Persistent economic inequalities in higher education policies of South Africa. Should fees fall? A case study of the University of KwaZulu Natal.

By

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A Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Public Policy at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College), Durban, South Africa

PROMOTER: Miss Fikile Vilakazi

JUNE 2019

ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL

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23 January 2018

Ms Noeline Xulu 211558788
School of Social Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Xulu

Protocol reference number: HSS/2277/017M
Project Title: Persistent economic inequalities in higher education policies of South Africa - Should fees fall?: A case study of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Howard College Campus in South Africa

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 5 December 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Fikile Vilakazi
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, **Noeline Xulu (211558788)** hereby declare that…

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(iii) This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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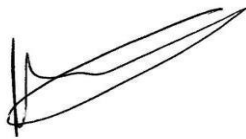
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DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

I supervised this Masters dissertation to satisfaction and is submitted with my approval.

Title: Persistent economic inequalities in higher education policies of South Africa. Should fees fall? A case study of the University of KwaZulu Natal.

Student name and number: Noeline Xulu - **211558788**

Signature   **Date**

Ms F Vilakazi   June 2019

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Dr Joyce Xulu and my son Ethan Mpilo-enhle Naidoo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dear God, I owe this to You. Thank You for Your grace, love and endurance!

This has been a period of intense learning for me, not only with writing this thesis but also on a personal level. Writing this dissertation has had a big impact on me. I would like to reflect on the people who have supported and helped me so much throughout this period.

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ABSTRACT

1. Introduction

Looking at the policies drafted in 1994 when South Africa became a democratic state, the aim of the study was to investigate if it was feasible to have free higher education when government had already failed the country on the existing policy or promise of free basic education. The question was: If fees were to fall, would this rectify the persistent inequalities of South Africa's higher education system?

2. Aims and objectives

The case for free higher education depends on two principle premises: (a) social equity: expanding advanced education access for poor people, particularly recently underestimated networks, notwithstanding expanding educational cost charges, and (b) development externalities. Given South Africa's abnormal amounts of abilities deficiencies, free higher education is deemed important to get human capital speculation to productive dimensions. The aim of the study was to establish the extent to which South Africa was ready to provide free higher education. The main objective was to find out if such a policy would address endemic inequalities in the country.

3. Methods

This is a mixed methods study which employed primary qualitative data collected via desktop research and a bit of field work with the use of surveys and interviews. The decision to use a mixed methods approach was predicated on the understanding that no method is perfect. Secondly, it was to further enrich the study's findings. Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to explore the nature of the case and to get in-depth understanding of different issues that might involve people's actions, experiences and attitudes of implementing agents.

4. Results

Free education in South Africa is an objective worth seeking after. It is important, particularly for those who are poor and need access to tertiary education but have no means to do so, as well as individuals who accurately consider it to be a privilege and a basic right for the nation. Germany has achieved this goal but unfortunately there is no African country which offers free higher education. There are countries that have tried it, but the expense of it all was far too much. The tremendous test is to make the trademark of "free higher education" attainable.

1. Recommendations

Flowing from the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

-We have to agree that poor students must be prioritized in terms of free education.

- There should be a formula where parents and the state share costs. Parents must pay what they can afford while the state fills in the rest. In this formula, private sector contributions can be included to subsidize the scheme through corporate bursaries.

-There should be a reduction in spending in other priority areas so as to be able to fund free higher education. Although this will impact people negatively, any investment in education is good investment.

-Those in positions of power should refrain from corrupt activities so that government would have enough money to invest in higher education.

-For the dream of free higher education to be realized all stakeholders should come on board (including the private sector). Government alone cannot deliver free higher education to the nation.

List of abbreviations

BRICS   Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

CHE   Council on Higher Education

DoE   Department of Education

HESA   Higher Education South Africa

NCHE   National Commission for Higher Education

NGO   Non-Governmental Organisation

NRF   National Research Foundation

NQF   National Qualifications Framework

NSFAS   National Student Financial Aid Scheme

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

RDP   Reconstruction and Development: Programme

SAQA   South African Qualifications Authority

TOC   Theory of Change

TABLE OF CONTENT

Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

1. Introduction

The persistent inequalities in higher education in South Africa derive from the country's past racial disparities. The apartheid higher education system was differentiated and diversified along racial and ethnic lines, resulting in the advantaging in various ways of what were previously known as white institutions and the disadvantaging of the previously black institutions (Msimang, 2015). Social disparities were implanted and reflected in all spheres of public life in South Africa. This was as a result of the fundamental rejection of blacks by the white minority under imperialism and politically-sanctioned racial segregation epitomized by apartheid from 1948. So, the education framework was no exemption in this regard; it was informed by race. The South African education system was and keeps on being influenced by social, political and financial separation and imbalances of a class, race, and sexual orientation, institutional and spatial nature. The present study was sparked by the most recent "#Fees must fall" protests. These protests can be marked as historic as in the past, non-whites would often strike for a better and affordable education system. However, this latest strike was one which included both black and white students coming together for the sole purpose of calling for the fees to fall at tertiary level.

The present study will add to existing knowledge on the theme of this dissertation. It will do this by adding new information and reinterpreting pre-existing information with specific emphasis on the racial disparities in education policies and related financial implications for students in Higher Institutions of Learning. The study focuses on the need for everyone to have the right to education. The main argument is that one should have the right to access and enter tertiary institutions regardless of financial constraints accumulated due to having a previously disadvantaged background. As a result, the study seeks to contribute to knowledge as it will reflect on the struggles of the past and the policies that were implemented to address education inequalities in South Africa (Ramoupi, 2011).

1.1 Background and outline of the research problem

The "#Fees must fall" movement in 2015 was not the first of protests at South Africa's universities. Students at poorer institutions that cater almost exclusively for black students such as the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Fort Hare University and the Tshwane University of Technology have been protesting routinely against rising fees and the cost of higher education since 1994. However, not only did their protests not make headlines in newspapers but their protest action was largely ignored. This then changed with the most recent "#Fees must fall" protests which involved students from not only historically disadvantaged but also historically advantaged universities. It then attracted widespread media coverage and sparked solidarity protests in cities as far afield as London and New York (Mkhize, 2015).

As mentioned above, there was very little media attention given to the protests that took place earlier at historically black universities versus widespread coverage and international solidarity for protests at historically white universities. The two very different responses are a stark reminder of post-apartheid South Africa's embedded inequalities. The above calls for revisiting some of our policies that were in place pre-democracy and the policies created and formulated post-democracy (McKaiser, 2016). This compels us to look at the Freedom Charter of 1955 which states *inter alia* that "education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit" (Freedom Charter, 1955). Government has provided this free education but only with regards to free basic education. The reality is that apartheid-era inequalities have not yet been addressed or removed entirely. Noticeably, as the demonstrations proved, the students' demands were deeper than just calling for free higher education. They also called for the "decolonization" and "transformation" of higher education institutions – both in terms of the staff profile and the curriculum. In a way, such a call was not misplaced. Similar calls were made by the political and academic leadership as well as the students in East Africa in the 1960s. Other parts of Africa joined the fray and made similar calls too. As such, South African students were justified in their "decolonization" and "transformation" calls.

1.2. Preliminary literature study and reasons for choosing the topic

The aim of this research project was to assess the feasibility of having a policy which promotes equality in the higher education system. For this reason, the South African education policies, the Freedom Charter and the Constitution had to be looked at but also had to be juxtaposed with some international education policies. To understand how it is that South Africa is faced with this pandemic, we must start by revisiting the past. This means looking at policies which existed during apartheid (Mamdani, 1998). The Apartheid system created educational inequalities through overt racist policies. The Bantu Education Act (No. 47) of 1953 ensured that Blacks received an education that would limit their educational potential and remain in the working class (Bantu Education Act, 1953). This policy directly affected the content of learning to further racial inequalities by preventing Black access to further education. In addition to the content, apartheid legislation affected the educational potential of students. School was compulsory for Whites from age seven to sixteen, for Asians and Coloureds from seven to fifteen, and for Blacks from age seven to thirteen (Bunting, 2004). Clearly, the lesser education Black students received, the fewer choices they had in the working world and in accessing higher education. Since these policies ensured that the content and amount of education perpetuated social inequalities, changing these policies in a post-apartheid era was the logical step towards ensuring social equality (McKaiser, 2016). Such equality would be in line with the country's new Constitution.

Educational inequality was also evident in funding. The Bantu Education Act created separate departments of education by race, and it gave less money to black schools while giving more money to white schools. Funding determines the amount and quality of learning materials, facilities, and teachers. In that context, disproportionate funding clearly created disparities in learning environments (Bunting, 2004). The policies and funding disparities in schools ensured contrasting access to higher education. Four Afrikaans speaking universities and one English speaking university admitted only Whites, while the other five had restricted admission and segregated classrooms (Du Plessis, 2006). Additionally, there was no financial aid available to Black students. Moreover, banks did not give out loans to non-whites.

