources of the proposed study.

Dr. Andre kraak and Michael Young's in their book, *Education in Retrospect: policy implementation since 1990(2001)*, presents the relationship between theory, policy and its implementation that applies to curriculum reform. However, the specific focus of this book is on: the role of qualifications (and in particular the role of the South African Qualifications Authority and the National Qualifications Framework); work-based learning (in particular the new learner ship programmed and the Department of Labor's National Skills strategy); and the broader issue of unifying the systems of further and higher education.

Ali.A.Abdi's in his article "*Integrated education and black development in Post apartheid South Africa: critical analyses*", focused on the problems of education and development of South African education post apartheid. The author also brought forth the critical insight of educational system in post apartheid, and the poles apart educational attainment between the blacks and whites, which poses a major challenge on government's policy on educational reform in South Africa. At the same time highlights the factors which are hindering the development of education that are still affecting millions of life in the new South Africa.

Molatlhigi T.C. Sechoole's in his book, *Democratizing Education Policy: Constraints of Reform in Post-apartheid South Africa (2005)*, argues about Apartheid context of higher education and democratic processes in post apartheid reform. The author also recognizes the various challenges faced by the post apartheid government in regard to South Africa's higher education.

Sayed Yusuf's article "*Post apartheid educational transformation: Policy concerns and approaches*", focuses on the various educational policies formulated by the post apartheid government to bring equality, economic development in the era of globalization. The author also, points out the various challenges faced by the democratic government in their policy implementation. However, he fails to distinguish the vast differences between the government policies on primary and higher education.

Nico cloete ,Pundy pillay, Saleem Badat,Teboho Moja's book on "*National policy and regional response in South African higher education (2004)*" discuss about the radical reform of South African higher education which started since 1994 and also about the critical issues involving the reform structure. However, the book gives more importance on social transformation which leaves a huge gap on work related to the importance of policies of higher education.

Nico Cleote, Peter Maassen, Richard Fehnel, Teboho Moja, Trish Gibbon and Helene Perold's book on "*Transformation in Higher Education global and local realities (2004)*" observes the South Africa's higher education transformation since apartheid to post apartheid period. They stated, the importance of National and International understanding of Higher education, so that understanding the real insight of South African higher education could be easier. However, the focused lack on government policy regarding higher education.

Saleem Badat's article *Higher education transformation in South Africa post 1994: Towards a critical assessment (2007)*, focused on how Higher education in South African were shaped up by socio economic and political priorities of the government and also the author attempts at bringing out the higher education transformation within the context of overall challenges of pursuing economic development.

### **1.5 Objective and Hypotheses of the study**

The present study deals with government policies regarding higher education post apartheid. The study attempts to analyse the outcome of the objectives context and programmes initiated by the post apartheid government. The study deals with the various changes occurred in South African higher education since the end of apartheid in order to understand the policy and implementation of affirmative action in higher education of South Africa since 1994. Finally the study evaluates the challenges faced by the government while implementing policies on higher education. Taking these objectives in mind the present study attempts to test the following hypotheses:

- Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and Massive shift to market economy has reduced public funding of universities which was required in huge amount to bring in Higher Disadvantaged Community to Higher Education.
- Democratic Government's policies for restructuring higher education in favors of Higher Disadvantage Community are not affective because affirmative action's is voluntary and not mandatory.

- The government policies on racial transformation resulted in a huge shift of enrollment from Historically Disadvantage University to former “Only white university” (Historically Advantage University).

### **1.6 Scope and rational of the study**

A brief review of the literature provides a comprehensive scope as to why the study of the Government policies on higher education in South Africa needed to be undertaken. The proposed study will apply analytical as well as descriptive method of the Higher Education scenario of post apartheid South Africa. It will examine how the democratic government had taken up the policies on Higher education and what are the various challenges faced by the Government while implementing those policies. It will also identify the Government policies and the socio economic problems associated with it. The study relies primarily in both primary and secondary sources. The primary data for this research will include documents, reports published by government (white papers) and official websites. The secondary source will include books, articles, and newspaper clippings. Internet sources will also be used to have an updates of the various happenings, meetings and talks regarding the Government reforms on higher education in South Africa.



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## **CHAPTER TWO**

### ***Objectives and Context of Higher Educational Reform under Democratic Government***

Today, in South Africa, the democratic government elected in 1994 has shifted its focus in achieving equity in access to higher education. The focus of this shift is to provide “epistemological accesses”<sup>1</sup> in terms of curricula and teaching methodologies in order to develop curricula which will allow students to become members of a global workforce.

## **2.1 South Africa Higher Education during Apartheid**

The South African higher education was shaped by the apartheid policies of the National Party government. The disenfranchisement of the African majority resulted in the establishment of five separate legislative and geographic entities and to the establishment of 36 higher education institutions controlled by eight different government departments. The apartheid system also led to the differentiation of higher education in South Africa into two distinct types –universities and technicons.

Higher education access in South Africa has been problematic due to the policy of ‘separate development’ by the Nationalist Government during apartheid which ensures the access to well resource higher education reserved only for white students and this resulted in the access barriers for the majority Black population.

However, the historically white Liberal Universities attempt to achieve a more equitable access to higher education in South Africa in the early to mid-1980s<sup>2</sup>; by taking advantage of the loopholes in apartheid law and therefore, admit a small number of black students who have the potential to succeed at tertiary level if appropriate support was provided. These Universities are often funded by liberal donors. However, another dialogue emerged in the late 1980s which created problems related to access very differently. In terms of this dialogue, successful access to higher education was not dependent on black students, but on higher education institutions examining their curricula, assessment practices and teaching methodologies in order to consider the extent to which they hindrances or facilitated access to an African majority. Responsibility for ‘disadvantage’ was thus shifted from individuals to the institutions, which were seen to

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<sup>1</sup> W.Marrow, “Epistemological access in the University”, (1993).AD Issues 1:3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Cleote, R.Fehnel, P. Maassen, T.Moja, H.Perold and T.Gibboom “Transformation in Higher Education: Global Issues and Local Realities in South Africa.”, Lansdowne( Cape Town, 2002), pp.53.

construct that disadvantage through a reliance on curricula, assessment practices and teaching methodologies that had their origins in northern, western, societies. In this dialogue, therefore, the achievement of equity regarding access to higher education was an issue of institutional and systemic transformation rather than individual redress.

### **2.1.1 Racial policies of the Apartheid government**

Beginning of 1994, South Africa's higher education system was fragmented and uncoordinated. This was primarily the result of the white apartheid government's conception of race and the politics of race.

In the beginning of the 1980's, the apartheid government, divided South Africa into five entities:

- The Republic of Transkei (formed from part of the old Cape Province);
- The Republic of Bophuthatswana (formed from part of the old Transvaal Province);
- The Republic of Venda (also formed from part of the old Transvaal Province);
- The Republic of Ciskei (formed from another part of the old Cape Province);
- The Republic of South Africa (which consisted of the vast majority of the land holdings of the old South Africa); the first four entities became known as the 'TBVC countries' (using the first letter of each in the acronym) and the fifth as the 'RSA'.

The South African government during apartheid considered the first four entities to be legally independent countries, but they never received international recognition of their 'statehood'. The international community regarded these four 'republics' as apartheid creatures, and only serve the purpose of further disenfranchising the majority of the citizens of South Africa.

### **2.1.2 The conceptual framework of Higher education under apartheid**

The 1984 constitution in the RSA, resulted in the separation of higher education institutions for the exclusive use of one of the four race groups: African, coloured, Indian and white. By the beginning of 1985, a total of 19 higher education institutions had been selected 'for the exclusive use of whites', two 'for the coloureds', two 'for the Indians',

and six 'for Africans'. The six institutions for Africans did not include the seven institutions in the TBVC countries, even though it was expected that the latter would be used almost entirely by the African citizens of the four 'independent republics'.

By the beginning of the 1980s the National Party government had drawn rigid distinction between institutions. The distinction between universities and technikons formed an important policy basis for National Party ideology, which at that time believed that universities could not become involved in technology (in the sense of the application of knowledge) and that technikons could not become involved in scholarly activities involving the generation of new knowledge.

### **2.1.3 The institutional landscape prior to 1994**

Major consequences which flowed from these conceptions of race and the nature of knowledge:

- Firstly, the South African higher education system was divided into two mutually exclusive types of institutions: universities and technikons.
- Secondly, eight different government departments controlled the institutions

#### **2.1.3.1. Historically white universities in the RSA**

In terms of South African law, historically white universities remained part of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) throughout all the years of apartheid. The group has been divided into two distinct sub-groupings: On the basis of medium of communication; Afrikaans and English. The key element in the distinction between the two sub-groupings is that some universities in the group supported the National Party government, including its apartheid higher education policies, and others did not.

The first sub-group comprised six universities, five of which used Afrikaans as the official medium of communication and instruction: the University of the Orange Free State, Potchefstroom University, the University of Pretoria, the Rand Afrikaans University and the University of Stellenbosch. The sixth member was the dual-medium University of Port Elizabeth, which had been set up in the early 1960s as a way of

bringing conservative white English-speaking students into the government fold. This university, despite being officially both Afrikaans and English, was dominated by Afrikaans-speaking executives and governing bodies. These six universities were run by executives and councils who gave strong support to the apartheid government. Their implementation of the government's race-based policies is shown by the fact that the combined student enrolment of the six universities was 96% white in 1990 and 89% white in 1993. They made few attempts to use the permit system to bring black students on to their campuses.

The second sub-group consists of the four historically white English-medium universities: the University of Cape Town, the University of Natal, Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand. Institutions in this group referred to themselves as the 'liberal universities' and refused to adopt the apartheid government's view that universities are simply 'creatures of the state'. Prior to the 1990s they had declared publicly that 'academic freedom in South Africa was dead' because of apartheid restrictions on teaching materials, student admissions and the selection of academics. During the years after the introduction of the 1984 tri cameral parliament, these four universities attempted to bring larger numbers of black students on to their campuses. The effect of these efforts was that by 1990, 28% and by 1993, 38% of the students registered at these four universities were either African or coloured or Indian. Their anti-apartheid stance during these years helped the four universities raise considerable funds from international donors.

### **2.1.3.2 Historically black universities in the RSA**

The historically black universities in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) were a heterogeneous grouping which after 1984 consisted of two sub-groups:

- First, a sub-grouping of four universities 'for Africans' controlled by the RSA's Department of Education and Training. These were Medunsa University, the University of the North, Vista University and the University of Zululand.
- Second, a sub-grouping of two universities: one 'for Indians' (the University of Durban Westville) and one 'for coloureds' (the University of the Western Cape).

Both were controlled by houses in the tri cameral parliament. The establishment of these universities was clearly political and instrumental. The apartheid notion that the universities controlled by the Department of Education and Training must be for African students only, was maintained through the 1980s and the 1990s. Their student enrolment was close to 100% African in 1990 and 98% African in 1993.

The University of the Western Cape and the University of Durban-Westville were different. In their early years they were, like the 'universities for Africans', institutions that supported the basic ideology of the National Party government. By 1990, however, the tight government control of these two universities had begun to slip. During the 1980s, both had rejected their founding apartheid principles with the effect that Durban-Westville (which was supposed to be an Indian 'own affairs' university) had an Indian enrolment of 59% in 1990 and only 53% in 1993, while Western Cape (which was supposed to be a coloured 'own affairs' university) had a coloured enrolment of 68% in 1990 and only 55% in 1993.

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### 2.1.3.3 Historically black universities in the TBVC countries

A further grouping of four historically black universities was linked to the 'independent republics' of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (the TBVC countries): the University of Transkei, North West University, the University of Venda and the University of Fort Hare, because each of these 'republics' had been established in a 'homeland for Africans' their universities enrolled mostly African students, many of whom came from the urban areas of the RSA, i.e. 'white South Africa'. In 1990, their combined enrolment was 14,000 and in 1993 it was about 20,000. The governments of these 'republics' treated the universities as an extension of the civil service and so held them under tight control at all times. The universities were regarded by these governments primarily as the training grounds for the civil servants and school teachers whom they required. As a consequence, they were authoritarian and instrumental like historically black universities in the RSA.



#### **2.1.3.4 Historically white technikons**

Seven institutions are clustered in this grouping: Cape Technikon, Free State Technikon, Natal Technikon, Port Elizabeth Technikon, Pretoria Technikon, Vaal Triangle Technikon and Technikon Witwatersrand. These seven institutions could not be divided into Afrikaans and English sub groupings. In terms of governance structures they were authoritarian institutions. They made little effort to 'play the permit system' and by 1990 a very high proportion of their students, 89%, remained white. By 1993, however, their proportion of white students had dropped to 75%. The historically white technikons were highly instrumentalist as far as knowledge was concerned. These institutions had no intellectual agenda other than that of offering vocational training programmes to young white South Africans.

#### **2.1.3.5 Historically black technikons in the RSA and TBVC**

These institutions fell into groupings consistent with those of the historically black universities:

- Two technikons were controlled by the national Department of Education and Training: Mangosuthu Technikon and Technikon Northern Transvaal. They were small, conservative institutions which had, in 1990, a 100% African student enrolment which totalled about 4,000. By 1993 their combined enrolment had increased to 8,000 students.
- Three technikons had been established in the TBVC countries towards the end of the 1980s: Border Technikon, Eastern Cape Technikon and North West Technikon. They had a combined, 100% African student enrolment of less than 2,000 by 1990 and of 3,500 by 1993.
- Two technikons were controlled by departments in the tricameral parliament, but before 1990, they had rejected their founding apartheid principles: ML Sultan Technikon (which was supposed to be an Indian 'own affairs' technikon) had an Indian enrolment of 73% in 1990 and 63% in 1993, and Peninsula Technikon (which was supposed to be a coloured 'own affairs' technikon) had a coloured enrolment of 73% in 1990 and only 58% in 1993. The intellectual agendas of these groupings of historically black technikons were similar to those of the

historically white technikons. They took their primary function to be that of offering vocational training programmes to young black South Africans. They undertook no research and offered little by way of postgraduate training.

#### **2.1.3.6 Distance education institutions**

During the 1980s South Africa had two dedicated distance education institutions, one of which was described as a university (the University of South Africa, also known as Unisa) and one as a technikon (Technikon South Africa, also known as TSA). Both were controlled during the 1980s by the House of Assembly in the tri cameral parliament. However, since their students studied entirely off-campus, these institutions were not affected by the permit system and could enroll any black applicant who qualified for admission to one of their programmes. Both institutions were governed during the period up to 1994 by councils and executives that were supportive of the apartheid government. Consequently, the University of South Africa was more akin to historically white Afrikaans-medium than historically white English-medium universities

Under apartheid, higher education in South Africa was designed to establish the power and privilege of the ruling white minority. Higher education institutions established in the early part of the century (Fort Hare, UCT, Wits) were incorporated into a system which was subsequently shaped, enlarged and fragmented with a view to serving the goals and strategies of successive apartheid governments. By 1994, the landscape of 36 higher education institutions included ten historically disadvantaged universities and seven historically disadvantaged technikons designated for the use of black (African, coloured and Indian) South Africans, while ten historically advantaged universities and seven historically advantaged technikons were designated for the exclusive development of white South Africans. Two distance institutions catered for all races.



## **2.2 Legislative Framework in the post apartheid Higher Education.**

### **2.2.1 The National Educational Policy Initiatives (NEPI)**

NEPI developed the Post-Secondary Education report that formed the basis for the development of much of the policy on higher education during the 1990s. Cloete, N., Fehnel, R., Maasen, P., Moja, T., Perold, H. and Gibbon, T.<sup>3</sup> write “this peoples education project put together education activists and trainee policy experts in a participatory, consultative and argumentative process”. In 1993 NEPI reported on topics related to transformation in South African Education.

The Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (UDUSA) established a policy forum that enabled organisations and its member institutions to participate in the debates about transforming education (UDUSA, 1994).

The Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994) set out proposals for ANC policy on education and training. The document states the goal as follows: “The challenge that we face at the dawning of a democratic society is to create an education and training system that will ensure that the human resources and potential in our society are developed to the full”<sup>4</sup> The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) started operating in 1995 and was set up by the new government. The central proposal of the NCHE was that South African higher education should be massified – an attempt to resolve the equity-development tension. The final NCHE Report released in July 1996 included the following principles:

- equity in the allocation of resources and opportunities
- redress of historical inequities
- democratic, representative and participatory governance
- balanced development of material and human resources
- high standards of quality
- academic freedom

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<sup>3</sup> Cleote, N., Fehnel, R., Maasen, P., Moja, T., Perold, H. & Gibbon, T. (Eds), “Transformation of Higher Education system, Centre for Higher Education”, (CHET, 2002), pp.94.

<sup>4</sup> African National congress (ANC), “A Policy Framework for Education and Training”, (Umanyona Publications, 1994), pp.2.

- institutional autonomy
- increased efficiency and productivity

The plan called for expanded access within the limits of public funding, development of a single coordinated system of higher education including universities, technikons, colleges and private institutions, an expanded role for distance education, three-year national and institutional higher education plans, development of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF), enhanced research efforts, capacity development in new structures at the national level within the Ministry of Education, and a new funding formula with both a revised equitable funding formula and earmarked funding for programmes that meet vital national policy objectives .

### **2.2.2 The Green Paper**

The Green Paper focused on transformation both to overcome the inequities of the past and to develop a higher education system so that it would make a far greater contribution to social, economic, and political development (DoE, 1996). The Green Paper endorsed the NCHE's recommendation to establish a single coordinated higher education system. An important addition to the Green Paper focused on restructuring higher education to foster economic development. Moja and Hayward<sup>5</sup> state that the most contested change to the NCHE's recommendations had to do with governance. The report disagreed on the necessity for the Higher Education Forum (HEF) and Higher Education Council (HEC). The HEC was thus limited to an advisory role and the HEC and HEF were combined into a new body called the Council for Higher Education (CHE).

### **2.2.3 National commission on Higher education**

The formal process of higher education policy formulation began when National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was established by presidential proclamation at the end of 1994. Its report, *A Framework for Transformation*, submitted in September

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<sup>5</sup> Moja, T. & Hayward, F.M. (2000), "Higher Education Policy development in Contemporary South Africa", *Higher Education Policy*, 12(2002) 335 – 359, New York.

1996, rested on three 'pillars' for a transformed higher education system.<sup>6</sup> First, in order to satisfy the needs of equity, redress and development, a policy of increased participation was required. This should be achieved, in the NCHE's view, through change from an elite higher education system to a mass higher education system: i.e. a process of 'massification'. Acknowledging that increased participation would bring with it new administrative arrangements and significant expenditure, a single coordinated higher education system was proposed as the only way in which the inequities, ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the existing system could be eradicated. In addition, to tackle differences in quality across institutions and to steer overall quality improvements in the system the NCHE advocated a policy of quality assurance (QA) and quality promotion through various forms of capacity-building within a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Second, the NCHE believed that a policy of greater responsiveness was needed to ensure that higher education engaged with the challenges of its social context. This would require changes in the content, focus and delivery modes of academic programmes and research, adapted to the knowledge needs of the market and civil society. The NCHE's third policy pillar of increased cooperation and partnerships led to the recommendation of a model of 'cooperative governance', whose elements included the state in a supervisory role ; intermediary bodies between state and HEIs; HEIs characterised by internal constituency partnerships; and a set of linkages between HEIs and civil society.

In producing its recommendations, the NCHE had followed an extensive process of consensus-building, and received general acclaim for its work. However, a further consultative process around the NCHE's recommendations was needed before they might be turned into policy, and this was led by the Ministry and the new Department of Education (DoE). In terms of the 1996 Constitution, education at all levels *except the tertiary level* became a functional area of concurrent national and provincial competence.<sup>7</sup> Thus the DoE had administrative responsibility at national level for higher education and had established a Higher Education Branch (HEB, 1995) to provide much-

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<sup>6</sup>National Commission on Higher Education, "Report:A Framework for Transformation", (Pretoria: HSRC Press,1996),pp.5.

<sup>7</sup>Republic of South Africa (1996). Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No.108 of 1996.Government Gazette No.17678, Notice No.2083,18 December 1996. Pretoria: Government Printers: Schedule 4.

needed capacity in this regard. Following a Green Paper (December 1996) and a Draft White Paper (April 1997), the DoE managed to forge a broad consensus in the new higher education policy published as *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education* (July 1997).<sup>8</sup>

#### **2.2.4 The White Paper**

The *White Paper* set out policy in support of an intention to transform higher education through the development of a programme-based higher education system, planned, funded and governed as a single coordinated system. As a necessary means to overcome the deficiencies of the legacy of apartheid in higher education system, the *White Paper* affirmed the principles that must emphasize change initiatives: equity and redress; democratisation; effectiveness and efficiency; development; quality; academic freedom; institutional autonomy and public accountability. The *White Paper* accepted the three NCHE 'pillars' as consistent with these principles. However it did not accept the specific proposals of the NCHE to increase participation through massification, instead arguing for planned expansion of higher education, with efficiencies achieved in the context of fiscal constraints and using designated policy instruments.

The *White Paper* detailed the role of planning, funding and governance in a single, coordinated higher education system encompassing universities, technikons, colleges of education, nursing and agriculture, and private higher education providers. A national higher education plan including benchmarks for transformation, and a system of three-year rolling institutional plans, would facilitate responsiveness by the system, and ensure planned expansion linked to sustainability (as against the NCHE view of massification). A goal-oriented, performance-related funding system would align resource allocation to policy goals and objectives. A system of cooperative governance would see the state playing a steering and coordinating role, while autonomous HEIs retained authority over their resources but acquired obligations to be publicly accountable for their use. Governance structures at both system and institutional levels would be democratized.

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<sup>8</sup> White Paper, 1997.

### 2.2.5 The National Plan for Higher Education development

After the *White Paper* of 1997, there was a gap of some four years before the publication of the next key policy framework, namely: the *National Plan for Higher Education* in 2001. The *National Plan* itself referred to this ‘implementation vacuum’ as having arisen from an incremental approach to the execution of policy instruments. This had in turn ‘given rise to a number of significant developments, including unintended and unanticipated consequences, which, if left unchecked, threaten the development of a single, national, coordinated, but diverse higher education system’.<sup>9</sup>

The ‘significant developments’ referred to have a number of interrelated factors. First, there was an absence of regulatory instruments, as noted by the *Plan*. Second, some HEIs seized market opportunities: historically advantaged institutions (HAIs) undertook a range of entrepreneurial initiatives to position themselves advantageously. Third, rapid shifts in student enrolments occurred, with African and women student numbers in HAIs rising significantly, while enrolments at most historically black universities (HBUs) declined sharply<sup>10</sup>. This decline was in part due to financial constraints facing students in these institutions: historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) had increased enrolments without initial concern for fee recovery, on the assumption that a broad programme of redress funding would eventuate. Other factors allowed students greater choice of institution: these included the opening up of higher education access after the early 1990s; student and parental perceptions of declining quality at HBUs; increased competition from private providers; and expansion of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). The net result of unplanned change was a set of HEIs whose differentiation, while overtly linked to developments in the market, was also directly linked to differences engendered by apartheid.

As a consequence of these developments, in 1999 the Minister of Education sought the advice of the CHE on the optimal size and shape of the higher education system, setting

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<sup>9</sup>National Working Group 2001. *The Restructuring of the Higher Education System in South Africa: Report of the National Working Group to the Minister of Education*. Government Gazette No.23549, 21 June 2002. Pretoria: Government Printers.