This means that even if students could break through working class instruction with under-qualified teachers in overcrowded classrooms, they still faced financial barriers to achieving their academic goals in the same manner that their white counterparts did (Bunting, 2004). Since the end of the apartheid era, many policy changes have occurred within education to try to address educational inequalities. Education rights are contained in section 29 of the South African Constitution. In terms of this section everyone has the right to basic education, including adult basic education; [1] and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible (Chapter 2, Section 29(1)(a)(b) RSA Constitution). Integration has occurred in the school system, and school is compulsory for all races (De Wit, 2012). But, although the Bantu Education ideology has been officially left behind, schools are still under de facto segregation. Despite policy efforts to equalize education among races, there still exist many seemingly racially neutral policies to funding that may disproportionately and negatively affect non-white students (Rouhani, 2012)

According to Higher Education South Africa (HESA, 2014), the government attempts to address inequalities through a funding plan that divides schools into five strata according to income levels in the community where the lower income level receives the higher funding per pupil. This funding system is definitely a large step towards improving historical disparities, but these funds are not enough. Disparities in access, funding and quality of education are not limited to primary and secondary schools. Inequalities also exist in the higher education sector. It is impossible to address the inequalities in education without taking into account the economic disparities resulting from apartheid education (De Wit, 2012). Contrasting tiers of the work force linger in the wake of apartheid's separatist presence, a large population of working class blacks stands out against the elite professional force comprised mainly of whites. This signifies that the education system needs to rely less on individual contributions from parents for compulsory education as well as higher education in order to be able to further aim at "moving past the legacy of apartheid." This ideal reform into free public education for all and financial aid for higher education requires money (Jacobs, 2016). It is apparent that some intervention is required in order to bridge the gap as those who were previously less advantaged cannot afford tuition fees.

Apartheid may have formally ended in 1994, but the fees make attending university impossible for many black youths compared to their white counterparts. As mentioned earlier, students are also pushing for a decolonized curriculum. The most far-reaching of these was the merger process, which was meant to level the academic playing fields. It was hoped that mergers would improve historically black universities' research and graduate output and give them access to better infrastructure and systems (Lagardien, 2014).

According to Jacobs (2016, 14), student enrolments at historically disadvantaged black universities have dwindled. Students have flocked to the better resourced, historically advantaged white institutions. This was already happening in the decade immediately after apartheid, but was exacerbated by the mergers. Fewer students means less money. Government's funding formula subsidises institutions according to student enrolments, graduation rates and recognised or "accredited" research publications. A process that was supposed to redress past inequalities has had the effect of entrenching them, and in some cases widening them. This should not be the case. Mergers had to lead to substantial better access and greater differentiation in course offerings to cater for diverse students. But this would require taking a different approach to the current corporatisation model (McKaiser, 2016).

It would demand that those who design education policies and run institutions be open to critique, and open to unexplored ways of thinking and pursuing knowledge. This kind of leadership would be more able to recognise a university's responsibility in relation to society. According to Rouhani, (2012,8) change is a process that requires factors such as culture, processes and people as driving forces that determine its success, provided that the environment is also conducive. This implies that the policies on education being a change process itself require an organizational culture that is fully supportive of its intentions. This is a worldwide issue. South Africa is not the only country that is battling with the increasing expense of advanced education. In the United States, numerous understudies graduate with colossal understudy advance obligations that saddle them with oppressive reimbursement terms in the midst of a tight activity showcase. The issue turned into a factor in the United States' recent presidential race, with the two contenders (Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump) proposing some ideas.

The United States government has additionally gotten serious about one of the country's biggest for-benefit instructive chains, ITT Technical Institute, after an extensive stretch of investigation into its enrolling procedures and instructive quality (De Wit, 2012). There have additionally been reactions that some United States open schools support out-of-state understudies since they pay higher educational cost than state occupants. Colleges in a few nations do not charge any educational cost whatsoever, or they charge just a few understudies. Germany and Norway have educational cost free college programs. Finland has now decided to begin charging non-European Union understudies educational costs in lone rangers and ace's projects (Gibbon and Kabaki, 2004).

On this note, the study will add to existing studies with specific emphasis on the racial disparities in education policies and related financial implications for students in Higher Institutions of Learning. The study focuses on the implementation of every one having the right to education. Even though it is only at basic level, one should have the right to access and enter tertiary institutions regardless of financial constraints accumulated due to having a previously disadvantaged background. As a result, the study seeks to contribute to knowledge as it will discuss the challenges experienced by the post-apartheid political leadership when designing policies that would be implemented to address education inequalities in South Africa. The literature discussed above is meant to locate the present study within the broader context. The content will be expounded in Chapter 2 below.

1.3. Research problems and objectives: Key questions to be addressed

When the study was conceived it sought to address the following questions:

a) Why did the students protest for free higher education?

 Here, the study sought to evaluate reasons why students are calling for free higher education.

b) Should education be free for poorer students or for everyone?

The issue of social inequality arises here once again. Students have been calling for free higher education in order to ensure that everyone had equal access and

not just white students. While a few understudies are demanding free training for poor students, the dominant section appears to want free advanced education for all. However the question which begs for attention is the following: Is it fair that even those who can afford tertiary fees will now be getting free education thereby disadvantaging those who are really needy? Would that promote "equality".

c) To what extent do the existing policies on higher education (Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and Higher Education Act 39 of 2008) make provision for free higher education in South Africa?

Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and Higher Education Act 39 of 2008 aim to promote good-standard education beyond formal schooling. These Acts regulate higher education in South Africa and govern all the legislation related to the establishment and operation of a Council on Higher Education and the funding and operation of public higher education institutions. One of its purposes is to redress past discriminations and ensure that there is equal access. This suggests that there are loopholes in the current legislation.

1.4. Research problems and objectives: Broader issues to be investigated

The case for paying nothing for advanced education depends on two principle premises: (a) social equity: expanding advanced education access for poor students, particularly recently underestimated networks, despite expanding educational cost expenses, and (b) development externalities. Given South Africa's elevated amounts of aptitudes deficiencies, free advanced education is deemed important to get human capital venture to productive dimensions. These premises are the very same ones that educated the free advanced education explored in other African nations (Gqola, 2008). Besides, the issue of legitimation cannot be precluded as a critical method of reasoning for the push for nothing in advanced education, particularly by lawmakers. The post-politically-sanctioned racial segregation period is portrayed by tremendous desires and, with regards to high youth joblessness and an absence of elective post-optional chances, advanced education has turned into an extremely swarmed yet restricted stepping stool of chance into the white collar class (Mamdani, 1998).

Given general disappointment with the present educational cost charge routines against the advanced education cooperation disparities in the nation, an arrangement of free advanced education is a conceivably helpful technique for compensatory legitimation by an administration whose 'center' voting demographic is winding up progressively but disappointed with administration conveyance (Mbembe, 2016). On its essence, an approach of free advanced education would be reliable with the nation's general post-politically-sanctioned racial segregation arrangement of change and social equity. Will free advanced education be the harbinger for a libertarian South Africa? This remains one of the most intriguing questions which the present study wrestles with.

1.5. Principal theories upon which the research project is constructed

1.5.1. Theory of Change

Theory of change (TOC) is a device for creating answers for complex social issues. An essential TOC clarifies how a gathering of right on time and middle of the road achievements sets the phase for creating long-extent results. A progressive TOC explains the presumptions about the procedure through which change will happen. It also indicates the manners by which the majority of the required early and middle of the road results identified with accomplishing the ideal long haul change will be realized and archived as they happen (Anderson, 2005). During the process of creating the pathway of change, if one may call it that, participants are required to articulate as many of their assumptions about the change process as they can so that they can be examined and even tested to determine if any key assumptions are hard to support or even negate (Morton, 2012). There are typically three important types of assumptions to consider: (a) assertions about the connections between long terms, intermediate and early outcomes on the map, (b) substantiation for the claim that all of the important preconditions for success have been identified and (c) justifications supporting the links between program activities and the outcomes they are expected to produce. A fourth type of assumption which outlines the contextual or environmental factors that will support or hinder progress toward the realization of outcomes in the pathway of change is often an additional important factor in illustrating the complete theory of change (Vogel, 2012).

Steps to Create a Theory of Change

Level 1: Context for the strategy: This refers to the analysis of the present state of the problem the policy is seeking to impact, the political, environmental and social conditions, along with other actors able to influence change (Morton, 2012).

Level 2: Long-term change: This is about expressing the long-term change that the policy seeks to support, from whose aspect it is compelling and for whose end it benefits (Vogel, 2012).

Level 3: Chain of events: This means identifying the chain of changes that lead to the most desired long-term outcome (Rogers, 2008).