<sup>10</sup>D.Cooper and G. Subotzky, “*The skewed Revolution: Trends in South African Higher Education 1988 to 1998*” (University of Western Cape, 2001).

in motion a range of policy developments that ultimately led to proposals for institutional mergers and incorporations to be implemented in 2004 and 2005. The *National Plan* itself was in part a response to the CHE report on size and shape, and provided the framework and mechanisms for restructuring the higher education system to achieve the vision and goals of the *White Paper*. In essence, it rejected the CHE's proposed differentiation through distinct institutional types, instead proposing differentiation through mission and programme mix variances structures at both system and institutional levels would be democratised.

### **2.2.6 The Higher Education Act**

The higher education act 1997<sup>11</sup> gave legal form to the values, principles and core concepts of policy, making provision for:

- The establishment, declaration, merger and closure of public HEIs. The Act gave the Minister of Education powers to establish, declare, merge and close public HEIs, subject to consultation with the CHE and notice through the Government Gazette.
- The *Act* set out statutory provisions for the roles, responsibilities and composition of institutional councils, senates and as an innovation of South African higher education governance institutional forums which would advise the council on all issues affecting the HEI, and specifically on issues of institutional culture and transformation. The *Act* enabled the Minister to appoint with the advice of the CHE an independent assessor to investigate and report on any public HEI encountering governance difficulties, including financial or other maladministration.
- The *Act* stipulated that the Minister of Education must determine funding policy for public HEIs including redress measures after consulting the CHE and with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance. It also stipulated that HEIs must furnish an annual report on governance, together with audited statements of income and expenditure, and a balance sheet and cash flow statement.

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<sup>11</sup>Republic of South Africa (1997). Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997. Government Gazette No.18515, Notice 1655, 19 December 1997. Pretoria: Government and Printers.

- The *Act* stated that the Minister must determine a language policy for higher education, to guide institutional language policies.
- The *Act* set out arrangements for the registration of private HEIs.
- The *Act* abolished the University and Technikons Advisory Council (AUT, now replaced by the CHE), and made provision for procedures to abolish at any future date the statutory status of the Committee of University Principals (CUP), Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP) and the Matriculation Board.

Since its promulgation in 1997, the *Higher Education Act* has been frequently amended (every year since 1999).<sup>12</sup>

### **2.3 Reforms and objective of higher education under the new government.**

To understand the major changes or reforms that have taken place in South African higher education after apartheid, it is important to understand why these changes have been introduced into the higher education system. There is a multitude of reforms that have transformed higher education in South Africa.

#### **2.3.1 ANC Policy**

The ANC education and training policy document (1994)<sup>13</sup> outlines the policy shift from apartheid to post-apartheid education. Along with general education conditions of freedom and fairness, it sought numerous changes such as lifelong and adult learning, and to skill the population. The most relevant of its policy position was its orientation to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994), which is asserted in the context of an outmoded higher education funding system. Higher education was seen as being in need of reconstruction and redevelopment, and in particular the development of capacity, resources and a student financial aid system. The policy was affirmative-action oriented, with priority given to the most disadvantaged groups, including rural and gender constituencies, as well as to initiate national youth leadership and development initiatives.

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<sup>12</sup> Amendments are Republic of South Africa (1999). Higher Education Amendments Act No.55 of 1999. Government Gazette No. 20651, Notice 1399, 19 November 2000. Pretoria, Government Printers; Republic of South Africa (2000) Higher Education Amendment Act No 54 of 2000. Government Gazette No 21784, Notice 1196, 22 November 2000. Pretoria, Government Printers; Republic of South Africa (2001). Higher Education Amendment Act No 23 of

<sup>13</sup> A Policy Framework for Education and Training, Draft. ANC, 1994. Chap.'s 1, 2, 3 & 24.

This provides the context for higher education redress of the imbalances of race, gender, population and discipline-related racial distortions. Race figures reflect this distortion, with higher education having 50% whites but only 10% Africans in the system.<sup>14</sup> Other distortions include poor HDI finance and research capacity, and the bias that most black students are registered in the humanities, with the result that the majority of the population obtains insufficient skills in hard sciences. Thus, the ANC saw it necessary to transform higher education for economic and cultural growth, and to enhance a democratic political system. It specifically sought to include democratic freedoms and responsibility in a “single, flexible educational system, that falls under a single qualification structure” in order to facilitate quality, mobility, flexibility and effective education at all South African institutions. These were absent during apartheid, due to huge racial and ethnic divisions, with differences in location, research and output.

The following objectives are notable in the ANC vision:

- To expand the higher education system for national development needs, and to redress systems inequalities between historically black and white institutions<sup>15</sup>; and
- To review the university funding formula, increase intake of disadvantaged students, and establish new student finance policy through bursaries, loans, scholarship and a graduate tax.

The priority was on access for disadvantaged students and this end the admission criteria of race, gender, class, disability and geographic disadvantages, apart from human resource development.<sup>16</sup> The idea was to widen education to include as many constituencies as possible, through various strategies (including technological strategies and by widening the ambit of educational forms), through various new and developing structures, and through the call for a national commission on higher education to

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<sup>14</sup> The terms “African”, “white”, “Indian” and “coloured” are used in their apartheid context (Africans have the least access to higher education); while “black” refers to all “population groups” except whites. Students at HDIs have been and still are predominantly African.

<sup>15</sup> “Historically white institutions” are more developed, and historically black institutions less so.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 116/7



investigate the higher education system. In sum, the ANC was clear about changing crucial aspects of the system.

### **2.3.2 Processes leading up to the Higher Education Act (1997)**

The NECC, a multi-constituency civic body formed in 1985, negotiated and contested for policy against the apartheid regime, but due to political resistance during apartheid (and the resulting threats, arrests and legal restrictions by the state), policy formulation was slow to develop. Policy discourse only got on track after the implementation of the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI),<sup>17</sup> charged by the NECC to research national education policy in the new context of an emerging democratic order. After two years of research, dialogue and debate, with no pressure to confirm the policies of the mass organizations, 160 working papers were produced. The final NEPI Report was submitted to the NECC (1992), at a crucial historical juncture, when the transition became possible, and when freedom was granted to political prisoners by the then president of S.A. (F.W. De Klerk).

NEPI's basic principles were non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, a unitary system and redress. It prioritised areas of race, gender, staff and institution. It notably suggested a 20% fixed government education fund and an education bank.<sup>18</sup> Its research ranged from knowledge, its transmissions and access to it, and an overview of post-secondary education, while carefully weighing out policy choices. In sum, NEPI cited critical choices for a new higher education system, of which the following are relevant.

- A differentiated or an equalised post-secondary education system;
- How to envisage state-higher education relations (leverage, direction or supervision), for maximum freedom or limited autonomy for institutions;
- To continue with the trinary system (colleges, technikons and universities) or a unitary structure that does not differentiate between these structures; and

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<sup>17</sup> *National Education Policy Investigation Post-secondary Education, Oxford/NECC, Cape Town, 1993.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* chapter 6.

- Modified equal access (access to some form of higher education) or an equal opportunities option (students simply compete for higher education places, despite their backgrounds).

Crucially, NEPI linked development notions to the post-secondary education system by emphasizing redress. Yet NEPI asserted that redress was insufficient for economic growth (as in the rest of Africa), leaving responsiveness to development needs of excluded communities to recomposing of governance structures. Economic revitalisation would evolve by development plans, coordination by private and public sectors, and by deciding on the unity of teaching and research (or the creating of academies for cutting edge knowledge), to develop technical and other education, to train people for a modern economy and for growth. Moreover, NEPI sought to access avenues to knowledge for the oppressed, to increase graduate outputs and national research and development potential for a more coordinated system.

NEPI's research was massive, and some shifts occurred towards marginalised constituencies (HDIs and students). However, this is blurred by other factors. It suggests options and the balancing of options, but was too careful about making policy choices and recommendations about the system. Its "modified option" is simply a revamp of UDUSA's position of allowing "some" kind of post-school education, if university access is not availed. Directed redress was not considered economically and socially beneficial. It called for balancing access, quality and development, and for skills redress at universities, but did not mention redress for HDIs and students. The NEPI options do not do sufficient justice to both the apartheid legacy and to the ANC and UDUSA responses. A national bank could also have been important. NEPI's ambiguity on redress, and its suggestion that redress could not be part of a multi-pronged strategy for growth, fails to resolve a crucial aspect of apartheid's legacies.

### **2.3.3 The Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (UDUSA) and its Policy Forum**

UDUSA's position is crucial, due to its resistance to apartheid, and in its contribution to an alternative policy vision. Its various commissions, campaigns, workshops and conferences<sup>19</sup> had a twin focus in the context of a newly emerging political dispensation, i.e., to articulate higher education policy and to focus on excluded constituencies, two of which were disadvantaged students and HDIs. The context of this was an education crisis, from which arose the multi stakeholder based National Education Crises Committee (NECC) which gave rise to the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), which in turn produced a massive amount of research on education. UDUSA espoused non-racialism, non-sexism and redress. Singh and Cloete,<sup>20</sup> who participated in the UDUSA Policy Forum, stress "four pillars of democracy, efficiency, equity and development". The latter two are noteworthy for purposes of this discussion. Equity relates to access to material resources for disadvantaged students, and development is a component of the system, since equity and redress make it so, with the rejoinder of applying a singular notion of development in all policies and contexts. The justification for the four pillars outlined above, includes the following.

- Rather than to constrict higher education (as with mergers later), it needs to expand with more students, colleges, technikons and continuing education. However, because of the challenges of globalisation there should not be more universities or more technological and managerial change.
- Access and redress relate to economic growth (in contrast to NEPI's position cited earlier). UDUSA cited affirmative action, gender sensitivity and "some form of access" (rather than universal access to universities) to post-secondary education as a universal right.
- Though differentiation structures related to apartheid privilege, it was necessary for redress and for a flexible response to development and effectiveness.

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<sup>19</sup> Transforming S.African Universities," UDW, 1-3rd July, 1992. Conference programme, UDW, Natal.

<sup>20</sup> Singh and Cloete, "Four Pillars for Higher Education in South Africa," in Bunting I., *Reconstructing Higher Education in South Africa, Selected Papers, the UDUSA Policy Forum*, UDUSA, Johannesburg. 1994.

- The system needed to be reshaped and articulated, for a restructuring of curriculum, and to improve the spread of research and development.

Both NEPI and UDUSA's together view accountability, governance, autonomy and academic freedom, as fundamentals. They reflect a vision and structure, with shape, size, provision, governance and access articulated in principle. The stress is on excluded communities, central to which is redress. Furthermore, the following aspect of UDUSA's response to the "sketchy White Paper" on higher education is revealing.

The White Paper "lacked a strong assessment of the system", when it should redress apartheid imbalances, align student numbers to population numbers, and have an "effective and unbiased system among other articulating principles". The White Paper is also seen as lacking a method of implementation, and did not make the choice between equal opportunity (market based) and equity that related to equality conditions. The White Paper remained too cautious about budget costs, while for UDUSA, "education was central to achieve RDP goals and to invest in the future without compromising on disadvantaged communities". The White Paper also did not consider an equality model in pre-higher education and an equal opportunity model thereafter.<sup>21</sup>

Among other calls relating to labour relations, UDUSA sought to "restructure and unify a fractured system" (not merely simply to coordinate as the White Paper saw it). According to UDUSA, the White Paper failed to broaden the parameters of development, and did not articulate the functions of science and technology, and of reconstruction and development. It also failed to locate its place in a differentiated economy, which needed differentiated skills and knowledge structures. The view of UDUSA's policy forum, as outlined below, gives more clarity in this regard.

UDUSA's Policy Forum, a gathering of activists and academics<sup>22</sup> gave detailed response on the matter.<sup>23</sup> It accepted the ANC's broad vision, but added (lifelong) access to higher

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 9.

<sup>22</sup> Wits, UCT, Unibo, UDW, UWC, Rhodes, UN, F. Hare, OFS, Zululand, SAAD & SACHED participated.

education for reconstruction, effectiveness and human resource development, and for redressing historical imbalances. Apart from basic principles for a new higher education system, it sought a diverse and flexible expansion, in various forms, to meet the public demand for higher education. It suggested a national physical audit of higher education, a differentiated fee structure for both advantaged and the disadvantaged. Restructuring could be another form of redressing access for students by providing a range of opportunities for further education and skills education. The government had to choose between an individual access to lifelong learning and training, and an equal opportunities model. The former gave unequivocal access to higher education, regardless of educational level, and the latter equalised opportunities but without providing universal access. The policy recommendations of UDUSA were consistent with both. The Forum supported students' call to legislate affirmative action with institutional targets, a central admissions centre, to upgrade maths and science programmes, and for skills redistribution, with the emphasis on (gender) redress. It also sought to prevent Afrikaans from being used as an obstacle to university access, and special development programmes including country-wide in service programmes, among a host of suggestions relating to higher education staff, their skill levels and gender related issues, and even it sought a review of staff recruitment, retention and promotions. Apart from its call to establish various government structures, it sought for democratisation of the system, and for the establishment of transformation forums to negotiate change. It also called for revamping the curriculum for reskilling, problem solving, learning outcomes, with research links to RDP functions, systems articulation and economic growth as well as social justice in a changing global environment.<sup>24</sup> The aim was for more relations between multiple sectors and players, and to increase higher education's basic and applied research funding (important for both students and HDIs), and to increase higher education access for blacks and women to higher level research training, and to increase productivity.

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<sup>23</sup> Bunting I., (ed.), *Ibid.* pp. 77-83.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 82-3.

UDUSA's contribution is thus significant in developing policy and research on higher education, with a focused on higher education expansion. UDUSA may not have boldly asserted student empowerment, but stressed redress and development. UDUSA emphasised autonomy, accountability and academic freedom, and attempted a critique of the White Paper. Yet, it did not call for a student charter or for a vision to frame for students' visions and aspirations, or even for an increase and development of black post-graduates. Moreover, the White Paper ignored black staff (who were mainly at HDIs at the time), and the equal opportunities model impacts mostly on students, due to its market effects, with the result that they are marginalised.

#### **2.3.4 SASCO's response to the Green Paper on Higher Education**

The South African Students Congress (SASCO) also responded to policy formulation in the period (1992-2002) and was centrally involved in resistance to apartheid policies. SASCO took the lead through its critique of the Green Paper (1997),<sup>25</sup> a precursor of White Paper. While the Green Paper articulated equity, democracy and NEPI principles outlined earlier, SASCO saw it as excluding principles of non-racialism and non-sexism, with no "policy on language and curriculum", and no vision of a "societally contextualized transformation". It ignored the liberation movement and students, as argued by SASCO, due to a union of three areas of thinking: NCHE, Growth and Redistribution (GEAR), which is S.A.'s economic policy but which is seen as "growth without redistribution" by the largest national union (COSATU), and structural adjustment policies (led by the IMF and the World Bank).

For SASCO, this entails an economic policy that is neo-liberal in goal, with a small focus, low taxes, low public budgets, and low government spending in the context of unequal international trade, south-north technological gaps, and globalisation of the information economy.

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<sup>25</sup> SASCO, "Submission on the Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation," 15 March 1997. Photocopy. Source: SASCO head office, Johannesburg.

Furthermore, the Green Paper is seen to “perpetuate neo-colonialism” by ignoring the role of multi-nationals. The post-apartheid state reflected the conditionalities of trade liberalisation, as in its support of the privatisation of state assets, thereby perpetuating the global gap between the north and the south. Democratic discourse is used by this state, without linking it to “people’s education”, the historical forerunner to post-apartheid education. Furthermore, “development” is seen to be narrowly economic.

Moreover, SASCO criticised the Green Paper’s funding policy, its non-alleviation for disadvantaged students, its disregard for problems relating to institutional inequalities, but called for a halt to the drain to national resources (as in the non-repayment of student loans). While admitting the strengths of the Green Paper (such as its attempt at aligning student numbers with national targets), SASCO pointed to the dangers of restricted student access through such alignments. SASCO’s suggestions included comprehensive institutional planning, affirmative action, remedial programmes, monitored academic development funds, resistance to privatisation, and more clarification of the definition of the notion of “higher education massification” to be underpinned by access and guided by RDP, especially for rural communities. It also echoed UDUSA’s call for language barriers to be removed, but differed from the latter in calling for a state control model and seeking to have the principle of free education as a long-term policy.

Although SASCO clearly stated that students’ views were not being considered, SASCO’s idealism remains problematic, especially its request for free higher education, even in the long term. One alternative to free higher education would be to redirect funds from some of the dysfunctional Sector Training Authorities (SETAs), though this may not be sufficient for universal free higher education. SASCO’s call for state control of higher education may be appealing for HDIs in the short term, but it is problematic because it impedes university autonomy. However, SASCO’s views underlined the dilemma of crises-ridden historically black and rural institutions, and the need to work on more effective, productive and quality institutions there. It is in this context that there is a need for “joint policy efforts” (Jansen, 2001) as one approach to the problem at HDIs.

Both UDUSA and SASCO gave high priority to policy to create and sustain social and developmental spaces for HDIs and students in the process of higher education development and progress. Both aimed for more participation in higher education, especially among black students. UDUSA sought to generate more skills and post-school phases for school leavers, recognising that more finance was needed for higher education, and discerned a need for a differential fee structure based on affordability criteria. Redress for historically marginalized persons and institutions, including students and HDIs, to participate in the rebirth of the sector were pivotal to the policies of both UDUSA and SASCO. While UDUSA did not clearly state its position on student participation in higher education in the choice between “rights versus equal opportunities”, UDUSA did at least assert that the new government had to choose between the two. UDUSA may have kept the two models too distinct with an either/or choice, excluding their usage in different areas for different purposes. Both student and staff formations were acutely aware of issues of access and democratization. They thus followed the ANC policy to its logical conclusions in trying to specifically cater for students and HDIs. However, post-1994 practice had not complied with such suggestions.

#### **2.4 Transformation of Higher education**

Education is, indeed, a crucial arena of transformation and vital to economic and social transformation and development. Having inherited a higher education ‘system’ profoundly shaped by social, political and economic inequalities of a class, race, gender, institutional and spatial nature, South Africa’s new democratic government committed itself to ‘transforming’ higher education as well as the inherited apartheid social and economic structure and institutionalizing a new social order. Indeed, over the past fifteen years virtually no domain of higher education has escaped scrutiny and been left untouched, and there have been a wide array of ‘transformation’ oriented initiatives.

There has been considerable increased in Student enrolments from 473,000 in 1993 to some 737,472 in 2005. There has also been an extensive deracialisation of the student body, overall and at many institutions. Whereas in 1993 African students constituted 40% (191,000), and black students 52% of the student body, in 2005 they made up 61%



(449,241) and 75% respectively of overall enrolments.<sup>26</sup> And also been commendable progress in terms of gender equity. Whereas women students made up 43% (202,000 out of 473,000) of enrolments in 1993, by 2005 they constituted 54.5% (402,267 out of 737,472) of the student body.<sup>27</sup>

In relation to the *National Plan* goal of 40% enrolments in Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), 30% in Business and Commerce (BC) and 30% in Science Engineering, and Technology (SET), there have also been positive shifts from 57% HSS:24% BC:19% SET in 1993 to 42% HSS:29% BC:29% SET in 2005<sup>28</sup>. With respect to teaching-learning, research and community engagement, in a number of areas of learning and teaching, institutions offer academic programmes that produce high quality graduates with knowledge, competencies and skills to practice occupations and professions locally and anywhere in the world. Various areas of research are characterized by excellence and the generation of high quality fundamental and applied knowledge for scientific publishing in local and international publications, for economic and social development and innovation, and for public policy. In a variety of areas, there are also important and innovative community engagement initiatives that link academics and students and communities. A national quality assurance framework and infrastructure has been established and quality promotion and capacity development have been implemented since 2004. These developments have significantly raised the profile of quality issues across the sector, and have linked notions of quality in teaching and learning, research and community engagement to the goals and purposes of higher education transformation. A new goal-oriented, performance-related funding framework has been instituted. Furthermore, an efficient and effective National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has been successfully established and expanded as a means of effecting social redress for poor students. The number and average amount of NSFAS awards have increased steadily over the years.

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<sup>26</sup> Council on Higher Education 2004 and Department of Education 2006.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Minister of Education 2001, Council on Higher Education and Department of Education 2006.

Overall, South African higher education shows much promise with respect to knowledge production and dissemination, to contributing to social equity, economic and social development and democracy, and to the development needs of the Southern African region and the African continent.

#### **2.4.1 Differentiation and Diversity**

Differentiation and diversity in higher education is a wide diversity of economic and social imperatives, needs and challenges to which higher education is required to be socially responsive. South African universities admit students with different abilities. Beyond the minimum standards that all universities must adhere to, qualifications are of different standards and programmes. It is, therefore, simply not true that all academic departments and all South African universities are the same in all respects. South African universities are different from one another. This is notwithstanding the provision of merger and recapitalization funding and a new funding formula that introduced aspects of institutional redress funding. Missions, qualifications and programmes, kinds of research, entrance requirements, and so forth. There is no virtue in homogeneity, where every university seeks to be the same and to pursue exactly the same goals and functions.

The 1997 *White Paper* makes clear that ‘an important task in planning and managing a single national co-ordinated system is to ensure diversity in its organisational form and in the institutional landscape, and offset pressures for homogenisation’. Four years later the *National Plan* proclaimed its commitment to ‘achieving diversity in the South African higher education system’, and ‘to diversify the system in terms of the mix of institutional missions and programmes that will be required to meet national and regional needs in social, cultural and economic development’.

#### **2.4.2 Academic Visibility**

The issue of the “visibility” of South African universities is a question that has been raised in recent years in different ways by a number of prominent intellectuals, and public sector, business and civil society leaders. For some the question of the visibility of universities is essentially about the responsiveness of the universities. It is entirely legitimate to

question the responsiveness of universities. Universities are meant to advance the public good, and should be able to exemplify how their scientific and scholarly endeavors contribute to social equity and economic and social development and make a difference to the lives of people.

In the name of responsiveness, universities must serve purely utilitarian ends and become instruments of the economy, the labour market and skills production. However, as Mala Singh has forcefully argued, the responsiveness of universities cannot only be economic in character; especially in a developing democracy it has to be of a more complex and wider social character (Singh, 2001).<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, some critics have highly unrealistic expectations of universities as an instrument of social transformation. While for some the “visibility” of South African universities is related to their *responsiveness*, for others the question of visibility relates to altogether different. Manuel Castells, for example, argues that universities perform four major functions (2001: 206-212): Historically, they have played a major role as ideological apparatuses. As such, they are subject to ‘the conflicts and contradictions of society and therefore they will tend to express and even to amplify the ideological struggles present in all societies’.

### 2.4.3 Academic workforce

From the angle of employment equity and the current social composition of South African academic workforce, there is a serious and immediate challenge: Black academics constituted only 37% of the total academic staff of 15,315 in 2005, comprising between 12% and 90% of universities. Women academics comprised 28% to 52% of universities and overall made up 42% of academics.<sup>30</sup> The roots of this crisis of participation and under-representation of blacks and women are well known. However, there is another challenge which is growing and will become grave unless there is decisive action on the part of institutions and strong support from government. This is the retention and reproduction of a new generation of academics. This includes from the

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<sup>29</sup> Singh, M., “Re-inserting the 'public good' into higher education transformation”, *Kagisano, Vol.1*, pp. 7-22, 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Department of Education, 2006

perspective of the democratization of society the next generation of critical scholars and voices and public intellectuals.

It should be clear that higher education transformation and development and indeed the future of South African higher education will be powerfully shaped by whether and to what extent Higher education are able to maintain the current generation of academics and simultaneously ensure the reproduction (and transformation of the social composition) of the next generation of scholars.

#### **2.4.4 Freedom and Responsibility**

In any assessment of higher education and especially institutional level of transformation it is necessary to analyse how 'the available choices' have been formulated; how they have been argued and struggled over, and how, in what ways and to what extent South African universities have indeed innovated the 'just machinery' that provides 'opportunity to choose' and to make decisions. Further, to what extent universities have succeeded in building institutional cultures and configuring internal governance in ways that hold fast to the principles of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, academic self rule and democracy, while concomitantly addressing the imperatives of social equity and the requirements of public accountability and greater effectiveness and efficiency? Has, as it is claimed, an ideology and culture of 'managerialism' triumphed irreversibly and if so why, and with whose culpability and whose acquiescence? Or is there still scope to innovate the 'just machinery' that provides 'opportunity to choose' and to make decisions? But equally, which may ask is that, have universities and academics acknowledged the threats of 'the legacies of intellectual colonization and radicalization'<sup>31</sup>, and have they assumed the moral responsibility of the 'substantive duties to deracialise and decolonize intellectual spaces'<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> du Toit, A. "From Autonomy to Accountability: Academic Freedom under Threat in South Africa. *Social Dynamics*, 26,2000, p.76-133.

<sup>32</sup> Bentley, K, Habib, A and Morrow, S. " *Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Corporatised University in Contemporary South Africa*", (Pretoria: Council on Higher Education,2006).

## **2.5 The Social and Public value of Higher education**

Amidst the multiple competing demands of social transformation, reconstruction and development in post-apartheid South Africa, why should public resources and energy be directed towards higher education? The answer to this question lies in the fact that higher education and its constituent institutions have immense social and public value: they contribute to the good of society, and therefore should be accorded a share of public resources.

In successful national education and training systems in democratic countries, education equips learners with skills to absorb new knowledge and the desire to learn and continually expand knowledge. At the apex of these systems, higher education is charged with developing a citizenry capable of participating effectively in democratic processes, and thus enhancing the project of democracy; with producing intellectuals who can engage with the most intractable problems of society and so develop more generally the ability of citizens to participate politically, economically and socially; and with producing high-level skilled graduates and new bases of knowledge to drive economic and social development, and to enhance the overall levels of intellectual and cultural development.

In South Africa since 1994, a democratically elected government has set out to achieve 'a better life for all' by focusing on economic development, by seeking to reconstruct the entire social system, and by aiming to reintegrate successfully into the international community while taking a lead role on the African continent.

In this context of comprehensive transformation, the demands on higher education have been extensive. The *White Paper* of 1997 has set out a general framework policy for Higher education to fulfill. Therefore, in present South Africa, they must contribute and support the process of societal transformation outlined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), with its compelling vision of people-driven development leading to the building of a better quality of life for all. These purposes are:

- To meet the learning needs and aspirations of individuals through the development of their intellectual abilities and aptitudes throughout their lives.

- To address the development needs of society. Administration, trade, industry, science and technology and the arts.
- To contribute to the socialization of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens.
- To contribute to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge.

Within the context of these general purposes, the *White Paper* and other key policy documents such as the *National Plan of 2001* call urgently upon higher education to address the challenges of social equity, development, effectiveness and efficiency. Higher education is asked to provide equitable opportunities for learning and self development; to be responsive to societal needs, producing relevant knowledge and socially committed graduates; to contribute positively to the development of the country (and by extension, its region and continent); and to be publicly accountable for the manner in which it applies resources in the fulfillment of these roles. Such demands imply that the case for higher education in South Africa is a compelling one in principle, and that there is a concomitant strong rationale for public investment in higher education. While such a case and rationale are implicit in these policies and their goals, they were not explicit realities at the time the policies were written. By the mid-1990s, public confidence in the ability of higher education to deliver accountably while at the same time satisfying the requirements of the new order was low.

The lack of trust in specifically public higher education was the result of a number of factors. First, there was a perception that higher education institutions (HEIs) remained essentially fixed in their apartheid past. Second, there was concern about the quality of output and institutions. Third, numerous inefficiencies plagued the system, with many HEIs evincing governance and financial problems, inadequate financial systems, the unwarranted duplication of programmes and the lack of optimal use of infrastructure and human resources. Fourth, these problems of trust and accountability occurred in a new context, as private providers rapidly entered the threaten historical monopoly enjoyed by public HEIs.

Given that the deep distrust engineered by apartheid education continued to abide in the system after 1994, the rallying cry to higher education to contribute to transformation has been at the same time a cry to higher education to transform itself, in order to fulfil its potential for serving the needs of a democratic South African society.

### **2.5.1 Higher Education, Democracy and Social Justice**

The role of higher education in the defense and advancement of democracy is closely related to the manner in which it promotes good citizenship. As noted, this is an in-principle function accorded to higher education in the *White Paper*<sup>33</sup>. In practice, the proper execution of this role requires South African higher education to deliver academic programmes that encourage intellectual critique, and to ensure the relevance of these programmes wherever possible to South African social and development challenges. In exercising its core functions of teaching (developing critical thinking), research and community engagement, higher education can also support social policy development and the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation. In other words, it is able to contribute to society by engaging with the actual problems and challenges of social reconstruction and development, as well as by functioning as a social critic. This ability is essential to enhancing society's capacity to consolidate democracy and promote prosperity in the long term. The concept of a 'learning society' is proclaimed on democratic principles and processes which enable the engagement of broad social layers in learning, and which promote tolerance for differing viewpoints.

The premise is that democratic learning environments can tap the collective experience and wisdom of communities and so build society's capacity to sustain and renew itself. The value and legitimacy of higher education in South Africa must be judged by the extent to which it provides access and opportunities for all South Africans. In particular, higher education must provide evidence of opening the way to black South Africans (especially Africans); to women and other socially disadvantaged groups; and to nontraditional learners, including students from working-class and rural backgrounds and adults who possess work-related knowledge. The extent to which higher education

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<sup>33</sup> White paper 1994

promotes or frustrates equity and access will have a direct bearing on social and class stratification, and the nature of the labour market. If it can successfully create equitable opportunities, the higher education system is a potentially powerful agent for enhancing the life opportunities of increasing numbers of people over time. High-quality, equitable higher education promotes social mobility and the well-being of larger social constituencies, and thereby increases the stability of society as a whole.

### **2.5.2 Higher Education, Economic Growth and Development**

A central feature of South Africa's economic policy since 1994 has been a focus on meeting the challenge of international competitiveness. It has been eminently clear to policy-makers that an inability to compete globally will increasingly marginalize the South African economy, have profound effects on its rate of growth, and negative consequences for the social well-being and stability of South African society. For instance, the potential threats and opportunities of the 'network society', as conceptualized by Manuel Castells, may imply from a South African perspective that the acquisition of knowledge and ready access to new knowledge and technology create new global power relations to our disadvantage: those countries that can rapidly access knowledge and ICTs and adapt to their demands ('the network') will dominate those countries that cannot. The knowledge capacities of higher education, properly supported by an enabling policy environment and constructive inter-sectoral partnerships, can enable South Africa to stay on the competitive side of the digital divide.

Since 1994, South Africa has pursued a 'high skills, high growth' economic development path. Increased supply of high-level skills and person power is critical in such a scenario. Higher education therefore represents a much-needed capacity to alleviate the skills constraint on economic expansion. Such expansion and improvement is intended to promote the possibility of jobs for many less skilled and unskilled workers, and thus resulted in a net improvement of economic welfare and equity. South Africa's process of democratic transformation has placed new demands on state bureaucracy, with a particular need to develop an honest, effective, efficient and innovative public service. Higher education is equipped to play a major role in generating the high and medium



level capacities and skills required in the public sector, including conceptual, policy development, planning and implementation skills, and managerial, administrative and financial competencies and skill. In the context of South Africa's socio-economic transformation agenda, the development of socially responsive HEIs and of socially committed individuals with the critical intellectual capabilities to produce, disseminate and apply knowledge and technology, is both a short-term priority and a long-term policy imperative. Without investment in human resource development (HRD) and expanding opportunities for both young and adult learners, sustainable growth will be difficult, and competitive participation in the global equally, effective and efficient implementation of policies and strategies, and delivery of opportunities and services, will be compromised, and the achievement of a genuinely democratic and caring society will be frustrated.

The case for higher education is argued in the context of South Africa's challenges of social equity, economic and social development, and the building and consolidation of democracy. Through its fundamental roles of high-level teaching and learning, research and knowledge production, and community engagement, higher education can play a critical role in addressing these challenges. Public support, allocation of public resources, and public oversight, are required if higher education is to deliver constructively on its social and public purposes.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### ***Programmes and policies of Higher Education reform in South Africa***

### **3.1 Programmes**

#### **3.1.1 National Plan for Higher Education**

One of the ways to give practical expression to the objective of a better life is to pursue greater access, transformation and quality in the HE system.

In 2008/09, the Department of Education's budget totalled R18.5 billion, of which R15.1 billion was transferred to HE institutions as block grants or earmarked funds (for the NSFAS, foundation programmes, infrastructure or efficiency allocations).

The National Plan for HE seeks to expand enrolment by setting a target of a 20% participation rate by 2015. It proposed a shift in the balance of enrolments to a ratio of 40%: 30%: 30% in the humanities: business and commerce: science, engineering, and technology, respectively over the period 2001 to 2010.

The challenges of equity of outcomes are addressed by matching the increased access of black people and women with increased success in key disciplines as well as in postgraduate programmes. Institutions were directed to establish equity targets with an emphasis on areas in which black and women students were underrepresented and to develop viable strategy for ensuring equity of outcomes.

The plan proposes the restructuring and configuration of the institutional landscape of HE to create new institutional and organisational forms to address the racial fragmentation of the system as well as the administrative, human and financial capacity constraints.

#### **3.1.2 High Quality Academic Programme**

A new academic policy for HE, has been developed for discussion within the broad framework of National Qualifications Framework as administered by SA Qualification Authority. This draft policy attempts to place academic programmes at SA institutions within a broader internationalised context and seeks to bring about a measure of coherence and systematization in the present HE qualifications environment.

The HE Act of 1997 established a HE Quality Committee to develop and implement an approach towards ensuring quality in HE. In addition, the National Plan on HE stresses the importance of greater levels of regional collaboration between institutions in developing new learning programmes and makes certain collaborative arrangements mandatory. This is largely meant to eradicate and prevent unnecessary overlap and wasteful duplication within the same HE region. Furthermore, the NPHE requires each institution to develop a five year programme niche plan in terms of its institutional mission and focus.

However, large number of challenges awaits HE in this regard. Firstly, all HE institutions will have to develop ways to ensure the continuous evaluation and adaptation of their learning programmes to incorporate changing social and economic realities. In doing so they will have to develop partnerships and co-operation agreements with structures in business/industry and in civil society through which they can constantly reinterpret the suitability of their academic offerings. Secondly, the new quality assurance dispensation in HE in SA poses a number of challenges to HE. HE institutions will all have to develop well functioning systems of self evaluation and self-regulation, both in the academic and non-academic spheres

### **3.1.3 Adult Basic Education and Training**

According to the Development Indicators 2008, there has been a steady annual increase in the literacy rate from 2002. By 2006, 74% of adults were literate. Female literacy rates followed a similar trend and reached 73% in 2006.

Mass literacy campaign was officially launched in February 2008. Government will spend R6.1 billion over five years to enable 4.7 million South Africans to achieve literacy by 2010. The campaign is aimed at reducing adult illiteracy by:

- Mobilising potential learners, educators and other support personnel to participate in the mass literacy campaign.
- Developing learner and educator-support material.

- Setting up relevant systems at national, provincial and district level to facilitate national implementation of the campaign.
- Establishing and maintaining a database of 4.7 million learners and 40,000 educators over the campaign period. By August 2008, progress included the enrolment of 360,000 learners.
- Recruitment and training of volunteer educators, 2,800 supervisors and 150 coordinators.
- In August 2008, blind unemployed matriculants were trained to teach basic Braille literacy to blind adults. In October 2008, the campaign received an additional allocation of R107 million.

### **3.1.4 Human-Resource Development Strategy (HRDS)**

The revised Human-Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) for the period 2009 to 2014 was approved and implemented in April 2008.

The aim of this strategy is to achieve articulation between the subsystems (public-private and across government) for optimal achievement of systemic outcomes; and to facilitate a continuing analysis of HRD and the functioning of the labour market.

The intended outcomes will include improvements in the HRD Index and country ranking, and in the measure and ranking of economic competitiveness. The strategy includes the following commitments:

- Accelerating training output in priority areas to achieve accelerated and shared economic growth ;
- Ensuring universal access to high-quality and relevant education ;
- Improving technological and innovation capability in the public and private sectors ;
- Establishing efficient planning capabilities in the relevant departments and entities for the successful implementation of the HRDS in South Africa.

A monitoring and evaluation system will monitor the implementation of the strategy. A major review based on systematic evaluation studies and impact assessments will be conducted every five years.

### **3.1.5 The International community**

The international community's contribution to the transformation of education is important. The department co-operates with United Nations (UN) agencies and numerous donors to improve access to basic education, FET and HE.

Development co-operation with partners such as Flanders, France, Germany, Italy, the Japan International Co-operation Agency, Norway, the Danish Agency for Development Assistance, United States Agency for International Development, Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the Sweden International Development Agency, the United Kingdom's (UK) Department for International Development, the Netherlands, the Irish Agency for International Development, the Finnish Government and the European Union have been instrumental in the provision of technical and financial assistance to the national and provincial departments of education.

The Ministry of Education plays a leading role in developing the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Education and Training, which aims to achieve equivalence, harmonisation and standardisation of education in the region. International partnerships and South-South exchanges are fostered, particularly within the African continent.

The Ministry of Education chairs the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (AU), which is monitoring the implementation of the AU's Second Decade of Education Plan of Action (2006–2015). The department has a strong collaborative relationship with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. A key initiative of the collaboration is the development of national Education for All (EFA) action plans.

As part of regional consultations on implementation, the department participates in assessing progress in the elaboration of the EFA plans of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and exchanges information on best practices in the development of these plans.

### **3.1.6 Higher Education Libraries**

The HE libraries hold the bulk of South Africa's scientific and scholarly information resources and fulfill more than half of all inter-library loan requests. Pressure on HE libraries includes redistribution of educational resources, rising prices and declining student numbers. These libraries have responded by forming consortia, looking at access and exploring digital resources. Special libraries are libraries that consist of subject-specialised collections, including private organisations' libraries and libraries of government departments. Government made an additional R200 million available for libraries in 2008. Libraries were expected to:

- offer improved access to libraries through better staffing and more sensible opening hours; update informational resources, especially educational-support material;
- install new library infrastructure;
- promote children's literature;
- Stock more books in indigenous languages.

The Library Charter, unveiled in 2008, sets the new direction for the country's community libraries. R39 million has been set aside for the upgrading of public entities and the South African Library for the Blind.

### **3.1.7 Health Promotion**

Once a reliable picture of the burden of HIV/AIDS in the higher education sector is available, it will be possible to develop evidence-based policies and planning frameworks. These will set out the elements of a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS in the context of higher education, and will determine the scope of these interventions. HEAIDS has set in motion work to:

- Determine the HIV/AIDS risk profile for the higher education sector and for individual institutions.

- Develop an HIV/AIDS policy framework and a related framework for monitoring and evaluation of programmes.
- Establish the cost of implementing the package of interventions outlined in the policy framework to the scale required.
- Explore potential funding sources to meet the envisaged costs and ensure longer-term sustainability of HIV/AIDS programmes across the higher education sector.

However, creating a sustainable and viable programme to tackle HIV/AIDS on every front at campus level poses a challenge. In many cases, resource constraints have limited the scope of institutional responses to HIV/AIDS and will continue to do so unless they are acknowledged and addressed. HE AIDS has created a special working group, which includes representatives of National Treasury and the Department of Education, to find ways to provide adequate, sustainable funding for higher education HIV/AIDS programmes

### **3.2 The Policy Context of Higher Education**

The administration of education for Africans was decentralised into regions and self governing territories in 1968 and from 1976, four 'bantustans'. The various governments were responsible for African education at all levels and this included higher education. The Minister of Education and Training administered all African education, including HEIs designated for Africans. In terms, of the 1983 Constitution, all Coloured and Indian education became the responsibility of the Minister of Education and Culture. A second set of divisions was between institutional types: universities and technikons. However, the relationship of universities to apartheid society was highly particularised in legal and policy terms. Legally speaking, each university was a 'corporation' founded by an act of Parliament meaning that its functions were prescribed and could be terminated by the state. At the same time, in policy terms, a university was 'an independent sphere of societal relationships', meaning that for as long as it existed, the state could not interfere



directly in its affairs. Neither could the university interfere in the affairs of the state, for example, rejecting the state's designation of it for a particular 'race' group.<sup>1</sup>

In short, legal and policy provisions for higher education under the apartheid government were apparently meant to create a system of 'separate but equal' elements that catered for particular needs in parallel. The effect of this legal and policy framework was to engender a higher education system that was highly fragmented and uncoordinated; fundamentally inequitable; that was 'effective' only in terms of rigid categorizations imposed by the state; and whose duplications rendered it profoundly inefficient.

### **3.2.1 Aims of Higher Education Policy**

The pillars of the new South African HE policy framework are to increased access and raised participation rates, increased responsiveness to societal and economic needs, programme differentiation and the development of institutional niche areas, and a planning and coordination imperative.

#### **3.2.1.1 Single Nationally Coordinated System of HE**

The proposal in the new HE policy framework for a "single system" has strong international support. HE systems globally have witnessed dramatic growth in enrolments during the past two decades, particularly amongst traditional students in the fields of recurrent, continuing, and professional education and training the key access points to HE for the working class and other previously marginalized constituencies. This expansion and diversity in programme delivery has primarily been an economic response. The globalised knowledge economy has required a more educated and better trained work force, and this has been reflected in the massive expansion of paraprofessional and professional recurrent and continuing education. Technological change is occurring at such a rapid pace that any given state of occupational preparedness can be obsolete within years. This factor, in addition to the increased volume of information and specialist knowledge emerging, heightens the need for lifelong recurrent education.

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Bunting, "A Legacy of Inequality: Higher Education in South Africa", (Cape Town 1994), pp.18.

Therefore, The conceptual foundation for the formulation of the key pillars of the new South African HE policy framework is to provide the conceptual legitimation for, first, a strong emphasis on the need for a single system of HE (unlike the racially fragmented and rigid trinary system of the apartheid era) and second, a strong emphasis in the new policy on partnerships and responsiveness in the production of high-skills graduates and in the facilitation of the new mode of knowledge production. A quick studying of the key HE policy texts will confirm these influences. The key recommendation of the NCHE (1996b) was that “higher education in South Africa should be conceptualised, planned, governed and funded as a single co-ordinated system”<sup>2</sup>. The need for such a proposal arose because of what the NCHE perceived to be an absence of any sense of “system” in South African HE. Three majors’ systemic deficiencies were noted:

- There was a chronic mismatch between HE’s output and the needs of a modernizing economy.
- There was a strong inclination toward closed-system disciplinary approaches and programmes, which has led to inadequately contextualised teaching and research. The content of the knowledge produced and disseminated was insufficiently responsive to the problems and needs of the African continent, the southern African region, or the vast numbers of poor and rural people in South African society.
- There was a lack of regulatory frameworks, due to a long history of organisational and administrative fragmentation and weak accountability. This inhibited planning and coordination, the elimination of duplication and waste, the promotion of better articulation and mobility, and the effective evaluation of quality and efficiency.<sup>3</sup>

The 1997 *White Paper* on HE raised similar concerns; it argues that the current system of provision was too fragmented, uncoordinated, supply driven, and insufficiently responsive to national priorities.<sup>4</sup> All of the HE policy texts argue that a new regulatory framework is needed that will coordinate the HE band as a single coherent whole,

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<sup>2</sup> National Higher Education on Education, “A Framework for Transformation”, (1996, Pretoria), pp.89.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid pp.2.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Education (DoE), Higher Education Act, no.101 of 1997, (Pretoria, 1997), pp.18.

applying uniform norms and procedures with sufficient flexibility to allow for diversity in addressing the multiple needs of highly differentiated learner constituencies.

### **3.2.1.2 Increasing Access and Participation Rates**

The demand for equity in HE has been a cornerstone in the struggle against apartheid. The call for increased access and higher participation rates for Blacks in the HE system is a response to apartheid's inequities in education, as well as a response to globalisation's growing pressure for a more highly skilled future workforce. The NCHE (1996b) noted these massification imperatives by arguing that the emphasis on increased participation signified a shift away from an HE system that "enrols primarily middle class students into elite professional and scholarly pursuits, to a system characterised by a wider diversity of feeder constituencies and programmes".

### **3.2.1.3 Increasing access and participation rates.**

A third aim of the new HE policy framework also emphasis on increased responsiveness, indicating a shift away from "academic insularity, a closed system governed primarily by the norms and procedures of established disciplines, towards an open HE system which interacts more with its societal environment".<sup>5</sup> This new emphasis on responsiveness takes two forms. The first is responsiveness to community needs, which is usually incorporated in the outreach programmes, service learning, and the community sensitive curricula and research programmes of HE institutions. The second form is socio economic greater responsiveness to the demands of economic growth and technological development. The NCHE (1996b) noted that this new form of responsiveness was leading to dramatic changes within HE, particularly with regard to new forms of knowledge production. Knowledge production has become an "increasingly open system in which a number of actors from different disciplines and from outside HE participate. The value of knowledge is assessed not only on scientific criteria but also on utilitarian and practical grounds".

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<sup>5</sup>National Higher Education on Education, "A Framework for Transformation", (1996, Pretoria).pp.76.

There is significant evidence of the growth of these new forms of trans disciplinary research and knowledge production in the South African HE system, with more and more applied research and consultancy work seeking solutions to some of South Africa's most acute social and economic problems. The new HE policy framework seeks to encourage this greater responsiveness to community and socioeconomic need.

#### **3.2.1.4 Programme Differentiation**

Even though the NCHE proposed a single coordinated system with strong homogenising tendencies and central planning imperatives, it was difficult to emphasise the need for ongoing institutional diversity and flexibility regarding boundaries. The new system, according to the NCHE (1996b), will ensure diversity in terms of institutional missions and programme mixes. This should evolve in "terms of a planned process based on the recognition and pragmatic consideration of current institutional missions and capacities on the one hand, and emerging national and regional needs and priorities on the other" Differentiation of mission in a future system will be based on programmes, not institutional types. In the past, learner mobility was restricted by the rigid boundaries that separated the differing institutional types (colleges, technikons, and universities) and by the terminal qualifications on offer. Diverse course provision was constrained by a bureaucratically managed, unresponsive, and supply-led system of HE provision. In contrast, differentiation within a single nationally coordinated system will be based on institutions developing programme niche areas centres of excellence that provide them with a distinct character different from that of neighbouring institutions. This form of differentiation will not be entirely laissez-faire and market driven but will be linked to government human resources development planning and funding strategies and, ultimately, to the needs of the labour market and the country's future economic growth path.