Level 4: Assumptions: Assumptions are enlightened by individual beliefs and values, professional experience, and organisational values; they are influenced by particular intellectual traditions and analytical perspectives (Van der Knapp, 2004).

The TOC approach to planning is designed to encourage very clearly defined outcomes at every step of the change process. Users are required to specify a number of details about the nature of the desired change including specifics about the target population, the amount of change required to signal success, and the timeframe over which such change is expected to occur. This attention to detail often helps both funders and grantees to reassess the feasibility of reaching goals that may have initially been vaguely defined, and, in the end, promotes the development of reasonable long-term outcome targets that are acceptable to all parties (Anderson, 2005).

1.5.2. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The above chosen theory is found to be the most compatible one as there are already policies in place which address the inequalities of education. Thus, it would be necessary to then go through them by monitoring, evaluating and then providing recommendations. There are three approaches that highlight the way monitoring and evaluation is conducted in organisations. According to Babbie and Mouton (2012, 350), these approaches are naturalist/ qualitative tradition, participatory/empowerment tradition and experimental tradition.

The naturalistic and participatory approaches apply more to the present study. The naturalistic tradition employs the qualitative methods of research, it is informed by the interpretivist paradigm which puts an emphasis on the difference between natural and social sciences. It goes on to state that human beings are social beings as they try to make sense of the world around them through social activities (Siabi and Kofi, 2013). Qualitative research is used to promote in-depth understanding of social actions through structured observation and interviewing. Process evaluation is more appropriate in this approach as it tries to understand the reason behind people's actions. The other approach is participatory or empowerment tradition. Siabi and Kofi (2013, 14) stated that the participatory approach is linked to the critical meta-theory since it views research participants as important parts of the research process and design. This approach involves both the research participants and the stakeholders in the research process, the data collected is qualitative data.

1.6. Research methodology and methods

This is a mixed method study which employed primary qualitative data collected via desktop research and a bit of fieldwork with the use of surveys and interviews. A Qualitative study according to Babbie and Mouton (2012, 270) is based on describing and also understanding as opposed to explaining human behavior. The Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to explore the nature of the case and to get in-depth understanding of different issues that might involve people's actions, experiences and attitudes of implementing agents. The study explored the decolonization and transformation of universities so as to get an in-depth understanding of people's attitudes and experiences about the existing policy. The qualitative data were collected via interviews and surveys (Anderson, 2005).

1.6.1. Surveys

Surveys are used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory reasons. Survey research is mostly used where individuals are units of analysis. It is the best method for the researcher who wishes to collect original data for describing a large population which cannot be observed directly (Morton, 2012). A questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument to collect empirical data. Details are presented in Chapter 2.

1.6.2. Interviews

Interviews according to Babbie and Mouton (2012, 249) are conducted for the purpose of the researcher (interviewer) to get information from the participant(s) during a structured conversation based on prearranged set of questions. The interviewers have an advantage as they get first-hand information from the respondents and can provide additional information in the event that the respondent does not understand the question (Morton, 2012). Also, the interviewer gets the opportunity to probe or ask for more details on the questions asked.

1.6.3. Theoretical Population

The theoretical population comprised students from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College).

1.6.4. Accessible Population

A number of students at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) constituted the accessible population.

1.6.5. Sampling Frame

A list of twenty five (25) informants who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) was used to carry out the study.

1.6.6. Study population

The study population comprised students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College). From this population, a list of twenty five (25) who represented the theoretical population of the study was selected.

1.6.7. Sample size

A list of twenty five (25) students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) comprised the sample for the survey. Of this number, one student was used for the qualitative face to face interview. Twenty four students were chosen for the survey because of the time limit for the.

1.6.8. Sampling procedure

The purposive method of sampling strategy was used to increase transferability. For survey, purposive sampling is used to identify the theoretical population, then twenty four participants were selected randomly from the accessible population. For qualitative face to face interview, one participant was chosen purposively from the accessible population on the basis of his knowledge and experience about the

persistent inequalities in the higher education system of South Africa, the fees must fall movement and the policies around education (Rogers, 2008)

1.6.9. *Sampling technique*

Purposive sampling is a non- probability sampling strategy that was used to select the participants. It only employs participants who are knowledgeable about the problem at hand because of their involvement and experience of the situation such as those of tertiary students. The selection of the sample is normally based on the judgment and purpose of the study being carried out (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability technique is used by the researcher to select a purposive sample that represents a broader group of cases as closely as possible. In other words, the size of the sample is not as important as the characteristic features of the research population.

1.6.10. *Measurement of Variables*

To ensure reliability of the surveys and interview, the study used the split-half method which suggests that the measurement of any complex social concept should be made more than once. This was done in order to ensure that the results were accurate. To ensure validity, the study used the content validity which measures the range of meanings included within the concept (Rogers: 2008).

1.6.11. *Data Collection and Analysis*

There was documentation of data and the process of data collection which had to be categorised into concepts. The concepts were then connected to show how they influence each other. Alternative explanations were evaluated and legitimized, then the findings were reported. For this study, twenty five (25) students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) were sampled for the survey and one student was identified for the qualitative face to face interview. Twenty four informants were chosen for the survey because of the time limit for the study and also because he was one student who was found to be knowledgeable on the study theme. Once collected, the data sets were analysed.

A. *Thematic analysis*

Babbie and Mouton (2012, 278) *describe* this type of analysis as being a historically conventional practice in qualitative research which involves searching through data to identify any recurrent patterns.

A theme is a cluster of linked categories conveying similar meanings and usually emerging through the inductive analytic process which characterises the qualitative paradigm. The exploratory power of this popular technique can be enhanced by the analyst lacking previous knowledge of the research topic as they are not guided by any preconceptions. Thus, the analyst does not have to be an expert in the research topic (Anderson, 2005). However, in order to begin the analysis the researcher must have at least some conceptual understanding to guide the insight processes. There is no simple distinction between qualitative (naturalistic, contextual, idealist) and quantitative (experimental, positivist, realist) methodologies. Since analysts move back and forth between new concepts and the data, all research involves processes of induction and deduction, especially thematic analysis whereby induction creates themes and deduction verifies them (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).   .

Thematic analysis and grounded theory are methodologically similar analytic frameworks but the manner in which themes, concepts and categories are managed varies considerably between these approaches. They both attempt to represent a view of reality via systematically working through text to identify topics that are progressively integrated into higher order themes via processes of de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation. Their procedures are more conceptually demanding than content analysis which employs a much simpler ordering of data. However, thematic analysis and content analysis are often confused. The former, through focusing purely upon meaning, promotes a more discursive interpretation since individual codes can cross-reference multiple themes, whilst the latter employs predefined mutually exclusive categories to count the frequency of a theme and is more appropriately used to statistically test any hypotheses (Bain, 2003*).*

  B. Analytic process
Preparing the data for analysis

The first step is to transcribe the interview into text and to format the document so that the margin could be used for identifying individual bits of data. This can be done by assigning line numbers as identifiers for cross referencing.

Reading the text and noting items of interest perform

Initial reading of the text

An inductive way to deal with topical examination enables subjects to rise up out of the information, as opposed to hunting down pre-characterized topics. Amid the principal perusing the researcher has to make note of various issues so as to get a feeling of the different themes implanted in the information (Bain, 2003*).*

Re-reading the text and annotating any thoughts in the margin

The researcher has to examine the text closely, line by line, to facilitate a micro analysis of the data. This also promotes open coding which identifies any new information by de-contextualising bits of data embedded within the primary material (Bain, 2003*).*

Sorting items of interest into proto-topics

This is the place subjects start to develop by sorting out things identifying with comparable themes into classifications. Computers are great for pasting the line references together. This should be a fluid process so that categories can be modified, developed and new ones allowed to emerge freely. At this stage keeping the themes as simple as possible assists flexibility in the categorisation process whereby any re-ordering of the clusters of categories can help create and re-define the initial themes (Rogers, 2008).

Examining the proto-themes and attempting initial definitions

This phase of trawling back through the data examines how information was assigned to each proto-theme in order to evaluate its current meaning. A provisional name and flexible definition should now be created for each emerging theme (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). This gives data sets a better shape that is easy to understand.

Re-examining the text carefully for relevant incidents of data for each proto-theme

This second procedure of trawling back through the information is additionally called hub coding. It includes re-contextualisation whereby any information is presently considered as far as the classes created through this investigation are concerned (Rogers, 2008). Taking each theme separately and re-examining the original data for information relating to that theme is a vital stage in the analytic process.

This is so because human perception is selective and the relevance of data can be easily overlooked. Furthermore, pieces of data previously assigned to a theme may in fact be contradictory (Babbie and Muton, 2012).

Developing the last type of each subject

The words 'definition' and 'supporting information' are reconsidered for the last development of each topic, utilizing all the material identifying with it. This phase of re-contextualisation concentrates all the more intently upon the hidden significance of each topic (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

Reporting each theme

The researcher has to finalise the name of each theme, write its description and illustrate it with a few quotations from the original text to help communicate its meaning to the reader (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

1.6.12. Ethical issues

Voluntary participation: Tertiary students were free to accept or refuse taking part in the study, no coercion or force was exerted. There was informed consent in the form of a consent form created for the use of the participants to sign as a reflection of their full understanding and willingness to participate in the study.

No harm to the participants: Assurance was given to the participants that no harm would be done or caused to them, either physically or emotionally. They were also informed that in the event that they felt uncomfortable during the study they could pull out without being negatively affected in any way.

Confidentiality: Participants were assured that information provided would be kept confidential between me as the researcher and my supervisor – with participants having guaranteed access to it if they so wished. Students were told that collected information would be kept confidential for a period of five years in accordance with the university's policy. They were also informed that such information would be used for research purposes only.

Deceiving subjects: Truthful details about the study were given to the participants verbally and in writing before they agreed to take part. This was done both in line with conventional practice but also in order to build a good rapport with the potential informants.

1.7. Structure of the dissertation

➢ **Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study**

The introductory chapter has provided the background to the study. Among other things, it discussed the problem statement, research aim and objectives, research questions and provided the context within which the study should be understood.

➢ **Chapter 2: Literature review**

Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review. This is done by reflecting on various government legislation under the old order (apartheid) which resulted in racial inequalities. Although apartheid touched on different aspects of life, the chapter pays particular attention to education policies. With historical context addressed, the chapter proceedes to look at the policies drafted since 1994 when South Africa became a democratic state with the view to reverse the apartheid social stratification in the education sector in general but the higher education sector in particular. This chapter locates the entire study within the broader context. It reflects on continental (African) and international trends on the theme of this dissertation.

➢ **Chapter 3: Theoretical framework**

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework on which the present study is anchored. Specifically, it introduces the theories used in the study, considers the history behind them and any such related information. These theories are: Theory of Change as well as Monitoring and Evaluation theory. The justification for using these two theories is made explicit in the chapter. This is done in order to demonstrate that they were carefully thought through due to their assumed relevance to the study.

➢ **Chapter 4: Description of research methodology**

This chapter details the research methodology that was followed in carrying out the present study. The chapter states that the mixed methods approach was adopted in in this study whereby primary qualitative data collected via desktop and a bit of field work with the use of surveys and interviews were collected in order to ensure that the results were credible. Qualitative study according to Babbie and Mouton (2012, 270) is based on describing and understanding as opposed to explaining human behavior. This is what informed the researcher when putting this chapter together.

➢ **Chapter 5: Research results and analysis**

Post-apartheid South Africa's education system has unwittingly perpetuated the racial and class inequalities of the previous regime. The majority of working class black students come from poorly-resourced schools and are ill-equipped to make the university grade. As it stands most non-white students are always scrapping registration and administration fees just to get into university. Against this backdrop, Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study. Moreover, it also gives meaning to those findings by analysing them so that readers could follow the discussion with ease.

➢ **Summary and conclusions**

Having discussed all the relevant issues on the theme of this study, this section performs a dual function. Firstly, it pulls the dissertation together by reiterating the key discussion points and the most critical findings of the study. Secondly, the section draws broad and specific conclusions on the theme of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the existing literature on the theme of the study. It assess the feasibility of having a policy which promotes equality in the higher education sector. Conventionally, the purpose of a literature review in any study is threefold. Firstly, it considers what other authors have written on the theme of the study under investigation. Secondly, it identifies any strengths in the literature being reviewed. Thirdly and most importantly, it identifies gaps and/or weaknesses in the previous works as justification for the current research. Within this context, the present chapter thus reflects on other authors' works related to the study's theme.

In the past, the apartheid higher education system was differentiated and diversified along racial and ethnic lines. This resulted in the advantaging in various ways of what was previously known as white institutions and the disadvantaging of the previously black institutions (Msimang, 2015). Social inequalities were deeply rooted in all spheres of life in South Africa. This exclusion was systematically and cogently thought through by the apartheid operatives. The primary aim was to ensure that blacks and women were relegated to the periphery or that they were placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy. With that being said, the higher education system was not an exception. The South African government at the time advanced an education system which was moulded by political, social, and financial undertones predicated on race, class, sexual orientation, and spatial location. Segregation and discrimination came into the mainstream of South African politics.

Given this historical context, in 1994 the new political leadership and the new government of South Africa resolved to change the status quo described above. This entailed passing legislation that would reverse social and racial inequality which had been entrenched under the apartheid system. Therefore, politically-sanctioned racial segregation, social and monetary structures had to be revisited under the new political order (Mbembe, 2016). In a nutshell, the entire political set-up had to be reconfigured. Jacobs (2016, 14) observes that student enrolments at historically disadvantaged black universities have dwindled. According to his observation, students have flocked to the better resourced historically advantaged white institutions.

This was already happening in the decade immediately after apartheid, but was exacerbated by the mergers which took place when the late Prof. Kader Asmal was Minister of Higher Education and Training. As a result of this process, there was a legitimate concern among previously black institutions that if not properly handled, a policy of diversity and differentiation in post-1994 could carry forward the past patterns of inequalities among tertiary institutions whereby black institutions would be at the receiving end while the previously white institutions would be at an advantaged position as had been the case before 1994. Moreover, if there were no strategies of institutional redress and institutional developmental trajectories for historically black institutions as a way of addressing the apartheid legacy, and to permit these institutions to take on new social and educational roles, the status quo would remain unchanged (Mbembe, 2016).

The reality was that the lesser the number of students at a tertiary institution, the lesser the subsidy from the national government. It is a fact that government's funding formula subsidises institutions according to student enrolments, graduation rates and recognised or accredited research publications. A process that was supposed to redress past inequalities has had the effect of entrenching them, and in some cases even widening them further. This should not be the case. When mergers were first contemplated, it was anticipated that they would lead to substantial better access and greater differentiation in course offerings to cater for diverse students. However, this would require taking a different approach to the current corporatisation model. Quick observation leads to the conclusion that there has been a wide array of transformation-oriented initiatives seeking to effect institutional change post 1994. But the extent to which this goal has been achieved remains debatable. A confluence of factors could be credited for having influenced the pace, nature and results of progress made thus far (Du Plessis, 2006). Among these factors are: financial constraints, constantly changing policies, lack of political will, sustained racial divisions amongst other things.

Higher Education South Africa (HESA, 2014), makes reference to the fact that government attempts to address inequalities through a funding plan that divides schools into five strata according to income levels in the community where the lower income level receives the higher funding per pupil. This funding system is definitely a large step towards improving historical disadvantages, but these funds are not enough. The point worth noting at this juncture is that disparities in access, funding and quality of education are not limited to primary and secondary education. Inequalities also exist in the higher education sector. It is impossible to address the inequalities in education without taking into account the economic disparities resulting from apartheid education (De Wit, 2012). Contrasting tiers of the work force lingers in the wake of apartheid's separatist presence; a large population of working class blacks stands out against the elite professional force comprised mainly of whites. This signifies that the education system needs to rely less on individual contributions from parents for compulsory education as well as higher education in order to be able to further aim at moving past the legacy of apartheid. This ideal reform into free public education for all and financial aid for higher education requires money (Jacobs, 2016).

The reality is that government alone cannot afford to provide such money. Therefore, it goes without saying that the private sector and other international donors have to come on board if the imbalances of the past are to be reversed. Unless this happens, the dream of free higher education for everyone will never be realised. For the envisaged change to happen, it would demand that those who design education policies and run institutions be open to critique, and be willing to consider unexplored ways of thinking and pursuing knowledge. This kind of leadership would be more able to recognise a university's responsibility in relation to society (Jacobs, 2016). According to Rouhani (2012, 8), change is a process that requires factors such as culture, processes and people as driving forces that determine its success, provided that the environment is also conducive. This implies that the policies on education being a change process itself, requires an organizational culture that is fully supportive of its intentions.

2.1.The 1996 National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE)
After the 1994 first democratic elections the possibility arose of transforming and integrating a divided, unequal and inefficient higher education system.

Following society-wide consultation, the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) reported to the Education Minister. The two loci of focus of the report were *governance* and *finance*. The latter focus is important for the discussion in this review. The Commission was tasked to examine the role of higher education with regards to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), structure of the system, institutional and system governance and student access. It included affirmative action in appointments, building a higher education resource base and a system of student finance. The NCHE's origins are tied to the RDP for the sake of national development and to advance worldwide knowledge (Letsekha, 2013).