### **3.2.2 Development Post Apartheid**

#### **3.2.2.1 Legal and Policy Frameworks**

In the post-1990 period, three initiatives began to develop for post-apartheid higher education policy. These were the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), a civil

society initiative with origins in the ‘people’s education’ movement; the Union of Democratic University Staff Unions (UDUSA) policy forum; and the Centre for Education Policy Development, linked to the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC developed a new national education policy framework, and pledged an ANC led government to appointing a national commission to formulate recommendations for transforming higher education. All of these initiatives emphasised five principles for higher education: non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy, redress and a unitary system. Some also highlighted the balance that higher education policy would need to achieve between equity and redress on the one hand, and between quality and development on the other, although the policy framework did not explicitly address policy trade-offs that might be needed, and did not initiate concrete strategies for redress within the higher education system.<sup>6</sup>

### **3.2.3 Other Policy Developments**

In addition to the legal and policy frameworks, a number of important subsidiary policy developments are in progress.

#### **3.2.3.1 Redress Policy**

Redress of past inequalities in higher education was a central issue in policy debates from the early 1990s, and was identified as a policy goal in the *White Paper* and *National Plan*. Over time, policy documents have come to distinguish between institutional redress: aimed at addressing the multiple apartheid-generated disadvantages embedded in institutional infrastructure and resources; and social redress: aimed at enhancing the position of individual students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Despite the symbolic prominence of the issue, and in the absence of a formal redress policy, concrete action to operationalise institutional redress has at times appeared to lag (although it is true that available redress funds also had to be used to bail out HDIs in financial distress, as in

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<sup>6</sup>Cloete, N, Fehnel, R, Maassen, P, Moja, T, Perold, H and Gibbon, T (eds) (2002). *Transformation in Higher Education: Global Pressures and Local Realities in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta: 94-96; Fisher, G (1998). ‘Policy, Governance and the Reconstruction of Higher Education in South Africa’. *Higher Education Policy* 11: 121-140: 121; Moja, T and Hayward, FM (2000). ‘Higher Education Policy Development in Contemporary South Africa’. *Higher Education Policy* 13: 335-359: 335-339.

1999/2000).<sup>7</sup> In late 2000, the Minister requested advice from the CHE regarding the development of a redress policy and strategy. Under the auspices of its Funding and Financing Standing Committee, the CHE sought:

- To review the development of the concept of institutional redress in higher education within a wider framework of transformation policy in contemporary South Africa.
- As part of this, to investigate its contemporary meaning and relevance and to arrive at an operational definition appropriate to the current context.
- To state specifically what the purpose and objects of institutional redress should be.
- To suggest mechanisms for the allocation of redress funds, and for the optimal time frame of a redress policy and appropriate monitoring and reporting mechanisms. The CHE submitted its advice in November 2003.

### **3.2.3.2 National Higher Education Information and Applications Service**

The Minister appointed a Working Group to develop an implementation plan for the NHEIAS proposed by the *National Plan*. Having evaluated existing central applications systems operating in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as in other countries (Ireland and the United Kingdom), the Working Group submitted its report in December 2002.<sup>8</sup> Its recommendations included: that all first-entry students local and foreign, contact and distance wishing to study at undergraduate level at any public HEI should apply only through the NHEIAS; that the NHEIAS should produce a handbook listing all programmes available to first-entry students, and should also supply career information; that applications should combine academic placement, student financial aid and student housing; that applicants should be permitted ranked choices not exceeding ten in number; and that HEIs should maintain their right to set the criteria for admissions, but should delegate to the central service the administrative application of the criteria to the pool of applicants. In response to a subsequent discussion document released by the Ministry, the

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<sup>7</sup> MoE 2001:11.

<sup>8</sup>Ministry of Education (June 2002).The Establishment of aNational Higher Education Information and Applications Services for South Africa. Report of the Working Group to the Minister of Education. Pretoria: Minister of Education(MoE).

higher education sector and its constituent HEIs voiced a number of concerns.<sup>9</sup> A second sectoral submission in March 2004<sup>10</sup> has argued for the establishment of a comprehensive higher education enrolment system that phases in a central information and applications service. This would link the service to the systemic functions of admissions regulation, in particular the management of minimum admissions thresholds (i.e. the current and future services of the Matriculation Board).

### **3.3 Policy on Restructuring of Higher Education Institutional Landscape**

In addition to public HEIs, a very small private higher education sector is also present. After 1990, there was a rapid and marked growth in private providers of higher education. While this was consistent with international trends, it also appeared to be fanned by a continued lack of policy to regulate the establishment and operation of the sector. By the end of the 1990s, the policy and legislative basis for the creation of a single, coordinated higher education system had been established. The Higher Education Act allowed for the incorporation of colleges into the higher education sector and the White Paper indicated that they would be incorporated in phases, beginning with the colleges of education. The Higher Education Act also stipulated the legal conditions for the registration of private HEIs and imposed various obligations upon them. Also by the end of the 1990s, the Department of Education (DoE) had required all institutions to develop three-year institutional rolling plans. It was clear from these that public HEIs were attempting, within their variable constraints, to respond to changed political, economic and social conditions. Some historically advantaged institutions (HAIs) had developed strong strategic planning and management expertise and had deployed their resources to respond to the non-traditional students' demand for higher education. Sources of funds had been diversified and income generated through non-traditional fee-paying students, research contracts and partnerships. Other HEIs had remained essentially residential and placed

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<sup>9</sup>South African University Vice-Chancellors Association and Committee of Technical Principals (March 2003). HE sector Response to the Report of the Working Group on the Establishment of a National Higher Education Information and Applications service(NHEIAS). A Joint SAUVCA-CTP Submission. Pretoria: South African University Vice-Chancellors Association and Committee of Technicon Principles(SAUVCA-CTP).

<sup>10</sup> South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association/Committee of Technical Principals (March 2004). Discussion Document Prepared for Meeting between SAUVCA-CTP Executive Committees and the Minister: 19 March 2004.

strong emphasis on excellence, postgraduate teaching and research. They had engaged in faculty and curriculum restructuring to increase efficiency and to respond more effectively to the range of competencies, skills and abilities required by the knowledge economy. Finally, certain historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) had been unable to reorient themselves as quickly and to the same extent as others. They had experienced irregular and differing degrees of instability because of governance conflicts, and some had severe declines in student enrolments. In combination, the range of developments signalled a highly mixed picture, but not necessarily one that was leading to a strategically differentiated set of HEIs. An obvious challenge was to ensure that the policy goal of a national, integrated and coordinated system was not compromised. In addition, enrolment patterns prompted many questions about the sustainability of the prevailing landscape of higher education: while it was clear that a broader spectrum of students was enrolling, they were, however, not enrolling in the anticipated increased numbers. Instead, student enrolment in higher education declined by 7% overall in 1999, compared to 1998. A major shift appeared to be occurring in enrolment patterns, with the main beneficiaries being contact technikons and the historically white Afrikaans-medium universities; and shifts were also occurring at the level of programmes.

### **3.3.1 Public Higher Education Restructuring**

The Minister of Education requested the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to provide recommendations on the optimal size and shape of the system. The CHE's report<sup>11</sup> *Towards a New Higher Education Landscape: Meeting the Equity, Quality and Social Development Imperatives of South Africa in the 21st Century* was released in June 2000. Some of its central findings included: that fragmentation of the system threatened to increase; that little meaningful coordination or cooperation had been achieved, while competitiveness between institutions appeared to have intensified; and that the sustainability of the higher education system, including the effective and efficient use of resources, required a reduction in the number of HEIs through 'combinations'. It argued that the 'current landscape and institutional configuration of higher education is inadequate to meet socio-economic needs and is no longer sustainable. South Africa does

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<sup>11</sup> CHE 2000: Annual Report of the Council on Higher Education.



not have the human and financial resources to maintain the present institutional configuration'.<sup>12</sup>

In responding to the report, the National Plan confirmed on the basis of a preliminary analysis of current enrolment trends and the institutional three-year rolling plans that 'the number of public higher education institutions in South Africa could and should be reduced'<sup>13</sup>. It did not take up the specific differentiation proposals of the CHE report, but proposed to main restructuring strategies, linked to the CHE report's view that institutional restructuring could take a number of forms. Accordingly, the National Working Group (NWG) was appointed in March 2001 to investigate and advise the Minister 'on appropriate arrangements for consolidating the provision of higher education on a regional basis through establishing new institutional and organisational forms, including the feasibility of reducing the number of higher education institutions'

The report of the NWG was delivered to the Minister in January 2002 and publicly released in February. It proposed a reduction from 36 to 21 institutions, providing a set of reasons for these based on a regional analysis of higher education provision in terms of quality, sustainability and equity. Reception of the NWG report included some strong concerns and criticisms. These included, for example, that the NWG had focused too narrowly on mergers; that the consultative process was inadequate; that the data upon which the recommendations were based were inaccurate; and that the benchmarks and performance indicators utilised were inappropriate. After a period of consultation and lobbying, and in some cases bitter encounters between Minister and institutions, some of whom threatened legal action, the Ministry's response to the NWG recommendations was taken to Cabinet at the end of May 2002 and subsequently set out in a Government Gazette<sup>14</sup> for public comment in June 2002.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid:51.

<sup>13</sup> MoE 2001:86-87.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Education (2002). 'Transformation and Restructuring: A New Institutional Landscape for Higher Education'. Government Gazette No. 23549, 21 June 2002. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Therefore, the Minister announced the establishment of a Merger Unit within the Higher Education Branch (HEB) of the DoE. Guidelines for institutions regarding the operationalisation of the merger process were issued in April 2003.<sup>15</sup> The mergers would occur in two phases: the first with effect from January 2004 and the second with effect from January 2005. Significantly, in the light of continuing concern about the overt and hidden costs of mergers, the Minister indicated government's commitment to providing the financial resources necessary to facilitate the mergers and to ensure the stability and sustainability of institutions, including funds to recapitalize institutions which did not have an adequate asset base to cover their liabilities.

### **3.3.2 Incorporation of Colleges into Higher Education**

In terms of the South African Constitution, all tertiary education is a 'national competence'. For colleges, the legal implication of the *Higher Education Act*<sup>16</sup> was that colleges could either be established as autonomous institutions or as sub-divisions incorporated into an existing HEI. From the mid-1990s, a range of processes was undertaken to determine how colleges would be incorporated into higher education.

#### **3.3.2.1 Colleges of Education**

A task team was appointed in August 1997, to investigate how to locate all teacher education within the higher education system. In reporting to the DoE, the task team put forward a range of possibilities, including that some colleges of education could become autonomous HEIs if they could achieve a minimum enrolment of 2,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, while others would become part of existing HEIs. An initial rationalisation of the colleges was undertaken by the regions, based on the outcomes of a national teacher education audit completed in 1995 (the number of colleges was reduced from 120 in 1994 to 50 in early 2000). Guided by a Transition Committee, colleges reduced their numbers further during 2000, as the regions rationalized to 25 'contact' colleges with 10,000 students who were earmarked for incorporation into higher education. The other 5,000 college students were enrolled in two distance colleges: the

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<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Education (April 2003). *Higher Education Restructuring and Transformation: Guidelines for Mergers and Incorporations*. Pretoria: Ministry of Education (MoE).

<sup>16</sup> Higher Education Act 1997: Section 21.2.

South African College for Teacher Education (SACTE) and the South African College for Open Learning (SACOL).

During 2001, all the colleges of education were incorporated into universities and technikons. The process was complex and contested. Key issues were whether HEIs would be willing to offer college programmes that did not 'fit' (especially primary education programmes); the supposed existence of a college culture and training model, which would be lost; and issues relating to staffing and labour relations. The *National Plan* has committed the DoE to finalising a National Teacher Education Plan with a national agenda for teacher education, development and training.

### **3.3.2.2 Private Higher Education**

After the mid-1990s, there was a proliferation of local and foreign private providers of higher education, as well as a complex array of partnership arrangements between public and private institutions. Reasons advanced to explain this included: substantial student interest in the types of programmes offered by private providers (particularly short courses, flexible modular programmes, and distance education); and perceptions of declining quality in public education and instability at public HEIs. In 1995, the NCHE estimated that approximately 150,000 students were enrolled in private HEIs<sup>17</sup>. By November 2000, one study<sup>18</sup> estimated that there were approximately 323 private and transnational institutions operating in the private higher education sector, and a number of public HEIs engaged in collaborative arrangements. Private higher education 'proper' has been estimated in 2004 to be at a headcount of between 30,000 and 35,000, comprising around 93 institutions and 382 programmes.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Council on Higher Education (2003a). *The State of Private Higher Education in South Africa*. Higher Education Monitor No 1. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education (CHE): 7.

<sup>18</sup> Mabizela, M, Subotzky, G and Thaver, B (November 2000). *The Emergence of Private Higher Education in South Africa: Key Issues and Challenges*: Discussion document prepared for the CHE Annual Consultative Conference. Bellville: Education Policy Unit, University of the Western Cape.

<sup>19</sup> Information Provided by the HEQC.

### **3.3.2.3 Merge of Higher Education**

The new public higher education landscape in South Africa is to consist of 22 public institutions: eleven universities, five ‘universities of technology’ and six ‘comprehensive institutions’. The new landscape incorporates a new institutional nomenclature, notably the terms ‘university of technology’ and ‘comprehensive institution’. Universities of technology are institutions formerly known as technikons, and so redesignated in October 2003. Comprehensive institutions combine both university type and technikon type programmes, and in some instances result from a university-technikon merger. The Minister requested advice from the CHE on the issue of nomenclature in September 2002. This was duly submitted in late 2003, although the report has not as yet been made public.

Amongst others, recommendations were made as to names for public HEIs in South Africa; criteria, in broad principle, for the use of designated protected names for HEIs; and processes and procedures for applying for recognition. There has been some debate about the extent to which this new institutional configuration renders void the old categories of HAIs and HDIs. It has been pointed out, for example, that of the twelve separate institutions, eight are HAIs who now enjoy freedom from the resource intensive burden of merger processes. In addition while part of the purpose of merging HAIs and HDIs is to achieve greater equity and redress in the system, success will depend on the effective formulation and implementation of redress policy and a new funding framework which incorporates redress measures.

### **3.3.3 Equity in the New Institutional Landscape**

With respect to institutional size, the mergers will create some very large institutions. In terms of 2001 headcount enrolments, seven institutions have enrolments of above 30,000; a further four will have above 20,000, six above 10,000 and five below 10,000. The new dedicated distance education comprehensive institution will have a huge headcount enrolment of 210,275. The two Pretoria institutions are next largest: the merged university of technology with 52,373 students and the University of Pretoria with 44,643 students. Apart from the latter, the largest nine institutions are all the result of mergers.

By comparison, the 2001 situation with respect to institutional size was as follows: the two dedicated distance education institutions were by far the largest: UNISA with over 133,000 and Technikon SA with over 68,000 enrolments. The University of Pretoria (without Vista Mamelodi) had over 41,000 and Pretoria Technikon over 38,000. A further seven institutions had between 20,000 and 30,000 enrolments, eight between 10,000 and 20,000, and 17 fewer than 10,000.

### **3.4 Financing**

The financing of higher education has three primary elements: the funding of students through the National Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS); public funding of higher education institutions (HEIs), and the models and mechanisms used for this; and the private income earned by HEIs through a range of channels such as student fees, investments, fund-raising through grants and donations, and various entrepreneurial activities.

In South African higher education, which is a mixed system of public and private HEIs, no public funding is made available for private providers. They rely on their own enterprise to remain financially afloat, although the regulatory framework requires them to give evidence of their financial health to government.<sup>20</sup> Public HEIs receive a large proportion of their total income from the state. Thus, on the one hand, public funding of higher education can be seen as the state's way of fulfilling its obligation to support higher education as a public good; on the other hand, funding provides government with a powerful instrument for steering the system in the direction of specific national policy goals and targets.

#### **3.4.1 Funding Models of Higher Education**

Funding models and mechanisms for South African public higher education, prior to 1994, were fragmented in accordance with the system's fragmented institutional landscape. Therefore, three sets of funding policies and practices were implemented, as follows:

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<sup>20</sup> Higher Education Act 1997: Chapter 7.

#### **3.4.1.1 Formula funding:**

This form of funding was initially associated with the HWUs. Global amounts available for higher education were allocated to institutions in terms of a formula which contained as input variables full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrolments and as output variables student success rates and research publications. These global amounts could be spent at the discretion of the council of the HEI, and unspent balances could be retained.

#### **3.4.1.2 Negotiated budgets**

This form of funding was initially associated with the historically black universities (HBUs) and technikons. These HEIs submitted 'needs' budgets to a government department, showing expenditure and partial income. Final approved amounts appeared as line items in the department's budget. Expenditure by the HEI had to be strictly in terms of this budget, and unspent balances had to be returned to the government. These funding practices meant that the HEIs built up no reserve and given that their expenditure budgets were not linked to student enrolments, but rather represented a percentage increase year on year were not in a position to catch up with institutions funded under the formula system.

#### **3.4.1.3 Full funding**

This form of funding was mainly associated with the college sector. In these cases, government departments accepted responsibility for all the costs of an HEI, in the absence of any institutional budget submission and without preparation of independent institutional accounts. Expenditures were taken as those of the relevant government department.

The South African Post Secondary Education (SAPSE) formula was underpinned by the principle that both government and the users of the higher education system would cover costs, given that both public and private benefits accumulated from higher education. A number of problematic issues became associated with this principle. First, the formula assumed all students were in a position to pay part of the costs of their education, and this was not necessarily true in all cases. Second, the formula treated all HEIs as equal and

unsurprisingly, given the apartheid context contained no mechanisms to account for unequal fund-raising opportunities across the sector, or to fund the academic development needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Third, although the apartheid state articulated objectives for higher education for example, with respect to efficiency in the use of resources the mechanism to achieve this was a combination of 'rational choice' and competition. In effect, the state's application of the formula entailed a 'hands-off' approach to steering and funding, leaving the higher education system to be determined by the 'market'.

Given these difficulties in principle, it is unsurprising that the SAPSE formula produced inequitable consequences in practice. This was especially true once the formula was applied to HBUs catering for historically disadvantaged students, as these institutions generated very different expenditure and income data from that on which the formula had been statistically based. As one element of the apartheid system of funding, the formula was not designed to deal with a disparate group of HEIs, and thus, when the pressure came to finance all HEIs in the same way, it would have been better to revise it completely. Finally, the formula encouraged larger numbers of cheaper enrolments in humanities, rather than in the more costly natural sciences.

### **3.4.2 The Policy Development Process for a New Funding**

The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) highlighted those problems and unintended consequences associated with the SAPSE funding formula. It recommended in 1996 that 'a new funding framework ... should be developed which is consistent with the principles of equity (including redress), development, democratisation, efficiency, effectiveness, financial sustainability and shared costs'.<sup>21</sup>

Accepting this recommendation, the *White Paper* of 1997 concluded that, as the expansion, transformation and redress of the higher education system would entail additional costs, public funding of the system should be goal oriented and performance related. In other words, the basic public funding components of block funding and

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<sup>21</sup> NCHE 1996: 216.

earmarked funding would be retained, but differently applied. Furthermore, public funding would be conditional on HEIs' providing strategic plans and reporting performance against institutional goals.<sup>22</sup>

The Department of Education (DoE) established a Funding Reference Group consisting of knowledgeable persons in higher education to act as its sounding board in the development of a new funding approach; this discussed some key issues in the period prior to the preparation of a first draft of the new funding framework in early 2001. In March 2001, the DoE released a discussion document on a new funding framework and a revised document was published in November 2002. The new funding framework was gazetted in December 2003, following consultation with the Council on Higher Education (CHE), in August 2003, and with the approval of the Minister of Finance. As required in terms of the new framework, the Ministry of Education (MoE) subsequently released a statement on higher education funding for the fiscal years 2004/5 to 2006/7. The statement sets out forward determinations of grant totals likely to be available to the public higher education system in this period, and other forecasts.

### **3.4.3 Public Funding of Higher Education**

#### **3.4.3.1 Patterns of Government Funding**

With respect to recent patterns of government funding of higher education, Table 1 and Table 2 show that the overall allocation to higher education risen in nominal terms from R4,072 billion in 1995/6 to R8,926 billion in 2003/4.

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<sup>22</sup> White Paper 1997: Chapter 4.



**Government Expenditure on Education and Higher Education (Rands billions)**

**Table:1**

Item	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total	33.8	42.1	44.1	45.2	46.9	50.8	54.9	61.9	68.8	73.9	78.6
education	22.4	24.1	23.2%	22.5	21.8	21.7	20.9	21.2	20.6	20.4	19.9
allocation %	%	%		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
of total											
Govt											
Expenditure											
Shools and	29.4	36.6	38.5	38.7	39.8	43.2	46.9	53.1	58.9	63.5	67.5
colleges	19.5	20.0	20.3%	19.3	18.5	18.5	17.8	18.2	17.6	17.5	17.0
allocation %	%	%		%	%	%	%	%		%	%
of total											
Govt.											
expenditure											
HE	4.1	5.2	5.4	6	6.6	7.1	7.5	8	8.9	9.7	10.3
allocation %	2.69	2.97	2.86%	2.98	3.05	2.98	2.86	2.72	2.58	2.7%	2.6%
of total	%	%		%	%	%	%	%	%		
Governme-											
nt											
expenditure											
% of	12.1	12.4	12.3%	13.4	14.1	13.9	13.7	12.8	12.6	13.0	13.0
education	%	%	0.78%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
allocation %	0.72	0.82		0.8%	0.81	0.77	0.75	0.72	0.72	N/A	N/A
of GDP	%	%			%	%	%	%	%		

Source: DoE 2001: SAUVCA June 2004.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The Data exclude educational services not administered by the Department of education. Data include the incorporation of 28 teacher Training college into Universities and Technicons which has the effect of partially veiling the fall in government fundind over the period.

## Government Appropriations for Universities and Technicons, 1995-2005

**Table: 2**

Institutions/Types	1995/96	1998/99	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5
Universities	3,066	4,337	5,399	5,708	6,071	6,391
Tecnicons	75%	72%	72%	71%	68%	65%
Other	1,006	1,663	2,123	2,216	2,564	2,759
	25%	28%	28%	28%	29%	28%
	0	0	0	0	0	728
	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%
Subsidy	3,566	5,309	6,620	6,985	7,818	8,568
Earmarked	87%	88%	88%	87%	88%	87%
Total	506	694	814	897	1,107	1,311
	13%	12%	11%	11%	12%	13%
	4,072	6,004	7,532	8,019	8,926	9,879
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: DoE 2003.<sup>24</sup>

The proportion of government expenditure allocated to education as a whole peaked at 24.1% in 1996/7, decreased to 20.6% in 2003/4, and is projected at 19.9% in 2005/6. The proportion allocated to higher education peaked in 1999/2000 at 3.05% of total government expenditure. It has since declined to 2.72% in 2003/4 and is projected at 2.6% in 2005/6. This decline reflects the steady decline in the proportion of total government expenditure allocated to schools and colleges, which peaked in 1996/7 at 20.9% and is projected at 17% in 2005/6. The allocation to higher education as a proportion of the overall education budget has remained fairly constant, rising from

<sup>24</sup> Other Funding in 2004/5 comprises: a) topsliced earmarked funds of R84.7m for foundation teaching Programmes; b) R 515m in order embarked funds including for institutional restructuring (R 502m); c) R128m in recovered funds from UDW (R12,45m), Technicons Pretoria (R 11.164m) and Technicon SA (R11.825m) owing to incorrect student data provided to the DoE in previous years. Furthermore, R77.834m is held back from UNISA until its data issues have been resolved. An additional R 14.283 m not distributed via migration strategy is included as well.

around 12% between 1995 and 1998 to around 14% between 1999 and 2001, and then declining to around 13% from 2002 on. As a percentage of gross domestic products (GDP), expenditure on higher education has declined since 1999/2000.

### **3.3.3.2 Funding through the NSFAS**

Government allocations to the NSFAS have settled at around 5%–6% of the higher education allocation; the new funding framework makes provision for an ongoing allocation of 6%. Noteworthy is the fact that total state expenditure up to 2002/03 amounted to R2.6 billion indicating a firm commitment to subsidising greater access to disadvantaged students. Importantly, this has been supplemented by the HEIs (over R191 million from 1996/7 onwards), foreign donors (R365.2 million), the private sector (R21.4 million since 1998/9) and significantly recovered funds (R343.1 million since 1997/8). Also notable is the joint state funding for the NSFAS through both the DoE and the Department of Labour (DoL). These diversified sources of income meant that 69% of NSFAS income in 2002/3 was contributed by the state, while recovered funds accounted for 20%, and donor funding 11%. In 2002, university students received 59% of NSFAS expenditure and technikons 41%. The number of total awards made by the NSFAS has risen steadily over the past decade from 7,240 in 1991 to 99,873 in 2002. Over the past six years, this represents an annual percentage increase of 5.4%, made up of 11.5% in the technikons and 1.4% in the universities. The size of awards ranged from below R1,000 to over R18,000. The majority (49%) were clustered between R 3,000 and R 8,000. Finally, success rates in terms of courses passed by NSFAS-funded students have averaged at 74% in the period from 1996 to 2002.<sup>25</sup>

### **3.4.4 Division of the Government Budget**

The latest indication of trends from the Ministry is that government grants cover on an average 50% of public higher education funding, with 25% from fee income and 25% from other private income sources. It is acknowledged that the capacity of HEIs to

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<sup>25</sup> A Taylor. National Student Financial Student Financial Aid Sheme. Briefing to the Education Portfolio Committee. 27 January 2004. Available at [http://pmg.org.za/docs/2004/appendices/040127\\_nsfas.ppt](http://pmg.org.za/docs/2004/appendices/040127_nsfas.ppt) (June 2010).

generate alternative sources of income varies widely, from 35% to 65%.<sup>26</sup> As these variations remain largely a function of institutions' historically defined purpose, location and academic profiles, they must be noted from the outset as significant. They provide potential indicators of unintended consequences, this time initiated by the new funding framework itself: exacerbating, rather than reducing, institutional disparities.

#### **3.4.4.1 Institutional Restructuring**

Institutional restructuring grants (5% of budget) are special earmarked amounts to be used to assist HEIs merging in 2004 and 2005. These grants will be allocated after the business and academic plans of merging institutions have been considered.

#### **3.4.4.2 Earmarked Funding**

Most of the earmarked funds (6%) are set aside for the NSFAS. The second category of earmarked funding (2%) is available for specific 'other' purposes, such as teaching (including foundation programmes), research and community development; interest and redemptions payments on approved government loans; and the higher education quality assurance (QA) framework. In the period 2004/5 to 2006/7, 1% of this second category of earmarked funds is to be allocated to interest and redemption on loans. The other 1% is allocated to foundation programmes (R85 million in 2004/5), on the basis of formal institutional applications for funding over a three year period.

#### **3.4.4.3 Block Grants**

The new framework aims to relate funding to performance: it focuses on HEIs' teaching and research outputs, as demonstrable results of public funding utilised for approved purposes.

#### **3.4.4.4 Research Output Grants**

Research output grants are to be calculated on the basis of *actual* research graduates and publication unit outputs, weighted as follows: publications units 1; research master's graduates 1; doctoral graduates 3.

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<sup>26</sup> MoE February 2004b:2.

#### **3.4.4.5 Normative research**

Research output totals are calculated using a government-determined publications benchmark. For universities, the approved benchmark for 2004/5 to 2006/7 is 1.25 research outputs per full-time academic staff member per year and for universities of technology (technikons) it is 0.5 research outputs. Any shortfall between an HEI's normative and actual research output may be allocated to it as a research development grant on the submission of a research development plan. No provision is made for research input grants. This is in line with the *National Plan's* emphasis on concentrating research resources in HEIs with demonstrable or potential research capacity, on accountable use of research funds and on enhanced research productivity.

#### **3.4.4.6 Institutional Factor Grants**

The new funding framework does not make provision for institutional set up, as the old formula did. However, it does make provision for addressing historical institutional disadvantage by means of two factors applicable to HEIs with large proportions of disadvantaged students. At this stage, in the absence of reliable information regarding the socio-economic status of students, 'race' serves as a proxy for disadvantage: this means that it is not possible to distinguish between advantaged and disadvantaged African and Coloured students. The first institutional factor grant enables HEIs with a large proportion of disadvantaged South African students to have their teaching input grant increased. The grant is applicable where students are enrolled in contact programmes, and in distance education programmes only in the case of the dedicated HEI (UNISA). The increase to the teaching input grant ranges from 0% additional income for those HEIs in which African and Coloured South African students make up less than 40% of FTE enrolment to 10% additional income for those with 80% and above.

The second institutional factor grant allows additional amounts to be added to teaching input grants for small institutions, depending on the size of their FTE enrolments. This works on a sliding scale from 0% additional funds for HEIs with 25,000 or more FTE

enrolments, through 9.3% for HEIs with 12,000 FTEs, to 15% additional funds for HEIs with 4,000 FTEs or fewer.

The MoE has committed itself to undertaking during 2004/5 investigations into the operations of newly merged and other multi-campus HEIs. This would determine the appropriate basis for a third institutional factor grant, for multi-campus institutions.

### **3.4.5 Issues Raised by the New Funding Framework**

#### **3.4.5.1 Institutional Redress**

The new funding framework incorporates a number of mechanisms to address aspects of institutional redress. Some would argue that, in alignment with the merger process, the new funding framework largely and effectively deals with this issue, rendering the need for a large-scale separate redress policy redundant, and leveraging more funding than HDIs might have originally anticipated from a dedicated redress fund.

Institutional factor grants based on large proportions of disadvantaged students are more problematic from the perspective of redress. First, as the framework itself acknowledges, the definition of disadvantage remains crude. Second, if HAIs are able to attract wealthy African and Coloured students (in large proportions), these institutions will be doubly advantaged: not only will they attract this aspect of institutional factor funding they will also enjoy the benefits of greater funding through higher graduation rates, postgraduate enrolments and enrolments in higher income generating fields. Third, if HAIs are not able to attract sufficient numbers of students from the designated groups, students from these groups in these HEIs may suffer from resultant fee differentials between institutions with different 'racial' make-ups. It may be that such problems as these could be addressed as soon as more elaborate and accurate data regarding the socio-economic status of students become available through the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS); however, the right to privacy of students may mean that socio-economic status remains difficult to determine. The jury must remain out on the true potential of the new funding framework to address institutional redress, until such time as indicators of real progress emerge.

### **3.4.5.2 Growth in Enrolments**

It has been noted that the SAPSE formula encouraged growth which was not financially sustainable. In the new funding framework, input subsidies have a higher weighting than previously, and some within the sector have argued that the incentive for HEIs is to increase student numbers will therefore be even stronger. Clearly, such an effect would be in tension with concerns to maintain the affordability of public higher education funding.

The DoE intends that parameters for growth will be determined by the planning process. During 2004, the DoE is engaging in a system wide student enrolment planning exercise to ensure that institutional enrolment plans are affordable and sustainable in the context of the MTEF; in the interim, it has proposed the introduction of enrolment caps for the short term.

### **3.4.5.3 Financial Uncertainty**

Under the SAPSE funding system, a factor created a climate of financial uncertainty for HEIs and curbed creative planning. Some believe that the new funding framework may exacerbate uncertainty. HEIs will not have the sectoral figures necessary to estimate their income for the coming year, as they had in the old system; and, as already discussed, the Minister can change funding values from year to year. On the other hand, the new formula releases three year forward projections which will be available to HEIs to determine their allocations.

### **3.4.5.4 Academic Development**

There are concerns that while HEIs may apply for funding for foundation programmes, there are no other designated mechanisms for supporting academic development. The burden of funding the redress of the inadequacies of South Africa's schooling system will thus continue to be borne by HEIs.

Government expenditure on higher education has been relatively stable over the last ten years, as a percentage of state budget, education budget and GDP. Notwithstanding this

consistency, there has been a decline in the years after 2000. South African expenditures are lower than international norms, and apparently steady values of subsidy per student have been achieved to the damage of capital expenditure. For the higher education sector, this raises a set of interrelated concerns including that government may not be able to maintain levels of funding; that the ways in which inflation affects higher education may require fuller exploration; and that capital funding needs are to go unaddressed. The critique of the new funding framework indicates some of the key themes that monitoring and evaluation must pursue. In general, it will be important to track the range of institutional behaviours which are elicited by the new funding framework and to assess these in relation to the intentions of national policy and its unintended consequences. Furthermore, attention will have to be given to the impact of the new framework on institutional equity within the new higher education landscape and the extent to which it addresses institutional redress concerns. Finally, it will be important to track the impacts of the new funding framework, both positive and negative, on all institutions, and especially on HDIs, both during the three-year period of the migration strategy and afterwards as the new framework comes into full-scale operation.

### **3.5 Language policy framework for South African higher education**

*“... the building blocks of this nation are all our languages working together, our unique idiomatic expressions that reveal the inner meanings of our experiences. These are the foundations on which our common dream of nationhood should be built...The nurturing of this reality depends on our willingness to learn the languages of others, so that we in practice accord all our languages the same respect. In sharing one’s language with another, one does not lose possession of one’s words, but agrees to share these words so as to enrich the lives of others. For it is when the borderline between one language and another is erased, when the social barriers between the speaker of one language and another are broken, that a bridge is built, connecting what were previously two separate sites into one big space for human interaction, and, out of this, a new world emerges and a new nation is born.”<sup>27</sup>*

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<sup>27</sup> By President Thabo Mbeki on 27th of August 1999.



The Minister of Education must, in accordance with Section 27(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1997, determine language policy for higher education. Subject to the policy determined by the Minister, the councils of public higher education institutions, with the concurrence of their senates, must determine the language policy of a higher education institution and must publish and make such policy available on request. The requirement of the Act takes into account the authority of institutions to determine language policy provided that such determination is within the context of public accountability and the Ministry's responsibility to establish the policy parameters.

The Ministry's framework for language policy in higher education is outlined in this statement. In developing such a framework, and in accordance with the Higher Education Act, the Minister of Education requested advice from the Council on Higher Education on the development of an appropriate language policy for higher education. This followed the decision of Cabinet in 1999 to prioritise the development of a language framework for higher education. In July 2001, the Council submitted its advice to the Minister in a report entitled "Language Policy Framework for South African Higher Education". The Report is attached as Annexure 1. A range of proposals and recommendations has been advanced in this report, many of which have informed the development of this policy document.

### **3.5.1 Basis of Language policy in South Africa**

The *National Education Policy Act* (Act 27 of 1996) empowers the Minister of Education to determine a national policy for language in education. Subsequently the *Language-in-Education Policy* was adopted in 1997. This policy operates within the following paradigm. According to the *Language-in-Education Policy* the main aims of the Ministry of Education's policy for language in education are:

- To promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education;
- To pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to the language in education;

- To support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as Alternative and Augmentative communication;
- To counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching;
- To develop programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages;
- To promote and develop all official language.

### 3.6 Equity

The achievement of equity is a principal and prominent goal for higher education in a democratic South Africa. As white Paper explains, the achievement of equity has both backward and forward looking elements. Existing inequalities ‘which are the product of policies, structures and practices based on racial, gender, disability and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage’ must be identified and a programme of transformation that includes measures of empowerment and redress implemented.<sup>28</sup>

The above figure, shows headcount enrolments for the period 1990 1994 in the various institutional sectors— historically black universities and technikons (HBUs and HBTs), historically white universities and technikons (HWUs and HWTs), and distance providers. During this period enrolments showed an overall growth of one third (more than 130,000), with HBUs growing by 37% (28,000) and HWUs by 8% (10,000). In the technikon sector, Technikon SA enrolments grew by 126% (38,000), while HBT enrolments grew by 60% (11,000) and HWT enrolments by 41% (19,000). These growth rates were a major contributing factor to the high-growth scenarios envisaged by the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) after 1994.

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<sup>28</sup>Department of Education White paper 1997. “A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education White Paper 3. Government Gazette No.18207, Pretoria: Government printers.:Section 1.18.

Overall participation rates in the public higher education system (i.e. total number of enrolled students divided by total population in the 20–24 age band, as per international norms) remained unsatisfactory. The gross participation rate was approximately 17%, higher than that of many developing countries, but lower than that of fast developing and developed countries. Participation rates were highly skewed by ‘race’: approximately 9% for Africans, 13% for Coloureds, 40% for Indians and 70% for whites.<sup>29</sup>

### **3.6.1 Overview of Policy with Respect to Student and Staff Equity**

Policy developments since 1994 have been significant because they have given a clear shape and form to what is required of HEIs in terms of achieving equity. This shape and form has been provided not only by explicit benchmarks in some cases, but also by a set of powerful conceptual links between, for example, equity and development, and equity and human rights. In the case of student enrolment, opportunities and outcomes, equity imperatives have been squarely cast within a determinant planning and funding framework, and increasingly within a quality framework. Staff equity has become a focus of institutional planning as a result not only of higher education policy requirements, but also on account of labour laws which apply to it directly.

#### **3.6.1.1 Policy on Student Equity**

It was confidently expected that higher education enrolments would expand after 1994, firstly given increasing enrolment patterns after 1990, as already described, and also in anticipation of higher numbers of matriculation exemptions. The NCHE expressed this confidence in its recommendations for a policy of massification, and its predictions of a public higher education system whose participation rate would be 30% by 2005, and which would enrol 690,000 students by 1999 and 740,000 by 2001. HEIs’ own predictions were lower but followed the same trend.<sup>30</sup> The *White Paper* did not accept massification as a basis for policy development, rather committing itself to planned expansion of the system. Such expansion would rely primarily on ‘a planning model that

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<sup>29</sup>Cloete, N and Bunting, I (2000). ‘Increased and Broadened Participation’. In Cloete, N and Bunting, I (2000). *Higher Education Transformation: Assessing Performance in South Africa*. Pretoria: Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET): 9-36: 14-16. Rates are approximate as adjustments had to be made to inaccurate 1991 census data in order to derive them.

<sup>30</sup> Cloete and Bunting 2000:11-12.

will provide estimates of the cost of expanding the higher education system based on different scenarios ... a variety of growth estimates and ... demographic and labour market indicators'.<sup>31</sup> The *White Paper* aimed to connect the policy goals of equity and development by ensuring equity in the student body; by expanding career-oriented programmes; by expanding postgraduate enrolments at the master's and doctoral levels; and by increasing distance and open learning enrolments.<sup>32</sup> The significance of the private sector in expanding enrolments was also recognised.

Three strategic objectives of the *National Plan* directly referenced student equity. First, the goal of producing graduates with skills and competencies to meet South Africa's human resource needs required increasing the participation rate (from 15% to 20% by 2010–2015), as well as the number of enrolments. It required increasing graduate outputs in line with specific benchmarks (e.g. 25% for three-year undergraduate programmes, and 33% for master's programmes); changing enrolments by field of study (from a humanities:business/commerce:SET ratio of 49%:26%:25% to 40%:30%:30%); recruiting nontraditional students (e.g. workers, mature learners and the disabled); and increasing student recruitment from the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Second, the strategic goal of achieving equitable student and graduate profiles required a range of planning and funding levers to increase overall access and success. Third, the goal of sustaining and developing research capacity required a range of planning and funding levers to increase postgraduate.

### **3.6.2.2 Policy on Staff Equity**

The *White Paper* recognised that distribution of access and opportunity for staff along lines of 'race', gender, class and geography, was even more inequitable than for students.<sup>33</sup> It set as a goal the development of capacity-building measures to facilitate a more representative staff component 'which is sensitive to local, national and regional needs, and is committed to standards and ideals of creative and rigorous academic

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<sup>31</sup> White Paper 1997.

<sup>32</sup> Department of Education White Paper 1997. "A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education White Paper 3. Government Gazette No. 18207, Pretoria: Government printers.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid: section 1.4.

work'.<sup>34</sup> It further stated that HEIs would be required to submit human resource development (HRD) plans, including equity goals, as part of their three-year rolling plans.<sup>35</sup> HRD plans would need to include staff recruitment and promotion policies and practices, staff development arrangements, remuneration and conditions of service, reward systems, and the transformation of institutional cultures to support diversity.

After 1994 the significant development was the development of a framework of labour legislation aiming to endorse constitutional rights and obligations in the sphere of employment (the *Labour Relations Act of 1955*, the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997*, the *Skills Development Act of 1998*, and the *Employment Equity Act of 1998*). With specific reference to HEIs, this framework of laws brought all staff, including academic staff, within one domain of employee relations, because all employment contracts were governed by the *Labour Relations Act*; because skills development plans were now required for all employees; and because the *Employment Equity Act* laid down clear and detailed requirements for initiating, driving and managing staff equity in HEIs. Specifically, this Act has required all HEIs to undertake an organisational analysis to determine under-represented staff categories and barriers to equity; and to detail an equity plan, setting out equity targets, measures, strategies and monitoring procedures,<sup>36</sup> enrolments and success at master's and doctoral levels.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid: section1.27.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid section 2.96.

<sup>36</sup> C. Howell and G. Subotzky "Obstacles and strategies in Pursuing Staff Equity:a Regional Study of the Five Western Cape Higher Education Institutions",(Bellville,2002).

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

*Assessment of Government's Policies on Higher Education and its impact on  
Black Population in post Apartheid*

A particular higher education system was inherited from apartheid which was deeply divided internally, and isolated from the international community of scholars. It was highly fragmented in structural and governance terms, and was far from being a coherent and coordinated system. It was inherently inequitable, differentiated along the lines of 'race' and ethnicity, and designed 'to reproduce ... white and male privilege and black and female subordination in all spheres of society'.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, Africans, as the largest South African demographic group, had the lowest participation rate in higher education. While a number of higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrated their own strengths and made effective educational contributions, the effectiveness of higher education could not be assessed as a whole but could only be related to the designated purposes of HEIs, whether defined by 'race' classification, or by separate institutional functions.

In sum, the legacy of the past was a fractured system and a set of HEIs bearing the scars of their origins. As South Africa entered a process of social, economic and political reconstruction in 1994, it was clear that mere reform of certain aspects of higher education would not be adequate to meet the challenges of a democratic country aiming to take its place in the world. Rather, a comprehensive transformation of higher education was required, marking a fundamental departure from the socio-political foundations of the previous regime.

#### **4.1 Phases of Higher Education Policy Making in South Africa**

There has been an extensive range of activities and transformation oriented initiatives in higher education like, definition of the purposes and goals of higher education; policy research; policy formulation and adoption in the areas of institutional structure and provision, governance, funding, academic structure and programmes, and quality assurance (QA); the enactment of new laws and regulations and regular amendments of these; policy implementation on numerous fronts; and occasional policy review.

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<sup>1</sup>Saleem Badat, "Transforming South African Higher Education 1990 to 2003: Goals policy initiative and critical challenges and issues", (Oxford, 2004), pp.4.

In tracing developments in the transformation of South African higher education from 1990 to the present, a number of commentators have sought to analyze and periodic change through the lens of policy-making, its patterns and nature. A number of analyses are in agreement in defining three principal periods of higher education policy change: symbolic policy-making; framework development, and implementation.

#### **4.1.1 The First Period: 1990-1994**

The first period of policy activity from 1990–1994 was associated principally with ‘symbolic policy-making’. In this period, from February 1990, when the National Party government’s unbanning of liberation organization’s gave a clear signal of accelerated movement to democracy through a negotiated settlement, the higher education policy process suddenly opened up beyond the apartheid state. The period has been variously characterized as one in which:

- There was a ‘race for policy position’ as contending actors, including the ‘self-reforming apartheid state’, the broad democratic movement, and civil society sought to establish symbolic statements of goal for change in higher education.<sup>2</sup>
- New policy propositions were forged, as the anti-apartheid movement began preparing to govern. During this period discursive tensions were apparent between ‘popular democratic’ and ‘economic rationalist’ positions, but they were muted by the consensus building dictates of the day.<sup>3</sup>
- Policy-making was symbolic, with the primary intention of declaring a break with the past, and signaling a new direction.<sup>4</sup>
- The predominant concerns were principles, values, visions and goals, unconstrained by issues of planning, resources and implementation. Attention focused on the role of the state in higher education transformation, and the relationship between the state and civil society in effecting transformation. Policy debate was characterized by the participation of mass movements and civil society. Outcomes included general agreement on the

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<sup>2</sup>Jonathan D.Jansen, “Rethinking Education policy making in South Africa: symbols of change, signals of conflict”, (Pretoria HSRC press, 2001), pp.42.

<sup>3</sup> Andre Kraak “Policy ambiguity and slippage: higher education under the new state, 1994-2001”, (Pretoria HSRC press, 2001), pp.86.

<sup>4</sup> Cleote, Fehnel et al. 2002:449-451.



values and principles that should guide policy-making; and the formation of symbolic policies<sup>5</sup>

The symbolic nature of developments prior to 1994 was perhaps only to be expected, given that a transfer of political power had yet to be effected and that the detailed conditions of governing higher education in a democratic environment could not yet be known. The inherent dangers of symbolism are however suggested in these analyses. The term 'a race for policy position' implies that the pressure of accelerated social change may have led to policy pronouncements without implications being fully comprehended. Likewise, reference to 'consensus-building dictates' hints at the possibility of contestations breaking out once such dictates were set aside. At several points in this report, the 'symbolism' alluded in these analyses has been encountered.

#### **4.1.2 Second period: 1994-1998**

A second period of policy making, 1994–1998 focused on framework development. This period claimed:

- There was a 'race to establish an overarching legal and policy canopy', still linked to policy of a symbolic nature.<sup>6</sup>
- Competing discourses were apparently 'settled' in the content of the *White Paper* and the *Higher Education Act*, while discursive tensions between equity and development were sustained in the debates of stakeholders. The 'economic rationalist' position was endorsed in a policy focus on the development of higher skills to meet the needs of economic development and global competitiveness. The 'popular democratic' position was endorsed in the declared commitment to a programme of redress.<sup>7</sup>
- An 'implementation vacuum' followed on the heels of the legislative and policy framework. These broad directions went unsupported by specified policy instruments, and quickly prompted unanticipated consequences at institutional level. Reasons

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<sup>5</sup> Saleem Badat, "Transforming South African Higher Education 1990 to 2003: Goals policy initiative and critical challenges and issues", (Oxford 2004), pp.13.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan D.Jansen, "Rethinking Education policy making in South Africa: symbols of change, signals of conflict"(Pretoria HSRC press, 2001), pp42-43.