Bunting (2004,48) states that in its instruction needs, NCHE attested the guideline of value with change, advancement to start profitability, democratization through investment, portrayal, scholastic opportunity, adequacy surveys for evolving needs, to keep up quality items and administrations, and proficiency to enhance techniques to accomplish such points and destinations. The various wide NCHE points are more prominent in the supporter's interest for mass instruction, expanding different sorts of linkages or organizations, participatory modes at foundations, and responsiveness to more open information frameworks. The NCHE in this way attested efficient co-appointment which included solidarity, assorted variety, adaptable passage, more support with equivalent chances, and the working of open-finished research limit with respect to a manageable imaginative framework and to make global principles with affectability to understudy needs. With these general NCHE aims in mind, Letsekha (2013,16) states that new knowledge focuses on the South African university funding formula and the direction it took in terms of policy in the period under study. It is therefore necessary to outline the apartheid funding formula, prior to considering the alternatives to such a policy after 1994.

2.2.The apartheid funding formula for higher education and suggestions of an alternative
Three types of funding are relevant here, namely budgeted, full and formulae funding. But the latter affected historically disadvantaged institutions the most. Its basis is fulltime equivalent students and successfully qualifying students split evenly, while distinguishing human and natural sciences with bias towards the latter.

In addition, different financial weightings were given to undergraduate students and the various post-graduate levels with a three year projected total. Unit costs were based on actual institutional costs such as staff levels, infrastructural and maintenance with different coefficients for natural and social sciences, and subject groupings linked to unit costs. An institution's annual cost calculations were made by relating each of its input variables to the coefficients and the appropriate cost units specified in the two formulae to the rand values for a given year. An institution's annual subsidy total was determined by deducting from the formula the total that which the institution was supposed to collect for itself such as tuition, private sources, investment, contract and other income of between ten and twenty five percent. Institutional subsidies were adjusted, in multiplying the net subsidy by an "A" factor, less than one, as an ad hoc measure to scale down subsidies to universities or Technickons (Du Plessis, 2006).

The NCHE cited problems of the apartheid era formulae, starting with its distinction of subsidisable and non-subsidisable funding. This arose from unrealised formulae intentions, making formulae applications inconsistent, as well as their objectives being only partially met. Formulae also did not fund remedial or preparatory material, which assumed that students passed with approved qualification. Furthermore, they ignored existing inequalities in South Africa and assumed a level playing field for access to higher education. The formulae also assumed that universities functioned effectively. Yet, inefficiencies continued after 1994, such as duplication, high drop-out rates, poor throughput rates, and an under-utilisation of physical and staffing resources (Bunting, 2004).

Furthermore, the role of the funding formulae in supporting national policy goals was affected by formulae incentives, since these had unforeseen negative effects such as financial uncertainty. Several factors were supposed to be incentives, but became disincentives after 1993, especially for historically disadvantaged institutions. Problems arose when there were huge spurts of growth, particularly at historically disadvantaged institutions with low access to historically advantaged institutions. This was due to the fact that government placed upper limits on the number of students it could subsidise. Other formulae contradictions included ad hoc budgets when budgets were negotiated; government weighting natural sciences but encouraging students to study in the human and social sciences in line with apartheid's grand plan to keep blacks under-skilled (Ramoupi, 2014).

The funding formula was revised and asserted by the NCHE. It contained some of the following: the need for student fees, inclusion of tuition and residence fees in order to balance institutional autonomy for equity in the system, and to negotiate policy with institutions. Although the National Student Financial Aid Scheme addresses student housing, capital housing is earmarked as it sees post-graduates gain from studies. The bulk of institutional funds and earmarked funds were mixed, with the latter to be for particular public policy purposes including resource constraints, staff inequalities, academic development, research, and information technology. Government funding amounted to R250 million p.a. There was a need to get donor funds, and to create student financial aid policies for education interest groups, including Department of Education (NCHE, 1996). There are also institutional financial, academic and rolling plans. These are meant to address equity through inputs, earmarked funds and a national student financial aid scheme for three years. Instruction, research, institutional and student support activities and the South African Post-Secondary Education funding formulae defined development activities (Letsekha, 2013).

It is critically important at this point to note that consistency with democratisation, effectiveness, development, efficiency, equity, and financial sustainability, shared costs to uphold post-secondary goals. It is equally important to distinguish levels and costs of learning and fields of learning, as linked to National Qualification Framework (NQF) categories, and to the current year of South African Post-Secondary Education funding formulae categories. For example, there is a two-dimension grid of institutional programme levels and learning fields, with input variables of fulltime equivalent and output variables to be constituted by normative rates, and to distinguish between contact and distance education (Letsekha, 2013).

Additionally, institutional grants include attached normative prices to student places, adjusted both for eligibility and by normative places. Inputs are defined as fulltime equivalent in instructional programmes, student places are expected enrolments and outputs are graduate instructional programmes, fields or levels and not success rates or research output as in the old South African Post-Secondary Education funding formulae. Student place prices are normative and actual-cost informed to support equitable or agreed funds for higher education goals. Institutional factors are economies of scale, with differences in prices or throughput for distance and contact education.

Lastly, there should be clear higher education policy objectives to be met through earmarked funding, and to mobilise donor funds to match government and institutions. The Minister decides on targets and criteria for eligibility, after consulting Council of Higher Education and Department of Education. There are limitations on the use of public funds to arise only from funds earmarked for a specific purpose and from restricted funds of subsidy formulae generated funds (NCHE, 1996).

2.3. *Some critical aspects of the NCHE vision*

Before looking at critical views of the NCHE formulations, it is worthwhile to consider the view of the advisory body to the Council of Higher Education (CHE). It described existing definitions of disadvantage as crude, and pointed out that previously advantaged institutions attracted large proportions of the wealthy students, making them doubly advantaged, first by attracting institutional factor funding and then funding through higher graduation rates, post-graduate enrolments and enrolments in higher income generating fields (CHE, 2004). Such statements point to the vexed problems of unequal playing fields, particularly in the context of the rural institutions that are not directly tied to the central economy and are at a distance from the point of modern industrial production. Against this background, some of the major criticisms of the NCHE process and its contents will be discussed below.

According to Ramoupi, (2014, 203) the NCHE's policy position undoubtedly reflects a major shift from apartheid contradictions in higher education. This is evident in its aim to develop systems articulation, enhance quality, increase programmes and for a stricter accreditation process across the system. However, in terms of the NCHE process and vision, a hundred academics were critical of the NCHE, for it was an opportunity for decisive tone setting as a historical precedent and for future generations. Academics criticised its lack of a coherent philosophy of education, its marginalisation of stakeholders and the fact that it ignored racial redress. Students at a national level pointed out NCHE's bias towards management, while being unclear about massification and policy implementation, and with little clarification of the role of gender and student representative councils. Students found it perturbing that NCHE did not tackle apartheid inequalities, with the NCHE ignoring fundamentals of capacity building and the national development of higher education human resources (Bunting, 2004).

These criticisms suggest an uneven higher education playing field, and a weak redress or equity policy. Co-operative governance as suggested by the authorities meant multi-constituency participation, but it did not evaluate how institutions would fit in it, or how to deal with historically disadvantaged institutions' crises and the substantial and numerous inequalities between historically disadvantaged institutions and historically advantaged institutions (Letsekha, 2013). The NCHE ignored NGO bursary support and a tax redress fund. Without an affordability analysis, financial incentives for institutional capacity building were necessary. Funding needed to address high failure rates, and institutional issues of staff development, capacity building and research, especially at historically disadvantaged institutions. To be fair though, the NCHE did suggest user charges for students who could not afford fees, and for planning through functional or flexible differentiation of the system, with varied research funding methods: as a portion of student prices, for research development or innovation and to link achievement to research outputs (Bunting, 2004).

Despite these flexibilities, still, other independent commentators also echoed criticisms of the NCHE and South African universities, along with a number of higher education institutions. These include institutions lacking a commitment to a post-apartheid university, especially in areas of race and gender. Also related to these were other problems, such as that of intransigent university managements and limited university access for black students (Ramoupi, 2011). Knowledge production remained largely in the hands of white academics, with a skewed form of university staff demographics, especially higher up in the academic echelons. For instance, there was government's espousal of notions of cooperative governance as an innovative way to reconfigure state-university relations. However, the need for governance to be contextualised within issues of race and gender at universities was expressed. If neither the issue of the cost of transformation nor the calls for re-negotiations of state-university relations are heeded, co-operative governance can in fact paralyse or reverse policy through reformism that overlooks the overhauling of the system's structural inequalities (Ramoupi, 2014). As for equity in higher education, though more Africans than whites graduated in 2002 most of the former were undergraduates. They constituted 68% in universities and 100% in Technikons.

While some positive changes in proportions of African graduates occurred, white university graduates were double that of African graduates at MA level, and treble at PhD level (Letsekha, 2013). Therefore, the CHE (2004,75) concludes that: "… despite increases over the years in … overall number and proportion of African and women graduates, graduate output at the upper qualification levels is still highly skewed and unrepresentative in terms of race and gender." This observation is indeed accurate. It leads to the conclusion that as much as South Africans are justified in celebrating the gains of democracy since 1994, the road ahead is still very long before reaching the envisaged destiny. For that goal to be achieved, there has to be concerted effort by everyone.

This is supported or agreed upon as it refers to a lack of a liberatory philosophy of education, and the NCHE's silence on building a new state and on the potential for transformation, including what the contents and contestants of transformation are. Funding is left to private sources, allowing the market and its neo-liberal agenda to re-assert itself. It is suggested that strategies to tackle university transformation, outlining a philosophy of education to replace the repressive pedagogy of apartheid should be put in place. Furthermore, policy is not articulated with politics and strategy, which vexes post-apartheid problems. The silence of the NCHE on political analysis and liberatory pedagogy is thus telling. This chapter has thus far outlined the views of major constituencies, reports, statutes and processes that led to change in the structure of higher education. The next section will focus on the cost of higher education as a theme.

2.4. Struggling with the rising cost of higher education

The rising cost of higher education is a global problem. South Africa is not alone in struggling with this endemic challenge. In the United States of America, many students graduate with huge student loan debts that saddle them with financial burdens. Countries such as Mozambique, China, Australia, England and Kenya once offered free higher education but have since executed policies and models of cost-sharing in different forms. The immediate instalment of educational cost expenses was presented by Kenya in 1991 and ended every single individual recompense that college understudies had been relishing.

There was then a follow-up during the course of the 1990s by what was known as the 'double track' educational cost expense approach. This methodology is whereby colleges would enlist two sorts of understudies. In particular, state-sponsored understudies chose a constraint on the quantity of understudies permitted to enter college dependent on examination execution, ethnicity or sexual orientation premise and a second gathering of unsubsidised understudies who paid industry normal charges (De Wit, 2012). De Wit (2012, 2) states that understudies in South Africa are requesting free advanced education. A few understudies are requesting free training for poor people, while the larger part appears to need free advanced education for all. Advanced education for a great many students in South Africa is a genuine test. Expanding expenses of advanced education are disappointing understudies. These are extremely real concerns. Consequently, in the South African context, it has been contended by understudies that charging expenses is against the soul of the Freedom Charter of 1955. This was a political aspiration adopted over 60 years back alongside wellbeing, lodging and different requests. For example, the completion of politically-sanctioned racial segregation was not planned with regards to political, financial and instructive substances in South Africa in 2016.

There are two fundamental premises on which the above discussion is premised: expanding advanced education access for poor students, particularly recently underestimated networks, even with expanding educational cost charges, and development externalities (Gibbon and Kabaki, 2004). South Africa has an abnormal state of abilities deficiencies and therefor free advanced education is important to get human capital venture to foundational levels. South Africa has precisely the same premises that educated the free advanced education explored in other African nations. The issue of legitimation can't be discounted as a critical justification for the push for nothing advanced education. This is particularly propagated by government officials. Tremendous desires were portrayed by the post-politically-sanctioned racial segregation. It was noted that there was high youth joblessness which government had to attend to. This prompted advanced education to revisit their mode of operation. There is general disappointment with the present educational cost expense routines concerning the advanced education interest disparities in the nation.

All things considered, an approach of free advanced education is a prospect system for change legitimation by an administration whose center supporters is ending up progressively disillusioned with administration conveyance (Gqola, 2008).

2.5.Comparison between South Africa and other countries

From 1963 to 1992 Kenya had a go at having a free instruction arrangement. Their educational cost and understudy living recompenses, instructive and examination framework, structures and staff costs proved unbearable thus resulting in the abandonment of the free education policy. Similarly, in Mozambique, free education was viewed as the surest path for the state to ensure the balance of chance (Gibbon& Kabaki, 2004). Much the same as Mozambique, free advanced education in Kenya was additionally based on biased social structures, the consequence of which was generation and fortification of these imbalances. For example, the dissemination of good quality schools and investment rates were uneven, an impression of skewed minister and provincial instruction designs. Furthermore, schools serving common labourers understudies, particularly in provincial territories and poor urban enclaves, get less assets, battle to draw in and hold qualified instructors, are not satisfactorily bolstered by the school network, and are once in a while examined for quality (Mbembe, 2016).

While advanced education was free, auxiliary instruction was not, yet it was a pre-imperative for college affirmation. Mbembe (2016,32) proposes that it is predominantly in light of cost related elements and the uneven circulation of schools that the progress rate from essential to auxiliary training was low. As detailed by Oketch and Somerset (2010), during the 1970s just about 14% of students sitting for the elementary school leaving examination performed well. For more than 66% of students, essential training was terminal in their instruction. The general population took care of all costs identified with college instruction, and in addition remittances to understudies to make them agreeable. Given the low number of understudies, free advanced education was most likely moderate (Garuba, 2015). In 1964, Kenya did not have very many college understudies, undergrad, postgraduate and confirmation understudies. By 1980, they relentlessly expanded and around the mid-1980s to 1990, enrolments began to develop quickly.

While enrolments were developing, the economy was declining and colleges were extremely underfunded, with the outcome that Kenyan colleges basically stopped to exist as lively information establishments. The encounters with the free advanced education system of Mozambique and Kenya caught the fantasy of numerous African nations of setting up present-day political economies, as well as a simply social request with equivalent chances. The method of reasoning for nothing advanced education was justifiable given the post-provincial welfare-commanded setting of the time. However, the results had not been as foreseen (Gibbon& Kabaki, 2004).

A. Germany

A case of a sustained cost free advanced education framework is Germany. In the mid-2000s, Germany experienced its very own educational cost expense test when a few of the Bundesländer, or government states which were around then represented by a Christian Democrat-Liberal alliance presented educational cost charges (Ramoupi, 2014). Following huge understudy dissents, and in a few expresses, an adjustment in government to Social Democratic and Green alliances, all states annulled educational cost charges by and by. Notwithstanding, much of the time the legislatures ensured that colleges were adjusted for their misfortune in pay by briefly expanding open advanced education subsidizing. Moreover, and in a different strategy process, the states and the government conceded to an arrangement of settlements intended to expand the quantity of study put by giving extra assets to advanced education foundations. South Africa took a cue from Germany and contemplated the implementation of free education (Kaya and Seleti, 2013). Some would argue that South Africa was implementing the Freedom Charter of 1955.

Contrasted with other Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations Germany has a fairly low investment rate in advanced education. This is primarily inferable from a broad and fruitful professional instruction and preparing framework, which gives a practical option in contrast to advanced education and takes into consideration relatively high lifetime profit (Gqola, 2008). Furthermore, while the German advanced education framework pretty much kept up its rule of educational cost free advanced education, it is additionally portrayed by a diminished dimension of understudy which allows and advances amid the most recent decades.

Contrasted with the dimension of understudy amid the mid-1970s when the framework experienced a period of huge development, the present emotionally supportive network is substantially more restricted, making advanced education less comprehensive (Kaya and Seleti, 2013). Despite the fact that nations like Germany and Norway have kept up an educational cost free advanced education routine, contrasting these nations with South Africa is profoundly risky. Germany and Norway have accomplished widespread access to essential and optional instruction of good quality, their pay assess routines are among the most demanding on the planet (45% in Germany and 55% in Norway) and they are among the most developed economies on the planet (Kaya and Seleti, 2013).

2.6.2. Lessons from Africa

It is not standard practice for South Africa to make correlations with or draw experiences from other fellow African countries. The country's tendency is to look to the worldwide North; the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany and other BRICS nations comprising Brazil, Russia, India and China. Be that as it may, with respect to free advanced education, South Africa should seek assistance from its northern neighbours and customise their experiences to suit the local context. But while it is advisable for South Africa to tap into the experience of fellow African countries, it is true that free advanced education in Africa has not passed the test of universalising access nor the acknowledgment of social consideration (Gqola, 2008). This means that in thinking about free education, South Africa could not find examples from within the African continent. Countries like Kenya and Mozambique (as discussed above) abandoned this process of providing free education. Instead, the country had to use the experiences of countries from abroad. However, as indicated above, these Western countries operated in different contexts and were financially more stable than South Africa. For this reason, South Africa could be pardoned.

2.6. Conclusion

Chapter 2 has reviewed the existing literature on the theme of the present study. Among other things, it reflected on the political history of South Africa with specific reference to free education. The period before 1994 was compared to the post-1994 era with the view to establish what changed and what remained the same after the new political dispensation.