<sup>7</sup> Andre Kraak "Policy ambiguity and slippage: higher education under the new state,1994-2001"(Pretoria HSRC press,2001), pp86-96.

advanced by government for the vacuum (including the need to develop a consultative process, and capacity problems) were unconvincing. A more compelling reason appeared to be political reluctance to make necessary choices.<sup>8</sup>

- The overall framework for higher education transformation was elaborated in greater detail; and strategies, structures and instruments for the pursuit of policy goals began to be defined. The principal outcomes of this period were a defined policy and legislative framework; a number of substantive policies in concrete domains such as governance, financing and funding; and the establishment of an embryonic governmental infrastructure for further policy planning and development, and for policy implementation.<sup>9</sup>

The second period suggests that framework policies continued to be largely symbolic, though some substance began to be added, seeking to integrate the three 'E's of policy: equity, effectiveness and efficiency. The Ministry of Education appeared to experience difficulty in confronting competing goals, and tensions in policies, with their attendant political and social dilemmas, and in making definite choices and decisions. At the same time, the idealism of symbolic policy had to confront the political limits and other structural constraints facing the new state. As one example, tight fiscal policies accompanying the shift from the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to the Macro-economic Strategy for Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), meant that higher education was unlikely to be allocated more financial resources than before.

While the causes of the 'implementation vacuum' can be debated, the absence of clear policy signals resulted in particular readings of the *White Paper* by HEIs, and various initiatives on their part, that would come to be considered by the Ministry as being in conflict with the intentions of the *White Paper*. In this second period of policy-making (1994–1998), the complexity of achieving large-scale higher education transformation in the context of wider social and economic conditions and policies became fully apparent.

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<sup>8</sup>Cleote, Fehnel et al. 2002.

<sup>9</sup>Badat 2003:51-52.

Apart from representing political and social dilemmas, this complexity also constituted challenges to policy and strategy.

#### 4.1.3 Third period: 1998-2009

A third period of policy-making began in 1999, as attention turned to implementation.

- The focus has been on addressing a perceived crisis in delivery through a ‘race for policy implementation’. This has been accompanied by a centralizing tendency and the dissolution of policy consensus.<sup>10</sup>
- Discursive tensions and political difficulties reached a high point (in 2000), resulting in policy doubt, retraction and reversal.<sup>11</sup>
- The focus of policy has narrowed down to efficiency, labour market responsiveness and economic development goals, while equity and redress have become secondary.
- A need has emerged for more targeted, differentiated, information-rich policy interaction between government, HEIs and society (given the unintended consequences of ‘unidirectional, comprehensive’ policy that developed in the second period).<sup>12</sup>
- An attempt has been made by the Ministry ‘to make decisive choices and take tough decisions in crucial areas that previously had not seen much progress through a relatively hands-off approach or inadequate governmental steering or by leaving it essentially to individual higher education institutions to take the lead’. Transcending the apartheid legacy in higher education by creating a national, integrated and coordinated yet differentiated system has remained the key policy objective.<sup>13</sup>

The first theme of these analyses of the third period is that there has been a significant shift in the mode of governance of higher education transformation as the Ministry of Education has opted for stronger state steering.

The second theme is that policy implementation has been characterized by ‘policy doubt, retraction and reversal’ and a ‘secondary focus’ on equity and redress, while a focus on

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<sup>10</sup> Jansan 2001:51-2.

<sup>11</sup> Kraak 2001:8,111-120.

<sup>12</sup> Cloeote, Fehnel et al.2002:477-486.

<sup>13</sup> Badat 2003:13-14.

efficiency has moved to the fore. These analyses use institutional redress policy or the lack of it as a marker. 'Equity versus efficiency' concerns that surfaced in relation to the *National Plan*, and the absence of a dedicated redress policy noted those elements of the new funding framework that support social and institutional redress. Certainly, institutional equity and redress have become strongly linked to institutional restructuring and the Programme and Qualifications Mix (PQM) exercise, resulting in limited financial allocations thus far for institutional redress. On the other hand, social equity and redress have been prioritized and achievements have been greater. Regarding the emphasis on efficiency, it is not obvious that the goals of equity and efficiency are in inevitable competition with one another. Undoubtedly, fiscal constraints have made efficiency concerns more prominent and have played a part in decisions related to institutional restructuring and public funding of higher education. However, the evidence with respect to 'policy retraction and reversal' in the areas of equity and redress in general, is far from compelling.

In summary, this analysis of higher education in the past decade of democracy in part with other analyses of patterns of higher education policy change since 1990. Higher education transformation in South Africa is best characterized as highly complex, consisting of a set of still unfolding discourses of policy formulation, adoption, and implementation that are replete with paradoxes and tensions, contestations, and political and social dilemmas.

#### **4.2 Purpose and Goals of Government Policy on Higher Education**

South African Higher education is accorded with a huge range of purposes and goals in order to be socially responsive. South African universities admit students with different abilities. Beyond the minimum standards that all universities must hold on to, qualifications are of different standards and programmes differ in content and purposes. South African universities are different from one another, this is a source of strength, because the varied economic and social needs of South Africa and the African continent are best served by a diverse variety of institutions that are differentiated in terms of their missions, qualifications and programmes, kinds of research, entrance requirements, and

so forth. There is no virtue in homogeneity, where every university seeks to be the same and to pursue exactly the same goals and functions. South African universities are different, and there is virtue in being different. As Graham argues we should avoid aspiring to 'ideal(s) which (we) cannot attain'. Otherwise, 'no sense of worth will be forthcoming' and we can have no 'proper self-confidence'.<sup>14</sup>

The 1997 *White Paper* makes it clear that 'an important task in planning and managing a single national co-ordinate system is to ensure diversity in its organizational form and in the institutional landscape, and offset pressures for homogenization'. Four years later the *National Plan* proclaimed its commitment to 'achieving diversity in the South African higher education system', and 'to diversify the system in terms of the mix of institutional missions and programmes that will be required to meet national and regional needs in social, cultural and economic development'.

Yet post-1994, 'differentiation' has been a difficult and controversial policy issue. Under apartheid, differentiation was accompanied by advantage and disadvantage along racial and ethnic lines and the dangers of the reproduction of this has been a legitimate concern on the part of the historically black universities. It is unlikely, however, that there is an in-principle rejection of differentiation, as much as a valid questioning of the consequences of implementing a policy of differentiation in the absence of both clear developmental trajectories for historically black universities based on new social and educational roles and significant new funds for higher education.

In this context, differentiation has been approached, financially, as a zero-sum game likely to perpetuate advantage and disadvantage along apartheid lines. The recent injection of an additional R 2.0 billion into higher education and the manner of its distribution to universities however highlights that differentiation need not be a zero-sum game. Whether this will facilitate the policy of differentiation and diversity being embraced by all universities remains to be seen. Yet without the successful

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<sup>14</sup>Graham, G., "The Institution of Intellectual Values: Realism and Idealism in Higher Education". (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2005) pp.157.

implementation of a policy of differentiation, the transformation and development of South African higher education is likely to be compromised, as will be the capacities of institutions to be responsive to the varied economic and social needs of the country and continent.

### **4.3 Issues of policy in Higher Education**

South African history has been particularly characterised by intense political conflict and socio cultural divisions along race and class lines. The initial character of the higher education system was forged by the country's colonial history and the underlying conflict between British and Afrikaner nationalism. Today, the system is being fundamentally reshaped by the post-apartheid transformation of South African society. Unlike most other colonized African nations, the unusual proliferation of thirty six higher education institutions among a relatively under populated nation was the combined result of two aspects of South Africa's history. First, the intense rivalry between the two dominant political and cultural groups-the British colonists and Boer Afrikaners-worked against the establishment of a single national university and spawned a multiplicity of historically white universities (HWUs). Second, apartheid racial and technicist ideology later generated more HWUs, as well as the ten historically black universities (HBUs) and subsequently the fifteen technikons (of which, seven were historically white, and seven historically black, and one a distance education technikon).

#### **4.3.1 Gender**

Though by 1995 women students were already a majority in university, but still a minority at technikons, and also remain underrepresented in certain fields, such a science and technology, and at the higher qualification levels, particularly at the master's and doctoral levels. Within some fields, such as business and commerce, women tend to be concentrated in "lower" programs such as public administration, rather than the "higher" ones such as business management. Conversely, women students tend to be concentrated in the traditional fields associated with females, such as teaching, social work, and the "lower" health and law programs, as well as at the lower certificate and diploma qualifications levels in all fields.

### **4.3.2 Faculty**

In contrast to the dramatically rapid Africanization of the student body over the past few years, the composition of staff and faculty has remained relatively unchanged. There is an overwhelming dominance of white faculty in the higher education system. Although the number and proportion of African faculty doubled from 720 to 1,555 (6% to 12% of the total), in 1993-1998 this increase was confined mainly to the historically disadvantaged institutions. Correspondingly, while the proportion of white faculty dropped from 87% to 79%, this comprised a slight decrease in the absolute number of whites (from 10,901 to 10,587). These trends were especially marked at HBTs, where the proportion of African faculty rose from 17% to 49%, while that of white faculty dropped from 80% to 41%. Women constituted about 36% of all faculties in 1998, an increase from around 30% in 1993. While this is an encouraging trend, women remain under-represented in the higher ranks, qualification levels, and in fields of study other than those traditionally associated with women. In 1997, men still constituted 90% of professors, 78% of associate professors, and 67% of senior lecturers, but only about 47% of the junior ranks.

### **4.3.3 Research and publishing**

The bulk of research activities are concentrated in a few (mainly white) institutions. About 65% of research publications output and 61% of research and development funding allocations to higher education are concentrated in five white universities (Cape Town, Natal, Pretoria, Stellenbosch, and Witwatersrand). By contrast, just 10% is produced in the ten HBUs combined, of which the major part is produced by the two non-African urban institutions, that is, the University of the Western Cape and the University of Durban-Westville.

### **4.2.4 Race and higher education**

The historically differential treatment of the three subgroups collectively differential treatment of the three Africans, Coloreds, and Indians poses a remarkable challenge to policy makers who have to transform the curriculum and formulate new strategies for the re-allocation of resources.

The continuing significance of race and the constant reconceptualization of racial identity raise a number of issues. It is evident that the current curriculum at both historically white and Black universities is heavily Euro-centric. There is still a pervasive attitude that there is nothing wrong with this curriculum. The problem has been defined in terms of the increasing presence of the "under-prepared" (mostly Black) students in institutions of higher education. This attitude was echoed at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association held in San Francisco by a professor from the University of Potchefstroom, a historically white university, when he stated that: "...white universities are Western animals and they have to conform to the high academic standards of the West. If Black students want to attend our universities, they have to adjust to the way things operate at these universities".

#### **4.4 Assessment and Impact of Government Policy on Higher Education.**

##### **4.4.1 Student Enrolment Flux**

The transition to the post apartheid era has had a wide array of problems, which have occurred as a result of the difficulties of moving from the old to the new order. A number of unexpected developments have had a negative effect on the HE system. First, there has been a wide fluctuation in enrolment patterns as a result of unpredicted student choice enrolment behaviour. Students now have a far wider variety of both public and private institutions open to students of all races and languages. Institutions that previously did not enroll large numbers of African students but that are now successfully doing so are the formerly White Afrikaner institutions and the technikon sector both of which have received significant increases in African enrolment since the late 1990s. Together with an emerging private HE system, these institutions have succeeded in poaching African students away from the historically disadvantaged institutions.

Second, student enrolments have fallen dramatically during the past 5 years from a high of 605,000 in 1996 to a low of 564,000 in 1999. Reasons provided for this decline include the high cost of tuition fees, the dramatic drop in the number of matriculates with university exemption certificates, the perceived decline in the quality of public HE, and



the consequent growth in private and international HE in South Africa .<sup>15</sup> All of these market factors responsiveness, enhanced student choice, and declining enrolments have combined to create dramatic shifts in the institutional landscape of HE. The changes have also had an uneven impact, triggering expansionary and contractionary effects across the system. For example, enrolments increased by 36,000 during 1995 to 1999 at the historically White and Afrikaans speaking universities at the same time as dropping in the same period by 22,000 students at the historically disadvantaged Black universities.

#### 4.4.2 Size and shape of higher education

The founding policy document on higher education after apartheid is the report of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) – *A Framework for Transformation* – that was produced by 13 commissioners whose terms of reference included advising the Minister on ‘the *shape* of the higher education system ... in terms of the types of institutions’ and ‘what the *size* of the higher education system should be’.<sup>16</sup> Little happened until July 1999, following the appointment of the second post-apartheid Minister of Education. In his *Call to Action*, the Minister announced that: “the shape and size of the higher education system cannot be left to chance if we are to realize the vision of a rational, seamless higher education system ... The institutional landscape of higher education will be reviewed as a matter of urgency in collaboration with the Council on Higher Education. This landscape was largely dictated by the geo-political imagination of apartheid planners”.<sup>17</sup>

On 5 March 2001 the Minister released a National Plan for Higher Education that argued that ‘the number of public higher education institutions in South Africa could and should be reduced’.<sup>18</sup> In December 2001, a National Working Group appointed by the Minister released its report, *Restructuring of the Higher Education System in South Africa*, and recommended the reduction of higher education institutions (universities and technikons)

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<sup>15</sup>Cloete, N., & Bunting, I., “Higher education transformation: Assessing performance in South Africa”. Pretoria, South Africa: Centre for Higher Education Transformation, 2000.

<sup>16</sup>National Commission on Higher Education, (NCHE) (1996), *A framework for transformation*, Pretoria.

<sup>17</sup>Department of Education (DoE) (2001), *National Plan for Higher Education*, Pretoria.

<sup>18</sup> Department of Education (DoE) , *National Plan for Higher Education*, (Pretoria,2001),pp.87.

from 36 to 21 through the specific mechanism of mergers, listing the specific institutions in various provinces to be targeted for merging.

A parallel process was followed for colleges of education, through a Departmental Technical Committee appointed in September 1997 and that delivered in the following year a document called *The Incorporation of Colleges of Education into the Higher Education Sector: a Framework for Implementation*.<sup>19</sup> It is this committee that recommended the option of incorporation or autonomy for colleges with the condition that 'an autonomous College ... to be financially viable it would require a minimum enrolment of 2,000 students'.<sup>20</sup>

At the start of 2003, colleges of education had all but disappeared from the higher education 'landscape' as a result of either being closed down or, being incorporated into universities and technikons. At the same time, the merger of universities and technikons had been finalised after an intensive political process, with a specified schedule for each of these events.

The Cabinet approved the following mergers and incorporations:<sup>21</sup>

- The University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville;
- The University of the North-West and Potchefstroom University;
- Technikon Pretoria, Technikon Northern Gauteng and Technikon North-West;
- The University of Fort Hare and the East London Campus of Rhodes University;
- The incorporation of the Vista University campuses into specified universities and technikons in the region where each campus was located, for example, the incorporation of the Mamelodi Campus of Vista University into the University of Pretoria;
- The University of Port Elizabeth and Port Elizabeth Technikon;
- The University of the North and the Medical University of South Africa;
- The University of the Transkei, Border Technikon and the Eastern Cape Technikon;
- Rand Afrikaans University and Technikon Witwatersrand; and

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<sup>19</sup> Department of Education, *Call to Action: Mobilising Citizens to Build a South African and Training system in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. (Pretoria: Government Printers, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 15.

<sup>21</sup> Press Statement by the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, on the Transformation and Reconstruction of Higher Education system, Pretoria 9 December 2002.

- Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon.

In a relatively short period of time, therefore, the higher education landscape in South Africa altered dramatically: 21 universities became 11 institutions; 15 technikons became five 'stand alone' technikons and six comprehensive institutions (combinations of universities and technikons); 150 technical colleges became 50 merged technical colleges. And 120 colleges of education eventually became (at the time of writing) only two colleges of education, with the rest either incorporated into universities or technikons (about 30 such incorporations) or 'disestablished'. And these two remaining colleges of education would also be incorporated into the proposed Institutes of Education for Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape. In short, 306 separate institutions for post-school education were radically reduced to at best 72 remaining institutions not counting the ongoing restructuring of nursing and agricultural colleges. This dramatic alteration of the post-school institutional landscape is the single most important change in higher education and requires explanation.

#### 4.4.3 Nature of higher education providers

The growth in private education institutions in South Africa has been quite dramatic since the 1990s. The number of private schools increased from 518 in 1994 to around 1,500 in 2001<sup>22</sup>, while more than 100,000 students are now registered in 145 private higher education institutions.<sup>23</sup> This flooding of the South African market for higher education, long dominated by public institutions, compounded the problem of completely unexpected declines in the enrolment fortunes of public universities. The judgement of private higher education is less severe than a few years ago as more reliable data suggests that:

- The private provider market is more heavily concentrated in the further rather than higher education sector;

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<sup>22</sup> J Hofmeyr and S.Lee „Demand for Private Education in South Africa: Schooling and Higher Education Perspective in Education,20 (40):77-88.

<sup>23</sup> Mabizela, Subotsky and Thaver 2000,The Emergence of Private Higher Education in South Africa: Issues and Challenges.Discussion Document presented at the CHE Annual consultative conference.

- The private providers concentrate their efforts on a restricted curriculum (often low-level commercial and business courses) and therefore represent less of a threat to public higher education than initially thought;
- The private provider market was in fact expected to grow at least from the perspective of the 1996 National Commission on higher education; and
- The private provider growth is completely common to development trends in other countries without dramatic declines in public sector fortunes.

Nevertheless, this varied but successful, emergent economy of private higher education transformed the higher education landscape in South Africa. The response of the state has been somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, several actions were taken to regulate the growth and quality of the sector by requiring registration, accreditation and quality assurance of both private providers and the programmes they offer. At the same time, foreign as well as local higher education institutions continue to be registered despite the acknowledgement of the limited interest in 'a relatively narrow range of programmes that are economically lucrative'.<sup>24</sup> The ambivalence can in part be explained in the context of the ongoing debates on free trade as a subject that includes higher education and that forms the subject of negotiations in the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and GATS (The General Agreement on Trade in Services), all of which have strong implications for developing countries like South Africa (Schoole 2002).

#### **4.4.4 Black Student distribution in higher education**

In the recent history of South Africa, a constant refrain was the problem of access to higher education by especially black students. Between 1990 and 1994, however, both the historically black and white universities and technikons experienced a sudden rush on higher education institutions. In this brief period, the historically black universities expanded by 28,000 (37 per cent) and their white counterparts by a total of 10,000 (or 8 per cent). This sudden expansion masked three other realities at the time. First, the fact

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<sup>24</sup> Department of Education (DoE), National Plan for Higher Education, (Pretoria, 2001), pp.65.

that gross participation rates remained low, standing at 9 percent for black and 13 percent for coloureds. Second, that participation rates were highly unequal by apartheid constructed 'groups', standing at 70 percent for whites and 40 percent for Indian South Africans. Third, that 69 percent of enrolments were in universities with more than 50 percent of university graduates and enrolments in the humanities. In other words, the technikons and the technological and science fields were heavily under-represented in the early 1990s.

By the end of the 1990s, however, marked shifts had taken place in student enrolments and distribution, using the period 1993 to 1999 as benchmark.<sup>25</sup>

- Black student enrolments increased from 191,000 to 343 000;
- Black students now constituted 59 per cent of the total headcount enrolments in higher education;
- Black student enrolments had decreased by 7,000 in historically black universities;
- Black student enrolments had increased by 22,000 in historically black technikons;
- Black student enrolments had increased by 10,000 in historically white, English-medium universities;
- Black student enrolments had increased by 56,000 in historically white, Afrikaans-medium universities; and
- Black student enrolments had increased by 49,000 in historically white technikons.

These radical and rapid shifts in the demographic spread of students can be attributed to changes in the external environment. Such changes include the unexpected decline in the number of qualifying high school graduates eligible for especially university-level studies ; the unexpected competition from private higher education providers, even though in limited fields of study; the expected compliance with national goals for equity in student (and staffing) enrolments; the need for institutional survival especially on the part of black universities since state subsidies were largely dependent on student enrolment (and progression); and an unexpected but logical shift in the public mind in favour of vocationally-oriented training. These demographic shifts will be further

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid,pp.36-37.

advanced by the mergers planned for higher education in the sense that universities and technikons will be combined in some cases (such as the Rand Afrikaans University and Technikon Witwatersrand), and former white and black universities in other cases (such as the Universities of Durban-Westville and Natal).

#### **4.4.5 Management and governance**

By the mid-1990s, a change in university management and governance had taken place. Many observers have documented the elements of this change but it includes the following:

- The institutional prominence of centralised and strategic planning covering all aspects of university life. The elevated status and pervasive discourse of 'strategic planning' was in part provoked by governmental expectations of 'three-year rolling plans' and the need to monitor and attain institutional performance against planned outputs.
- The decentralisation of core administrative functions in the direction of faculty and departmental units. Such functions include finance and budgeting, planning, facilities (in multi-campus institutions), personnel management, student administration, marketing and communication, and quality assurance.
- The expansion and concentration of executive management on a centralised basis, effectively changing the roles of deans and directors from academic leaders into executive managers. A new language of affirmation accompanied these organisational changes. For example, vice-chancellors became chief executive officers and deans became executive deans. A critical shift in this environment was that deans were now appointed by 'management' rather than by their colleagues.
- The expansion of the functions of councils of universities and technikons as they became much more involved in the management of institutions, compared to their traditional governance role with respect to institutional policies. This created considerable conflict in many institutions as the line between management and governance became blurred through the activism of otherwise distant councils. These changes in governance and administration at institutions dramatically changed the social relations on campuses between staff and students, between academics and administrators,

between university managers and their external communities, between government and institutions.

The HE Act of 1997 ensured a far greater measure of democratization and representivity of governance structures such as Councils and Senates in HE institutions. New structures such as Institutional Forums in which the various structures in institutions such as Councils, Senates, SRCs etc were represented, were established. These Forums are required to advise Councils on matters such as race and gender equity policies and on issues relating to institutional cultures. In addition a welcome emphasis on increased levels of public accountability has been introduced. A new HE management information system has been developed and is being implemented. Likewise, a new financial reporting system for HE has been developed and is in the process of being implemented. The new planning approach adopted by Government for HE, in which institutions have to develop a range of institutional plans, has certainly heralded a new era of increased public accountability in HE.

The remaining challenges in this area are that, the newly established structures do not seem to be functioning as effectively as expected. Councils in particular are too large and will have to be trimmed in size without sacrificing the newly gained victories around their representivity and democratization. Not doing so will inevitably mean that of Councils will assume too high a level of final decision making. Second, in some cases the subcommittee structures of Councils do not seem to be functioning effectively. This means that governance issues are not accorded the required depth of analysis and debate since Councils as such cannot hope to deal equally exhaustively with the many policy and governance issues they are confronted with during their meetings. Third, in especially the historically advantaged institutions these structures are still overwhelmingly dominated by white males. Appreciable progress in this regard still awaits many institutions. Fourth, the sudden introduction of large numbers of new role players to the governance functions of Councils has not been an unqualified success. In many cases new members of Councils were simply not given sufficient training in especially their fiduciary responsibilities. Training in corporate governance especially in view of the changing

public accountability environment is a very serious challenge indeed. Fifth, the large scale democratisation and reconstitution of all boards and council type structures in South African society both in the public and private sectors since 1994 has meant that many black persons and women are unfortunately simply having to serve on too many such bodies simultaneously. It would be unfair to expect an equal time and energy commitment to all the many boards. The pool of suitably qualified persons to serve on governance structures in South African society will have to be enlarged.