Moreover, the chapter drew parallels between South Africa and other countries in Africa and abroad regarding the theme of free education. In this regard, both successful and unsuccessful attempts were looked into in order to draw parallels. On that note, it should be re-stated at this juncture that while the present study is not ground breaking, it will add to existing knowledge with specific emphasis on the racial disparities in education policies and related financial implications for students in Higher Institutions of Learning. As mentioned in Chapter 1 and as reiterated earlier in the present chapter, the study focuses on the implementation of free education with the view to address past inequalities occasioned by colonialism and apartheid. In line with the current South African Constitution, everyone has the right to access and enter tertiary institutions regardless of financial constraints accumulated due to having a previously disadvantaged background. As a result, the study seeks to contribute to knowledge in this area. Specifically, it discusses the policies that were implemented from 1994 to address education inequalities in South Africa as articulated in other works (Ramoupi, 2011).

What is clear from the discussion thus far is that the racial divide in apartheid South Africa meant that the possibility of standard education policies did not exist. Education policies were formulated along racial and ethnic lines. At the dawn of the democratic order it became necessary to craft new policies that would be more encompassing and inclusive. However, the issue of resource constraints meant that government could not move at the intended pace. Examples from other countries that had provided free education did not help South Africa that much because of the different contexts. African examples showed a short-lived process. Western countries showed diverse experiences. But despite these challenges, crafting new education policies in post-apartheid South Africa was not a choice but a necessity. The financial and social needs of South Africa have proved to be exceedingly different from other countries and a responsive advanced education framework requires a range of foundations that would resonate with the local context (Msimang, 2015). When looking at the politics of South Africa's education policies, it should be noted that politically-sanctioned racial segregation regulated disparities which converted into a 'framework' of foundations described by instructive, budgetary, material and geological favorable position and inconvenience (McKaiser, 2016). These are some of the issues that this chapter covered.

Now that previous works on free education and the politics attached to it have been discussed at length, the next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework on which the present study was anchored. This will assist in giving the study the necessary theoretical context within which it should be interpreted.

Chapter Three:

Theoretical Framework – Theory of Change[TOC]

3. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the theoretical lens that underpins the study. The Theory of Change (TOC) by Anderson (2005) was used in the study. TOC is most effective when used throughout the policy design cycle. It is both a process and a product. At its most primary meaning, theory of change is a dialogue-based process that is intended to generate a 'description of a sequence of events that is expected to lead to a particular desired outcome' (Van der Knapp, 2004).Theory of change (TOC) begins from a baseline analysis of both context and issues. It then maps out what needs to be a logical sequence of changes that are usually always anticipated as being necessary amongst stakeholders and in the context to support the desired long-term change. The sequence of changes provides a pathway towards measuring impact. In this way, TOC enables a logical link between project objectives and outcomes. As a result, evaluators are able to explicitly and critically analyse projects through a theory of change process [in ways that] help to support more rigorous impact planning, implementation and impact assessment (Vogel, 2012).

In the context of this study, in South Africa, various policy changes have occurred since the apartheid era within the education system to address educational inequalities. As a result, integration has occurred in the school system, and school has become compulsory for all races (De Wit, 2012). However, there are various other challenges that remain unabated in relation to access, funding, quality and so on that require monitoring and evaluation from time to time. In this regard, Vogel (2012) argues that the theory of change framework for the policy design process can then help to guide stakeholder engagement approaches, communication, influencing and co-production strategies, and monitoring and tracking progress towards impact within the lifetime of the policy outcome.

It may also be used in order to support discussions and decision-making with communities and stakeholders right through the policy design cycle as it encourages questioning to be on-going regarding what might influence change in the research context and draws on evidence and learning during implementation, thereby, helping the policy design team to respond to changes in the context (Anderson, 2005). The next sections discusses theory of change as a framework.

3.1. *Understanding theory of change*

Developing a theory of change requires a discussion between the research team and stakeholders of the following elements:

i.   The context for the initiative: This includes social, environmental, and political conditions of the current state of the problem which the policy is seeking to influence along with the other actors able to influence change (Anderson, 2005).

ii. The long-term change: That which would be what the initiative seeks to support and for whose ultimate benefit (Morton, 2012).

iii. The sequence of events: Either anticipated or required, to lead to the desired long-term outcome (James, 2011).

iv. The assumptions about how these changes may occur, along with contextual conditions that might affect whether the activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing the desired changes in this context (Vogel, 2012).

Critical thinking is strengthened by the mapping of the sequence of events about the contextual conditions that influence and motivate the policy and contributions of stakeholders along with other actors and the different interpretations and assumptions on how and why that process of change might come about (Stern, 2012). The most important benefit of theory of change occurs from making different views and assumptions about the change process explicit, especially seemingly obvious ones, to check whether they are appropriate, debate them and enrich them to strengthen policy design and implementation. In view of this discussion, we can conclude that theory of change emphasises the importance of dialogue with stakeholders, acknowledging the multiple viewpoints and acknowledgement of power relations including political, social and environmental realities in the context (Anderson, 2005).

A. Theory of change and how it works in research projects

Theory of change is an on-going reflection that explores change and how it happens and what that means in a particular context, sector and/or group of people. Among others, it does the following:

➢ It locates a programme or project within a wider analysis of how change comes about (Anderson, 2005).

➢ It draws on external learning about development (Vogel, 2012).

➢ It articulates our understanding of change but also challenges us to explore it further (Anderson, 2005).

➢ It acknowledges the complexity of change: the wider systems and actors that influence it (Morton, 2012).

➢ It is often presented in diagrammatic form with an accompanying narrative summary (James, 2011).

TOC works in a structured manner to help develop a description of how research links to development outcomes. It assists in building an impact-orientation to guide research design. It also draws on evaluation and social change traditions, combining logical process mapping with critical reflection on assumptions, interpretations and worldviews (Anderson, 2005).

B. Developing theory of change for research projects

TOC is most effective when used to frame the research design from the outset. There is a four-stage process that can be used to develop a project's theory of change which consists of four levels namely; Context for the strategy, Long-term change, Chain of events and Assumptions. Assumptions made definitive are the essence of theory of change, but accessing assumptions takes dialogue, critical reflection and time (Vogel, 2012). In order for TOC to be effective, it must be used right from the start of the research design process. In preliminary policy design stages, theory of change can help to focus on the issue the policy is seeking to influence, the context and the stakeholders involved (Morton, 2012). When stakeholders are identified and involved, appropriate ways in the scoping and design of the policy is essential to strengthen the impact potential of the research. It is helpful to use TOC to structure discussions with stakeholders about their perspectives on the issues, their priorities and to develop an understanding of the opportunities for research to influence change in the context.

Therefore, understanding stakeholders' agendas and their networks along with potential needs for evidence, which may be either acknowledged or unacknowledged, provides an important foundation for research questions (Rogers, 2008). According to Vogel (2012,37), in order to ensure that research questions are relevant for stakeholders and have the potential to generate evidence that can inform the issues, it is important to start with the analysis of the context. Many practitioners of the TOC suggest having a printed change diagram on display which can be referred to when needed. Some map research questions onto theory of change to help them ensure that the policy addresses all the relevant processes in the research strategy (Whittington, 2006).

3.2.How to develop a theory of change

As part of a theory of change analysis, there are levels which should be adhered to. The following elements should be addressed according to the sequence in which they are presented below since they constitute levels in the theory of change process:

Level 1: Context for the strategy: This refers to the analysis of the present state of the problem the policy is seeking to impact, the political, environmental and social conditions, along with other actors able to influence change (Morton, 2012).

Level 2: Long-term change: The second level entails expressing the long-term change that the policy seeks to support, from whose aspect it is compelling and for whose end benefit (Vogel, 2012).

Level 3: Chain of events: This level entails identifying the chain of changes that lead to the most desired long-term outcome (Rogers, 2008).

Level 4: Assumptions: Assumptions are enlightened by individual beliefs and values, professional experience, organisational values and are influenced by particular intellectual traditions and analytical perspectives (Van der Knapp, 2004).

Each of the levels above is discussed in detail below.

(i)   *Context for the strategy – level 1*

Context for the strategy is divided into three stages namely: (i) context level 1, (ii) context level 2 and (iii) context level 3.

Context level 1: Context level 1 is where the policy seeks to influence the development of a baseline analysis of the problem that gives rise to the policy design. It has two benefits, namely: (i) it shapes a circumstantial rationale for the research design, safeguarding that it is focused on the most relevant issues and (ii) it intensifies monitoring and evaluation of impact by building in a baseline from the outset (Morton, 2012). This level also generates information on the following issues: (i) the current situation, how issues currently affect people, communities, and existing evidence on the drivers and factors of problems in the issue area like the poverty status of affected groups; (ii) past and future trends such as The Bantu Education Act of 1952 and potential baselines for macro-level contextual issues from which to track impact (Morton, 2012).