#### **4.4.6 Equity**

##### **4.4.6.1 Equity development since 1994**

In line with the nature of the apartheid project, the apartheid system of higher education was profoundly inequitable. Public HEIs were designated for the exclusive use of specified 'race' groups (African, Coloured, Indian and white), and there were legal constraints upon their enrolling students from another group. Attempts to circumvent the system were made by white, English-medium HEIs, and by non-African universities. Specifically, after the introduction of the tricameral parliament in 1984, these institutions took advantage of loopholes in the law and interpreted applications by nondesignated students as being for programmes not offered by African or other black HEIs.

By 1990, 28% of the student enrolment of white English-medium HEIs was black (38% by 1993)<sup>26</sup>. From 1990, as clear signals of impending socio-political change emerged, all HEIs opened their doors to students from non-designated groups. Accordingly, significant changes in institutional enrolment patterns took place between 1990 and 1994.

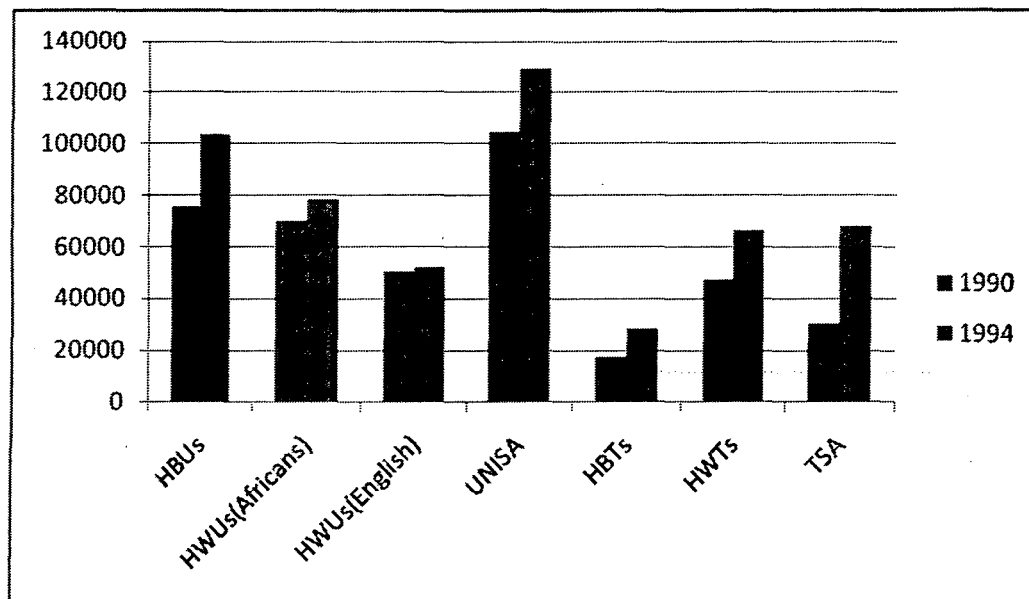
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<sup>26</sup> N.Cleote and R. Fehnel "The Limits of Policy" (Cape Town, 2002), pp. 71



**Chart: 1**

**Headcount Enrollments by Institutional Sector, 1990-94**



	HBUs	HWUs(African s)	HWUs(Englis h)	UNIS A	HBTs	HWTs	TSA
<b>1990</b>	75600	69800	50400	10430 0	17400	47100	30100
<b>1994</b>	10330 0	78300	51700	12920 0	28000	66500	68000

Source: Cleote, fehnel et al 2002: Chapter 5

#### 4.4.6.2 Overall Graduate Equity Output

A crucial feature of the higher education system with respect to its contribution to the intellectual, cultural, social and economic development of the country is, of course, the number, range and quality of its graduates and the rate at which these are produced.

**Table: 3 Graduate outputs from 1995, 1998 and 2002.**

<b>Institutional Type</b>	<b>1995</b>		<b>1998</b>		<b>2002</b>	
Universitiities	65,494	80%	59,167	74%	75,664	74%
Technicons	16,269	20%	20,558	26%	26,015	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,764</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>79,725</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>101,679</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: SAPSE, 1995 and 1998<sup>27</sup>

#### 4.4.6.3 Equity Graduate Outputs by 'Race'

##### Higher Education Graduates by Race, 1995-1998-2001-2002

**Table: 4**

<b>Race</b>	<b>1995</b>		<b>1998</b>		<b>2001</b>		<b>2002</b>	
African	31567	39%	39633	50%	53301	54%	53558	53%
Coloured	4252	5%	4053	5%	5036	5%	5337	5%
Indian	5370	7%	3757	5%	6146	6%	7147	7%
White	40575	50%	32382	40%	33582	34%	35368	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81764</b>		<b>79725</b>		<b>98065</b>		<b>101 680</b>	
	<b>100%</b>		<b>100%</b>		<b>100%</b>		<b>100%</b>	

Source: SAPSE, 1995 and 1998; HEMIS, 2001 and 2002.

The above Table 4, indicates that the number and proportion of African graduates increased significantly between 1995 and 2001, reaching 50% of total graduates (39,633) in 1998 and rising to 53,301 (54% of the total) in 2001, but flattening out at 53,558 (53%) in 2002. Correspondingly, the number and proportion of white graduates dropped initially from 40,575 (50%) in 1995 to 32,282 (40%) in 1998, from which time they rose

<sup>27</sup> The 1995 and 1998 figures differ from those in the CHE Annual Report 1998/99 as they have since been updated.

marginally to 33,582 (34%) in 2001 and then up to 35,638 (35%) in 2002. Coloured and Indian graduates showed modest numerical increases over this period, with a sharp increase of about 1,000 in the latter between 2001 and 2002. While the increase in the number and proportion of African graduates is to be welcomed, the outputs remain unrepresentative of the overall South African population.

#### **4.7.7 The present situation**

##### **4.7.7.1 Equity in the New Institutional Landscape**

A key consideration in assessing what has been achieved by the reconfiguration of the higher education institutional landscape will be the extent to which it enhances 'race' and gender equity among both students and staff.

##### **4.7.7.2 Student Access, Opportunities and Outcomes in the New Institutional Landscape**

In accordance with the historic pattern of enrolments and geographical concentration, Coloured students are clustered predominantly at the universities of the Western Cape, Cape Town and Stellenbosch non-merged institutions and Indians in the merged universities of Durban-Westville/Natal. The distribution of African and white student enrolments is somewhat more even among the merged and non-merged technikons. Not surprisingly, given the historic pattern of enrolments, Coloured students are clustered in the merged Cape Technikon/Peninsula Technikon and Indian students in the merged university of technology (Durban Institute of Technology/Mangosuthu Technikon). The two non-merged comprehensive institutions (Venda and Zululand) remain predominantly African in profile, while the merged ones and the distance education institution are more representative.

In terms of the overall South African demography, Africans form 79% of the population, Coloureds 9%, Indians 2% and whites 10%. In this regard, Africans are still under-represented in higher education and especially under-represented at universities (48%).

Whites remain strongly represented in all institutional types, especially in the universities (37%).<sup>28</sup>

#### **4.7.7.3 Fields of Study in the New Institutional Landscape**

The 68% of postgraduate enrolments are in the universities, 30% in the comprehensive institutions dedicated distance education and just 2% in universities of technology (technikons), which are relative latecomers in being authorised to offer postgraduate qualifications<sup>29</sup>. It can be seen that the independent universities (including the historically advantaged universities of Wits, Cape Town, Pretoria, Stellenbosch and the Free State) have a powerful presence in postgraduate education, accounting for 44% of postgraduate enrolments, including 65% of doctorates and 54% of master's. As a result, doctoral and master's enrolments are heavily concentrated in the universities (84% and 74% respectively).

#### **4.4.8 Availability**

Higher or tertiary education includes education for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, certificates and diplomas; up to the level of the doctoral degree. The South African higher education system includes 23 public higher education institutions: 11 universities, 6 comprehensive universities and 6 universities of technology. As of January 2009, there were also 79 registered and 15 provisionally registered private higher education institutions. Many of South Africa's universities are world-class academic institutions, at the cutting edge of research in certain spheres.

Although public tertiary institutions are subsidised by the state, the universities are autonomous, reporting to their own councils rather than to government. In 2008, the higher education budget was R18.5 billion. Some R15.1 billion of the budget was transferred to higher education institutions as block grants or earmarked funds. According to 2007 figures, a total of 761,090 students were enrolled in the public higher education institutions. One year later, the student enrolment stood at 783,900 and is expected to

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<sup>28</sup> HEMIS,2001,DoE and HEIs.

<sup>29</sup> HEMIS,2001,DoE and HEIs; MoE,2001.

grow to 836,800 by 2011. South African National Plan for higher education seeks to expand enrolment by setting a target of a 20 percent participation rate by 2015. It also proposes a shift in the balance of enrolments to a ratio of 40 percent in humanities, 30 percent in business and commerce, and 30 percent in science, engineering, and technology. In 2007, those percentages stood at 41.7 percent, 30.1 percent and 28.2 percent respectively. The 2007 figures also point to a great improvement in expending higher education to previously disadvantaged population. Almost 63 percent of students in the public higher education system were Black African. However, inequalities of outcome persisted, with the average success rate of Black African undergraduate students standing at only 73.6 percent.

Inequalities also existed in the share of Black African, Coloured and Indian or Asian staff permanently appointed to academic posts in the higher education system: in 2007, they accounted for only 38.6 percent. Women had a 42.8 percent share of permanently appointed academic staff posts, even though females accounted for 55.5 percent of all students enrolled into the tertiary institutions in 2007.

#### **4.4.9 Excellence**

In South Africa, a matric endorsement is required for the study of university degrees, with a minimum of three subjects passed at the higher grade. Some universities set additional academic requirements.

A quarter of all doctoral graduates in South Africa are not from this country, according to the Council on Higher Education, and around one in 10 postgraduate students are foreign. Attracting students from other Southern African countries, especially postgraduates, is an explicit policy aimed at developing research in the region. But efforts to grow the number of research postgraduates are being dissatisfied by lack of supervision capacity.

More than 205,000 students from Sub-Saharan Africa studied outside their home countries in 2006, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and around 70% of them went to North America or Western Europe.

South Africa was the study destination for most of the rest, and in 2007 there were some 60,000 international students in this country, representing 8% of the total student population.

Universities have proportionally more foreign postgraduate students - 10% of all postgraduates in 2004 and this rose to 13% in 2007, according to *Higher Education Monitor - The state of higher education in South Africa*, published by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) late last year.

At the doctoral level in 2005, the CHE report revealed, “26% of people enrolling for doctoral degrees and 25% of doctoral graduates were not South Africans. Since most foreign students come from other countries in Africa, South African higher education plays an important role in developing staff for higher education across Africa.”

It continued later: “This, together with the leading position South Africa enjoys in research output, puts the country in a strong position to develop and lead research on the continent”.

Most research is concentrated in five out of the country's 23 universities, and most international postgraduate students are found in these institutions although others are scattered across the country at universities with postgraduate strengths in specific fields.

The University of Cape Town has the highest number of international students - 4,543 including some 1,600 postgraduates, two-thirds of them from Africa. Foreign students comprise around 20% of the total student cohort.

The university's location in Cape Town and its strong research profile - it has been ranked top in Africa and 146 in the world by the Times Higher Education rankings –are high among the reasons, it is able to attract international students, spokesman Ray hartle told *University World News*.

Nationally, by far the most international students come from member countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) - nearly 42,000 or 70% in 2007, according to the Department of National Education's higher education statistics system HEMIS, against 8,700 from the rest of Africa and more than 7,100 from the rest of the world.

After the end of apartheid in 1994 there was rapid growth in the numbers of international students in South Africa - a five-fold increase to 2007. This is in line with the National Plan for Higher Education, which called for an increase in foreign enrolments, especially from SADC and at the post graduate level.

“Increasing these numbers is considered beneficial for the development of the region as well as for enriching the experience of South African students,” said the CHE report. “International students are counted for enrolment and graduation subsidies in the same manner that South African students are and postgraduates from the SADC region have access to some categories of National Research foundations funding.”

Growth in international student numbers has flattened out in the past few years and the CHE and others - such as the International Education Association of South Africa - have urged more active policy support for internationalization.

The CHE report cited concerns for international students as being fees, which may be higher than those paid by South African students, difficulties in obtaining study visas “and the recent specter of xenophobia in South Africa which has also been reported on university campuses”.

There have also been concerns about the capacity of the higher education system to produce more post graduate students.

“In particular, research has shown that the average number of research masters students per supervisor increased from 3.8 to 5.2 between 2000 and 2005 while the average

number of doctoral students per supervisor increased from 1.3 to 2.2,” the report revealed, adding that lack of qualified supervisors could hamper efforts to increase research postgraduate numbers.

#### **4.5 Achievements**

The considerable change that has characterized higher education as a result of a countless policy initiatives; the higher education of South African today retains considerable strengths. It also displays many positive departures from the legacy system inherited in 1994, and these can be linked to the goals set out in the *White Paper* and *National Plan*. It is hoped that these achievements will become long-term features of the new South African higher education landscape.

First, even if the nature and elements of the transformation agenda that has been elaborate requires ongoing critical debate, the government has nonetheless defined a comprehensive agenda and policy framework for higher education that help in overcoming apartheid past and creating a higher education system that is more suited to the needs of a socially equitable and developing democracy.

Second, Foundations for a single, coordinated and differentiated system of higher education encompassing universities, universities of technology (technikons), comprehensive institutions, and various kinds of colleges have been laid. Progress has been affected through the development of a national higher education plan, benchmarks for higher education transformation, and the establishment of a planning dialogue between the Department of Education (DoE) and HEIs; through the implementation of restructuring strategies encompassing programme level rationalization and cooperation, especially at regional level, and the reconfiguration of the institutional landscape; and through the implementation of common governance arrangements across the public higher education system

Third, it has increased and broadened participation within higher education to advance social equity and meet economic and social development needs, a crucial goal given the



legacy of disadvantage of black and women South Africans, especially of working class and rural poor origins. Student enrolments have grown from 473,000 in 1993 to some 737,472 in 2005. There has also been an extensive deracialisation of the student body, overall and at many institutions. Whereas in 1993 African students constituted 40% (191,000), and black students 52% of the student body, in 2005 they made up 61%(449,241) and 75%respectively of overall enrolments (CHE, 2004;DoE, 2006b).<sup>30</sup>There has also been commendable progress in terms of gender equity. Whereas women students made up 43% (202,000 out of 473,000) of enrolments in 1993, by 2005 they constituted 54.5% (402,267 out of 737,472) of the student body (CHE, 2004; DoE, 2006b).<sup>31</sup>There has also been a welcome internationalization of the student body, overall and at various institutions. Foreign student enrolments increased from 14,124 in 1995 to 51,224 in 2005, constituting about 7% of the total student body. Students from the South African Development Community bloc increased from 7,497 in 1995 to 35,725 in 2005. Students from other African countries increased from 1,769 in 1995 to 7,586 in 2005. Students from the rest of the world totaled 7,913 in 2005.

Fourth, with respect to teaching learning, research and community engagement, in a number of areas of learning and teaching, institutions offer academic programmes that produce high quality graduates with knowledge, competencies and skills to practice occupations and professions locally and anywhere in the world. Various areas of research are characterized by excellence and the generation of high quality fundamental and applied knowledge for scientific publishing in local and international publications, for economic and social development and innovation, and for public policy. In a variety of areas, there are also important and innovative community engagement initiatives that link academics and students and communities.

Fifth, a national quality assurance framework and infrastructure has been established and policies, mechanisms and initiatives with respect to institutional audit, programme

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<sup>30</sup> Council on Higher Education Higher Education in the First Decade of Democracy.(Pretoria,2004). Department of Education (2006b) Education Statistics in South Africa at a glance in 2005 Pretoria Glance in 2005. Pretoria.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

accreditation and quality promotion and capacity development have been implemented since 2004. These developments have significantly raised the profile of quality issues across the sector, and have linked notions of quality in teaching and learning, research and community engagement to the goals and purposes of higher education transformation. There has also been a concomitant emerging institutionalization of quality management within institutions.

Sixth, a new goal-oriented, performance-related funding framework has been instituted. Furthermore, an efficient and effective National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has been successfully established and expanded as a means of effecting social redress for poor students. The number and average amount of NSFAS awards have increased steadily over the years.

Seven, New organizations at system level, such as the Higher Education Branch (HEB) of the DoE and the Council on Higher Education (CHE), as an advisory and QA body, have been institutionalised. A process is also under way to create a unified higher education association from the existing South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) and Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP).

Eight, a national QA infrastructure has been established and key policies and mechanisms with respect to institutional audit and programme accreditation are being implemented from 2004. These developments have significantly raised the profile of quality issues across the sector, and have linked notions of quality in delivery of teaching and learning, research and community engagement, to the goals and purposes of higher education transformation.

Overall, South African higher education shows much promise with respect to knowledge production and dissemination, to contributing to social equity, economic and social development and democracy, and to the development needs of the Southern African region and the African continent.

#### 4.6 Limitations

Though, it is important to recognize accomplishments and achievements. However, there are limitation to Policies as well, those are:

- Firstly, the progress of both African and women students masks inequalities in their distribution across institutions, qualification levels and academic programmes. Large numbers of African students continue to be concentrated in distance education and both African and women students continue to be under-represented in SET and BC programmes. Post-graduate enrolments across most fields are also extremely low.

- Secondly, judging by drop-out, undergraduate success and graduation rates, a substantial improvement in equity of opportunity for black students remain to be achieved. Contact undergraduate success rates should, (according to the DoE) be 80% 'if reasonable graduation rates are to be achieved'.<sup>32</sup> Instead they range from 59% to 87% with an average of 75%. White student success rates in 2005 were 85%, while African student rates were 70%. The DoE's target for throughput rates 'is a minimum of 20% which would imply a final cohort graduation rate of about 65%' Instead, throughput rates for 2000-2004 were between 13% and 14%, and the cohort graduation rate was 45% in 2004, with an overall drop-out rate of 45%.<sup>33</sup>

Inadequate funding to financially and academically support students is one likely reason for the very high rate of drop outs. However, the extent to which intellectually nurturing cultures that promote higher learning, cater for the varied learning needs of a diverse student body through well-conceptualized, designed and implemented academic programmes and academic development initiatives, and whether the minimum conditions to assure quality are in place at all institutions are controversial issues. The danger of the shortcomings in quality, of course, is that it compromises redress and social equity, confuses certification with meaningful education and confers private benefits while generating limited public benefits.

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<sup>32</sup> Department of Education (2006a) Aspects of the Higher Education Planning context. July 17.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*

- Thirdly, the institutional restructuring of higher education and a new landscape is intended to ‘lay the foundation for an equitable, sustainable and productive higher education system that will be of high quality and contribute effectively and efficiently to the human resource, skills, knowledge and research needs of South Africa’.<sup>34</sup>

However, while institutional restructuring is a *necessary* condition of the transformation of South African higher education it is not a *sufficient* condition. Other concomitant initiatives are required to give effect to higher education transformation and realize its contribution to social equity and the economic, social, cultural and intellectual development needs and goals of South Africa.

Whether mergers in general and specific mergers in particular will indeed create equitable, productive and sustainable institutions and contribute to the effective and efficient achievement of wider national goals and specific institutional goals remains to be seen. Only time will reveal the success or otherwise of institutional restructuring and mergers.

#### **4.6.1 Shift in Macro-Economic Policy**

Orthodox international macro-economic policy has also been very influential in the policy formulation process in South Africa. One of the most significant and earliest shifts in ANC policy occurred in June 1996 with the release of the GEAR (DOF, 1996) strategy as the government’s official macro-economic dogma, displacing the RDP (ANC, 1994) from its earlier status as the party’s social democratic orthodoxy on economic policy. The significance of GEAR was that it privileged the attainment of monetary policy objectives such as the reduction of the state’s fiscal deficit and inflation rate at the expense of other important features of the RDP’s broad socio economic platform of policies particularly those elements in the RDP and Growth Through Redistribution doctrine that were premised on coordinated market policies, a developmental state, and the provision of basic needs. Work by Webster and Adler (1999) highlighted the genesis of this shift from

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<sup>34</sup>MoE “ National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa. Ministry of Education.”(Pretoria,2001), pp.16.

what the authors termed the “Left-Keynesian” framework of the Growth through Redistribution doctrine and the RDP to the conservative macro-economics of GEAR. The roots of this shift lay as far back as November 1993 with the formation of the Transitional Executive Council when ANC officials, along with representatives from the apartheid government’s DOF and Reserve Bank, negotiated a secret deal with the World Bank to secure a U.S.\$850 million loan. In return, the ANC (as the future government) agreed to maintain existing monetary policy, prioritise inflation reduction, contain government expenditure, and desist from raising taxes the key premises of the future GEAR strategy. Webster and Adler<sup>35</sup> showed how these two tendencies Left-Keynesianism and macro-economic conservatism ran parallel to each other from 1993 onwards, but with the latter having a significant influence over the former. For example, the initial COSATU Reconstruction Accord was redrafted by the ANC in its preparation of the April 1994 RDP election manifesto to include strong references to the new monetarist principles. By June 1996, with the publication of GEAR, this conservative macro-economic framework was the new ANC economic orthodoxy, having effectively neutralized COSATU and Communist Party opposition to these shifts. The impact of GEAR (DOF, 1996) on the policy debates in the HE sector was also severe. Along with the 1997 publication of the government’s Medium Term Expenditure Framework, which laid out the government’s intended expenditure patterns and priorities over a 3-year period (for a fuller discussion of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework, see DOF, 1996; National Treasury, 2002), the impact of these tight fiscal policies meant that the HE sector was unlikely to be allocated more financial resources than before. Total education expenditure has stabilised at about 21.3% of total government expenditure. HE has consumed 14% of this allocation.<sup>36</sup> These percentages are very favourable in comparative terms. Exceeding them would be extremely difficult for the government to afford or justify. These limits on state intervention filtered through to HE even during the policy formulation phase. Perhaps the most contrasting feature between the *White Paper* (DOE, 1997) and the report of the NCHE (1996b) was the former document’s fiscal realism: What is not clear,

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<sup>35</sup> African National Congress. (1990b). Recommendations on post-apartheid economic policy. Transformation, 12,pp.15.

<sup>36</sup> Cloete, N., & Bunting, I. “Higher education transformation: Assessing performance in South Africa”. Pretoria, South Africa: Centre for Higher Education Transformation,2000,pp.66.

however, is what increases in participation rates for black students, and overall, are possible within the foreseeable future in the context of the government's macro-economic framework and fiscal policies. . . . It is unlikely that the recent trend of public expenditure growth rates in this sector can be sustained over the next decade, given other pressing social needs. . . . Despite national fiscal constraints, and the government's commitment to fiscal discipline, the central role of higher education in developing high-level skills and competencies essential for social and economic development requires sustained financial investment in the higher education system. Substantial additional costs are associated with greater student participation, redress of current inequities, and the restructuring of existing programmes. These costs will have to be met from a strategic mix of funding sources. These will include system and institutional efficiencies, a greater volume of private contributions, and increased, redistributed and tightly targeted public sector outlays.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore, a significant shift in focus on, present in the policymaking period of 1997 but amplified later that HE transformation could be brought about only through the attainment of greater institutional efficiencies and cost-effectiveness and the redistribution of these savings to targeted transformational interventions. However, as Cloete and Bunting<sup>38</sup> pointed out, the state has failed to increase the amount allocated to redress through earmarked funding in the 1995 to 1999 period and is therefore unlikely to be able to afford a dramatic increase in the near future. The subsidy block grants to institutions still dominate about 88% of government allocations, whereas the level for earmarked funding has remained relatively stable since 1995 at 12%. In short, fiscal restraint and lower economic growth rates than initially forecast by GEAR (DOF, 1996) seriously constrained the government's ability to act positively in terms of redressing the inequities inherited by the HE system from the past.

#### **4.6.2 Institutional Differentiation**

The *National Plan* firmly rejected the rigid structural differentiation of the CHE report, although it added a new element in the ongoing policy debate about institutional

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<sup>37</sup> Department of Education. (1997). Education white paper 3: A programme for the transformation of higher education. Pretoria, South Africa: Government Gazette, pp. 21.

<sup>38</sup> Cleote and Bunting et al. pp. 64.

differentiation. It proposed the retention of the binary divide between technikons and universities for a period of at least 5 years, primarily to limit the extent of institutional creep and the drift toward programme uniformity. The tendency toward uniformity of provision, according to the *National Plan*, “is worrying.” There has been little evidence of attempts by institutions, it argues, to identify unique institutional strengths and niche areas, either existing or potential, that would differentiate between institutions: In fact, other than the broad distinction between universities and technikons in terms of the career-oriented and technological focus of the latter, there is little else to distinguish between and within the aspirations of the university and technikon sectors. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that many institutions aspire to a common “gold” standard as represented by the major research institutions, both nationally and internationally. The *National Plan* identified three determinants of the tendency toward uniformity. These were the absence of planning capacity at institutional level to identify unique niche areas, the lack of a strong regulatory framework designed to ensure diversity, and the highly competitive and imitative behaviour of institutions as witnessed in the past decade. The solutions to these problems do not lie with the CHE’s proposed rigid system of structural differentiation, “which introduces an element of rigidity which will preclude institutions from building on their strengths to respond to social and economic needs” in unique and differing. The solution (according to the *National Plan*) lies in a return to mission and programme differentiation as outlined in the DOE’s (1997) *White Paper* that would allow institutions to define a unique developmental and programme trajectory for themselves in a way that would not “lock them into a predetermined institutional structure” as would be the case with the CHE proposals.<sup>39</sup> The tendency toward uniformity will be restricted by levers, sanctions, and incentives built into the “planning grid” proposed by the *National Plan* that would limit provision in areas that were duplicative or inefficient in the use of scarce resources.

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<sup>39</sup>Department of Education. (2001a, February). National plan on higher education. Pretoria, South Africa: Author.pp.54

### 4.6.3 Mergers

In contrast to its rejection of much of the CHE proposals on institutional differentiation, the *National Plan* clearly signals its support for the CHE analysis and recommendations regarding improving system efficiency and effectiveness. The *National Plan* argues that the key point to emphasise is that the rationale for restructuring the higher education system is to ensure the fitness of purpose both of the system and of the individual institutions. The fact is the higher education system is currently not operating efficiently in terms of its core mandate, i.e. the production of knowledge and graduates. In this context, the starting point for restructuring the higher education system must be to ensure that higher education institutions, as they are structured, become more efficient and effective, before embarking on new roles and functions.<sup>40</sup> The *National Plan* specifically agrees with the CHE's analysis that the "sustainability and transformation of the higher education system requires a reduction in the number of institutions".<sup>41</sup> It agrees with the reasons given by the CHE for a reduction in the number of institutions, the key arguments being the sector's roots in a tainted apartheid past, its lack of responsiveness to human resources development needs, and the lack of capacity to manage the current configuration of institutions. The *National Plan* is very assertive on the question of state steering, coordination, and planning, reflecting a clear return to the language of the NCHE (1996b) report and *White Paper* (DOE, 1997). It is strongly critical of the lack of real collaboration and the high degree of institutional self-interest and voluntarism that has characterized the sector's response to the new policy environment since the mid-1990s: Institutional collaboration will not make any headway unless there is direct intervention and stronger signals from government. . . . The Minister does not agree with suggestions from the higher education sector that combination processes should be essentially self-driven, although within a stronger policy framework. Voluntarism . . . has failed to encourage institutional collaboration. And while planning and funding mechanisms will play an important role in steering programme and infrastructural collaboration, they are insufficient on their own to alter the institutional landscape of higher education. The Ministry firmly believes that if the institutional landscape of higher

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.pp.59.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.pp.86



education is to be restructured, the Minister will have to exercise the full regulatory powers at his disposal in terms of the Higher Education Act (No 101 of 1997), that is, the power to merge two or more public higher education institutions into a single institution. The Ministry will not shy away from this responsibility. The strength of the *National Plan* undoubtedly lies with its return to the idea of state steerage. The *National Plan* has a strongly articulated commitment to implement policy and in particular to implement the levers, sanctions, and incentives that will steer the entire system in the direction of a diverse yet single coordinated national system of HE. The document asserts strongly that the framework outlined “is not open for further consultation. The focus must now be firmly on implementation”. The DOE has never before spoken with such resolution regarding HE policy.

#### **4.7 Critical Issues and challenges**

South Africa HE pre 1994 was governed and managed by a large number of different government departments in terms of race groupings. Although efforts were made to ensure some commonality of policies, the application of these policies was very uneven. Inevitably this gave rise to a large degree of fragmentation, lack of co-ordination, severe inequities and inefficiencies in the HE system.

Against this background the major challenge for the post 1994 government in the field of HE has been to: ‘conceptualize, plan, govern and fund higher education in SA as a single, co-ordinate system’. In terms of the White Paper on HE of 1997 the planning of such a system of HE was to be premised on a number of fundamental principles. These are: Equity and redress, democratization, development, quality, effectiveness and efficiency, academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability. These principles are intended to characterize policy development and policy implementation in pursuit of establishing a HE system which will achieve all the goals set for it in the White Paper.

##### **4.7.1 Institutional Landscape**

It is essential that there is an acute awareness of the contemporary and changing context within which South African higher education transformation takes place. Three

dimensions of the contemporary context are relevant. First, globalization of communications, of trade, of production, of culture is a defining feature of the period. Second, inequality, poverty and injustice remain rife in the world, and fault lines between the rich and powerful and the poor and powerless continue to deepen within and between countries. Third, higher education itself is increasingly subject to pressures of Transnationalisation, marketisation and commoditization, as those seeking new sources of profit see higher education as a multi-billion dollar industry independent of sovereign national purposes.

The context of these three dimension will condition and shape policy and practice, as South African higher education struggles to transform in ways that meet the challenges of its own developing democracy, and the globalizing knowledge society and economy. It should also be noted that higher education and its institutions exist at the intersection of state, market and civil society, each with its specific, varied and different expectations and demands. A common experience of all institutions, therefore, is an exceptional 'demand overload' that is to say, institutions must:

- Cope with a vast array of varied and differing national goals and imperatives, policy initiatives, market pressures, public expectations and institutional stakeholder demands.
- Discussing the need for and possibly developing national policy on internationalization of higher education.
- Developing national policy on the application of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) to higher education.
- Collecting well-defined and accurate information about student and staff mobility in relation to South African higher education (incoming and outgoing).
- Developing institutional-level internationalization policies linked to core functions.

#### **4.7.2 Teaching -Learning, and Research**

The core activities of higher education and HEIs teaching and learning, research and community service, and innovation and renewal in these areas cannot be sidelined in the clamors over changes to governance, financing and other areas. Focus must be sustained

on ensuring that HEIs address their core function: fulfilling the needs of students and society.

The issues are complex and wide-ranging. Teaching and learning, and research programmes, need to be conceptualized, designed and planned for a diverse student body. Opportunities need to be presented so that students can develop and succeed as intellectuals, professionals and researchers; can think theoretically, can analyze with validity, and can gather and process empirical data; and, finally, can do all this with a deep social conscience and sensitivity to the development challenges and needs of our society. Students also need learning environments and cultures that are safe, secure and respectful, intellectually nurturing, and engage them as partners. Finally, critical questions with respect to the transformation of teaching and learning and the curriculum, and the discourse of responsiveness prevailing in academic departments today, must be continuously posed and answered. The orientation of academic programmes, their outcomes, curricula, modes of teaching and learning, and assessment all require evaluation. Further, the question must be asked whether academic programmes are narrowly directed at technical mastery in a discipline or field, or whether they also address issues of critical citizenship, and the context and needs of a transforming society in which knowledge must be applied.

#### **4.7.3 Quality**

A serious higher education transformation agenda must prioritize quality as a key policy driver. However, significant challenges associated with implementing the quality objectives of policy must be recognized. One of these challenges is to manage the difficult balancing act between quality and equity: equity without quality is meaningless, while quality cannot be pursued in isolation from the goal of equity in higher education. A second challenge is to develop, in a differentiated system, a variety of standards appropriate to specified educational objectives and purposes. A third is to resist the tendency to see investment in QA as an expense that could be better utilized elsewhere. While quality is ultimately the responsibility of the institution, it cannot be left to institutional Endeavour alone. Going forward, a principled partnership will be required

between HEIs, academics, students, other stakeholders and external QA agencies, to enable an optimal mix of self-regulation of quality by HEIs, and external validation.

#### **4.7.4 The Role of the State**

The successful transformation of higher education and HEIs cannot be left uniquely to the 'market' and 'market forces'; nor will it be the result of individual and collective efforts of HEIs alone. The state has an indispensable role to play, while the mode of its involvement requires careful modulation.

The involvement and role of the state should be predicated on a fundamental commitment and respectful adherence to the principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom as necessary conditions for optimizing the contribution of higher education to economic and social development. This is so notwithstanding the concomitant necessity for public accountability on the part of HEIs. Optimally, the state's role should constitute a mode of involvement that is thoughtful and supervisory, creating an enabling higher education policy framework that includes appropriate substantive policies, predictability of policy and adequate public funding.

It is necessary to comprehend the limits of Ministry of Education action in higher education change and transformation, and that of other national agencies. This is particularly the case when it comes to far-reaching goals such as the creation of 'a single national coordinated system'. The market, civil society and social forces internal to higher education and HEIs, also has a great impact on higher education and HEIs. This is especially the case where public subsidies to HEIs may be declining and new sources of revenue have to be found, and where considerable and even competing claims may be made on HEIs by the market and civil society (and other state departments).

#### **4.7.5 Student and staff equity and increased participation rates.**

In 1994 the overall HE participation rate of about 17% of all 20-24 year olds in SA displayed severe inequities the participation rate for whites was in the region of 70% while that of Africans was approximately 10%. The present participation rate of about

16% displays a significant improvement in the participation rate of Africans to 13% but equity in this regard still remains a serious and long term challenge.

Similarly student numbers of black persons (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) in HE increased very rapidly in the post-1994 era. In 1993 black students comprised 52% of all enrolments in HE while this figure increased to 72% in 2000. A large part of this change is, however, attributable to a fairly significant decline in the student numbers of whites in the HE system. In terms of gender equity overall women student enrolments in HE comprised 50% in 1997 and in 2000 had become 53%.

Despite these obvious achievements towards greater levels of equity in student enrolments and participation in HE a number of serious challenges still confront us. First enrolments of women and black students in especially science, engineering and technology are still way very low. Second an analysis of graduation and retention rates in HE institutions also reveals some serious challenges that are awaiting us. Retention rates amongst the universities were 87% in 1997 and then dropped to 83% in 1999. For technikons the corresponding figures were 74% and 68% respectively. The drop in retention rates is alarming. Some analysts attribute at least a part of the increase in drop-out rates to the high cost of HE study and the insufficiency of available student financial aid in the National Student Financial Aid Scheme. This challenge will have to be faced squarely. Third, graduation rates in terms of proportions of graduates to enrolments in our HE system reveal the following figures for 2000: Science, Engineering and Technology 26%, Business and Commerce 22%, Humanities 33% and Education 19%. Once again these overall average figures mask significant differences in terms of type of institution (university or technikon) and the race of students where black students still tend to have lower graduation rates than white students. Clearly equity in terms of student outputs is as important as equity in terms of student inputs and HE will be hard pressed to make substantial progress in this regard in the next few years. Fourth for academic staff the picture is hardly any better. In 1994 20% of all academic staff in HE consisted of black persons (Africans -13%, Coloured-3% and Indian-4%). By 1999 this had changed to 27% only (African- 18%, Coloured-4% and Indian- 6%). In terms of gender, 32% of all

academic staff was women in 1994 while this figure changed to 37% in 1999. As in the previous case, these overall figures particularly in terms of race mask very real differences between historically advantaged and disadvantaged institutions.

#### **4.7.6 Funding**

HE has been funded in terms of subsidy formulas which are based on student enrolments; successful student numbers in terms of courses passed and research outputs. The present subsidy formulas for universities and technikons are replaced in 2003 by a new funding framework consisting of block grant allocations and earmarked funding. Block grant funding will be generated by teaching input subsidies based on approved student places, teaching output subsidies based on numbers of graduated students, research output subsidies based on masters and doctor's graduates and research outputs in the form of research articles published in accredited journals and a provision for set-up costs. In the teaching input subsidies provision is made for differential costs associated with levels of study (three levels) and fields of study (four cost categories). In essence this leads to a 4x3 funding medium. The new funding framework's block grant allocations consist of the notion of 'approved student places'. This means that institutions will be awarded a certain number of approved student places in terms of three year rolling institutional plans which are to be based on the five year programme niche plans drawn up by them and which are the subject of present negotiations between them and the Department of Education.

The following main challenges arise for HE in this regard: First, the envisaged funding of research outputs only in the block grants means that institutions with low research outputs will be largely dependent on earmarked funding for allocations to improve their research performance. Second institutions will have to develop well functioning management information systems which will ensure a good fit between institutional capacity and student places asked for. It will also be important for institutions to avoid declining enrolments in the four categories of fields of study since this will simply result in lower numbers of approved student places and thus lower allocations.

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## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### ***Conclusion***

The history of South Africa has been particularly characterized by intense political conflict and socio-cultural divisions along race and class lines. The initial character of the higher education system was forged by the country's colonial history and the underlying conflict between British and Afrikaner nationalism. Today, the system is being fundamentally reshaped by the post-apartheid transformation of South African society.

Unlike most other colonized African nations, the unusual proliferation of 36 higher education institutions among a relatively under populated nation was the combined result of two aspects of South Africa's history. First, the intense rivalry between the two dominant political and cultural groups-the British colonists and Boer Afrikaners-worked against the establishment of a single national university and endanger a multiplicity of Historically White Universities (HWUs). Second, apartheid racial and technicist ideology later generated more HWUs, as well as the ten Historically Black Universities (HBUs) and subsequently the fifteen technikons (of which, seven were historically white, and seven historically black, and one a distance-education technikon). Therefore, between 1916 and the late 1980s, a system of 36 higher education institutions, comprising 21 universities and 15 technikons with approximately 550,000 students evolved.

The flaws of apartheid higher education are contrasted to the post 1994 policy framework, and the following argument is presented. Although a radical shift in policy content and direction has occurred from apartheid to post-apartheid, numerous problems continued within the higher education sector and in policy processes, specifically in their implementation within and between institutions. The policy weaknesses exist in various areas, such as funding, redress and capacity building, both for Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) and for students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

One reason for such problems in the higher education system is the fact that the market mechanism remains strong in the system in general and in universities in particular. The system thus continues to be patchy, although not altogether fragmented, despite government's efforts at coordinating a unified system. Policy implementation at various institutions and in the system in general, remains weak. The socio-economic and politico



geographical reality of apartheid continues in the period under study, with higher education institutions inserted in this landscape of an urban and rural divide between advantaged and disadvantaged campuses. Furthermore, the marginalization of a previously radical constituency to redefine and recast the higher education system creates a discontinuity between the radical legacy of past student movements and the reported post-apartheid immobility of higher education sectors. Thus, despite all the changes after 1994, redefining a new higher education system remains problematic. These are issues, raised in Chapter four, that underlined the roots of ineffective Government policies on Higher education and proved both the hypotheses valid that the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and Massive shift to market economy has reduced public funding of universities which was required in huge amount to bring in Higher Disadvantaged Community to Higher Education and Democratic government's policies for restructuring higher education in favour of Historically Disadvantage community are not affective because affirmative action is voluntary and not mandatory.

ANC's (1994) vision on "Unified higher education" refers to a "single, flexible educational system, under a single qualification structure' with quality, mobility, flexibility and effective education to be possible at all South African institutions". This is in contrast to the fragmented system that existed prior to 1994, that was characterised by a racial and ethnic divide between institutions; by quality being identified with the larger liberal institutions due to their international recognition at the time; and mobility, flexibility and effective education being reduced due to problems across the system. However, this does not mean that there was no quality in the system. "Historically Advantaged Institutions" (HAIs) and "Historically Disadvantaged Institutions" (HDIs).

Distinction between Universities is used in order to describe the distinct split along racial and ethnic lines as set out in the apartheid policy (1959), which created separate universities for the different African ethnic populations (Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, etc.) and for coloured and Indian populations. Such engineering aimed at limiting HBUs to institutions of teaching (rather than institutions of research), and their limited potential and capacity was further exacerbated by the fact that most of them were located in rural

areas (in government-created ethnic homelands) to give some authority to those territories as being independent and having their own institutions, government and administration (to which these universities could direct their training). The HAIs fall into two groups. Firstly, there were the larger and older “liberal” English institutions that were well endowed due to their urban location, their historical networks, and their links to business, their alumni and their capacity for research. The Afrikaans institutions were smaller, with the exception of UNISA, and were the product of Afrikaner affirmative action, with growing capacity and potential, though they were mainly conservative in orientation. These also had networks with business and its alumni. They are also sometimes described as historically white universities (HWUs) and historically black universities (HBUs), or as historically Afrikaans institutions and historically English institutions, due to their respective mediums of instruction in the era of apartheid.

The HDIs were disadvantaged by their low capacity, their low level of research (they were not intended to be research institutions), their rural locations placing them at the margins of the South African economy, and by their lack of financial and other networks. This marginal status is also reflected in other aspects, such as having been limited to being teaching institutions, and being obliged to use up their funds instead of investing surplus funds. A second aspect of marginalisation is found in the student sector, in terms of disadvantaged students who eventually contested their placement in ethnic-based institutions the result of this were constant eruptions at HDIs in the apartheid era.

However, post apartheid there has been a significant development in HDIs due to various development policies undertaken by the new government. A rapid student enrollment with African and women student numbers rises in HAIs, while enrollment at most historically black universities declined sharply. This decline was due to students’ greater choice of institutions and opening up of equal access after post apartheid, and these issues were raise in chapter two and therefore, prove the hypothesis valid that the government policies on racial transformation resulted in a huge shift of enrollment from Historically Disadvantage University to former “Only white university” (Historically Advantage University).

Thus, the main concern of government's higher education post apartheid policies includes redressing past inequity, increase efficiency and productivity. Therefore, government's initiatives for higher education policy like NEPI, UDUSA, Centre for Education policy development and many more emphasized on principles of non-sexism, non racialism and unitary system and work rigorously towards achieving it. Therefore, government reshaping and merging of HDIs and HAIs is to achieved greater equity and redress in the system, it also achieve reduction of public HEIs from 36 institutions into 21 .However, success regarding achievement of equity and redress entirely depends on the effective formulation and implementation of redress policy and a new funding framework which incorporates redress measures.

## *Appendices*

**APPENDIX I**

**LIST OF UNIVERSITIES ANDS TECHNICON QUALIFICATION**

<i>University qualification</i>	<i>Equivalent technikon qualification</i>
<b>Doctorate</b>	<b>Laureatus in technology</b>
<b>Masters degree</b>	<b>National diploma in technology</b>
<b>Honours degree</b>	<b>National higher diploma</b>
<b>Postgraduate diploma</b>	<b>Postdiploma diploma</b>
<b>Professional first bachelors degree</b>	<b>First national diploma (4 years)</b>
<b>General first bachelors degree</b>	<b>First national diploma (3 years)</b>

## APPENDIX II

### LIST OF INSTITUTIONS UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNICONS IN SA

#### ***Universities:***

- The university of the North and the Medical University of Southern Africa(University of Limpopo from January 2005);
- The university of Kwa Zulu- Natal;
- The University of Zululand;
- The University of Fort Hare;
- Rhodes University;
- The University of Port Elizabeth( The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University from January from 2005);
- The University of Cape Town;
- Stellenbosch University;
- The University of Western cape;
- North-West University;
- The University of the Free State;
- Rand Afrikaans University and Vista(University of Johannesburg from January 2005);
- The University of Pretoria;
- The University of South Africa;
- The University of Witwatersrand.

#### ***Technicons:***

- The University of Transkei( Walter Sisulu University of Technology from January 2005);
- Durban Institute of Technology ( Mangosuthu Technikon to join DIT) ;
- The Border and Eastern Cape Technikons (Walter Sisulu University of Technology and Science from January 2005);

- Port Elizabeth Technikon( The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University from January 2005);
- Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technicon will merge ( Cape Peninsula University of Technology from January 2005);
- Central University of Technology, Free State;
- Technikon Witwatersrand (University of Johannesburg from January 2005);
- Tshwane University of Technology;
- Vaal University of Technology.

### APPENDIX III

#### Enrollment by Institutional Type:

		<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>Universities</b>	HBU	92,000 (27%)	111,000 (29%)	99,000 (25%)	79,000 (21%)
	HWU Afrikaans	73,000 (21%)	92,000 (24%)	116,000 (29%)	128,000 (34%)
	HWU English	52,000 (15%)	53,000 (14%)	56,000 (14%)	56,000 (15%)
	UNISA	123,000 (36%)	128,000 (33%)	124,000 (32%)	108,000 (30%)
	Total	340,000 (100%)	384,000 (100%)	394,000 (100%)	372,000 (100%)
<b>Technikons</b>	HBT	24,000 (17%)	32,000 (17%)	43,000 (22%)	44,000 (23%)
	HWT	58,000 (36%)	68,000 (37%)	81,000 (40%)	82,000 (43%)
	Technikon SA	50,000 (47%)	85,000 (46%)	77,000 (38%)	66,000 (34%)
	Total	133,000 (100%)	185,000 (100%)	201,000 (100%)	192,000 (100%)

*Source: DOE 1999, Tables 25.1, 26, 27.2, and 28.*



Appendix IV  
Levels of Education in South Africa

BAND	SCHOOL GRADES	NQF LEVEL	QUALIFICATIONS
HIGHER		8	Doctor's degree
		7	Master's degree
			Honours degree
			Postgraduate diploma
		6	General first degree
			Professional first degree postgraduate
			Bachelor's degree
		5	First diploma
			Higher certificate
			Certificate
FURTHER	12	4	Diplomas
	11	3	Certificates
	10	2	
GENERAL	9	1	Grade 9 / Adult Basic Education and Training level 4
	8		
	7		
	6		
	5		
	4		
	3		
	2		
	1		
R			

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Source: Department of Education (DoE), South Africa

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