Context Level 2: Context level 2 focusses on stakeholders and actors and power relations in the context. Stakeholders, actors, structure and power relations in the context constitute one of the most significant aspects of the context together with an array of institutions, actors and stakeholders that are active in it. Some evaluators under context level 2 include stakeholder behaviours, political agendas, contextual and environmental conditions (Vogel, 2012). There is a wider package of knowledge, skills and investment which is required to put research into use at this level. In such instances, the use of jargon needs to be avoided. For instance terms such as policymaker, can be somewhat vague in some contexts. So, they should be avoided. It is of paramount importance to be specific in this analysis and use language that is understood by all stakeholders. The reason for this is that there may be a high likelihood at this level that stakeholders are active in different sectors and settings which may include research policy networks, business and enterprise, state and non-state implementers of initiatives, state institutions, local communities and of course, their organisations (Anderson, 2005), and therefore may not share a common jargon.

In order to find relevant stakeholders and actors, an analysis of the issue and context may need to cover, for example, the identification of formal agencies involved in local governance arrangements and understanding the role of regulation; the clarification of the influence and jurisdiction of different stakeholders along with understanding the influence of community-led formal and informal practices along with governance arrangements (Nutley, 2007). In order to keep the stakeholder analysis manageable, the aim should be to identify up to three priority stakeholders (Stern, 2012).

Furthermore, context level 2 develops information on links and networks between local communities, institutions, governance and other relevant organisations which may be both formal and informal as long as they have power to influence the conditions around the issue; the reach to which there is capacity to respond and use new knowledge as well as the identification of up to three stakeholder groups and how they may relate to each other and the issues at hand (Morton, 2012).

Context level 3: This level focusses on the analysis of the acceptance of context to new evidence on the issues. In many contexts, there may not be a clear recognition of the need for evidence. In some situations, there may be outright conflict between stakeholders around a particular issue (Whittington, 2006). Now, while it is of paramount importance for this research to address questions that are relevant to stakeholders, there is also a dual role for research to be independent in order to challenge existing views and to bring both new and fresh perspectives (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). In view of this situation, it is important at this level to establish right at the start of the policy design, through analysis, how receptive stakeholders may be to new actors, ideas and initiatives. This is a vital step in setting realistic goals for effect and impact. In the context of this research, for example, the issue of whether fees should fall is a conflicted subject. Therefore, the most realistic aim might be to facilitate the open mindedness and willingness of some stakeholders to consider new evidence and perhaps alternative concepts or frameworks on the issue.

It is important to understand that change in actual behaviours and practices may simply not be feasible. However, contributing to the acceptance of alternative approaches amongst key stakeholders would be a considerable achievement in this sort of situation (Stern, 2012). On the other hand, in a context where there may be broad consensus amongst stakeholders, there may be much more freedom for aiding changes in practice and strategy amongst stakeholders such as testing new approaches. In a situation such as that, it may be realistic for the policy design team to aspire to influence changes in both policy and in practice (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). Furthermore, context level 3 derives information on whether actors in the issue area or sector recognise the need for change (Nutley, 2007).

It identifies areas where there is either consensus, challenge or innovation around strategies to deal with issues; establishes the level to which there is potential demand for evidence amongst stakeholders and lastly determines a baseline, scope and/or policies to influence change in the context (Said, 1994).

(ii)   *Defining the long-term change – level 2*

The next stage that follows after mapping the context is defining the long-term change or development impact that is desired. There is a high level of discomfort amongst many researchers with developing a clear statement of the long-term impact they hope to support. When research impact is defined at an early stage of research design it can be challenging as it is difficult to predict the findings of the research. Often in the long-term, there are multiple factors and stakeholder behaviours which influence impact, therefore expressing a statement of change at the onset of the project is often not appropriate (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010).

In theory of change, however, the statement of the anticipated long-term change is not intended to be an inflexible prediction of outcome, although it should reflect the actuality of the context identified in level 1. The intention is to provide theoretical clarity about the realistic long-term impact to guide the policy design team. The statement should be, specific, feasible and realistic thus housing the intended benefits for specific stakeholder groups and the potential contribution of research to that change (Morton, 2012). It would be suggested that it should be expressed as an active statement, with actors and verbs, a high degree of specifics and include a timeframe. The statement should be as detailed and insightful to the team and refined as progress is made from time to time in the lifespan of the project. As mentioned above, theory of change demands both logical thinking and deeper reflection which includes values, worldviews and philosophies of change that play a role in teams and stakeholders' ideas about long-term impact (Stern, 2012). This stage intends for the output to be both a positive and credible statement of the impact that the policy intends to influence, expressed in terms of key changes in the baseline situation, such as positive poverty alleviation outcomes and sustainability.

(iii)   *Identifying the chain of events – level 3*

The third level is whereby the change process is expressed as sequence of events anticipated to lead to the desired long-term outcome. This is where the connections between a research paper and development outcomes can be made in a sturdy way (Morton, 2012). It would then be advisable that this stage should be approached as a theoretical exercise about the steps which lead towards a direction of impact in this context. It is of paramount importance to highlight that it is not a literal prediction of the future but, the mapping should reflect a hierarchy of changes from short term through medium to long term, thus representing a logical, plausible progression from one set of changes to the next (James, 2011).

People mistakenly interpret theory of change as a linear sequence of change since the idea of logical sequencing is often represented in that linear way. However, building development impact is not a linear process. There should be definitive expression that there are non-linear and iterative aspects of the change process, especially acknowledging where complex processes create major uncertainties that cannot be known until later stages, if at all. Often these provide useful points for review along learning and adaptation of the policy strategy (Morton, 2012). Ideally, the sequence of change should be set up backwards from the long-term impact so that the logical and conceptual links are made. However, it is often easier to work in directions in practice, when doing so, we continue asking simple, open questions to aid the set up process such as; what should happen next? Is there anything else that needs to be happening to support this change? Usually, it is easier to be more precise about short-term changes.

However, the discipline of transparency and precision should be maintained when thinking through medium-term changes (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). The team and or stakeholders should aim to identify at least five priority changes in the sequence, to make it more manageable. The progression from one change to the next should be logically robust and plausible. It is suggested that such changes should be expressed as active statements, with actors and verbs, and a high degree of specificity (Anderson, 2012). The change process happens in sequences as presented below.

Sequencing Step 1: *The first sequence looks at changes in the long term* compared to changes in the current practice. This includes the use of current knowledge and policies inter alia to support longer term impact. During this phase, research should hypothesise what changes or processes could be needed to support widespread adoption and which stakeholders would be involved. This can be done by identifying, engaging and supporting potential partners who are able to work with decision-makers at the appropriate level (Carden, 2010). The following factors need to be considered at this stage: (i) what may be the main changes that are required to support the desired impact? and (ii) what are some of the institutional changes required to be seen in the sector or geographical area e.g. in terms of processes or participation, mandates, governance arrangements, capacities, new institutions, in order to create the conditions to support the development impact ? (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010).

This stage derives information on:

- macro-level changes such as institutional change, a new ministry, new patterns of investments, new programme areas that support a lasting shift towards the long-term impact (Vogel, 2012);
- identification of sign-posts towards long-term change, useful for suggesting indicator areas to investigate with monitoring and evaluation (Carden, 2010).

Sequencing Step 2: *The second sequence looks at changes in the medium term* which may include shifts in practices, policies, strategies or budget allocations. Although the foundations are laid in the short-term, research outcomes start to influence development outcomes in the medium term changes (Sardar, 2008). Changes in the medium term identified should represent lasting shifts that help to support the conditions for the desired impact. For example, changes in practices, policies, management and implementation strategies, or budget allocations to support new approaches to the use of services for fees must fall may be included in medium term changes. It is suggested that these changes should be linked to specific stakeholder groups such as stakeholders and research communities, business and enterprise, policy, public management, programme implementation both state and non-state, local communities and their organisations (Jones, 2011).

The stakeholder mapping conducted in level 1 should provide a baseline description of current practices. Realistic propositions are developed as how these should change to support the longer term impact sought in this stage. There are complex combinations of parallel shifts along different pathways in medium term change. This can be used as an example; there may be changes in individual behaviours and practices, alongside changes in informal and formal organisational practices, as well as changes in formal institutional and policy regimes (Morton, 2012). Experience from other research programmes suggests that some typical pathways of medium term changes that might be influenced include:

- influencing policy and the enabling environment for development activities such as policy budget allocations (Vogel, 2012);
- influencing investments by development stakeholders into research-into-use activities, demonstration and scaling-up processes (Nutley, 2007); and
- influencing investments by development and science funding stakeholders into future research (Rogers, 2008).

Research projects, such as this one, may only be able to influence the start of processes that build towards medium term changes. Like in the analysis of longer term change, it is helpful to hypothesise medium term changes in order to help them identify opportunities to build relationships with key players and community alike. Because the full extent of changes are unlikely to be seen until after the end of the research it should be considered that what initial behaviour changes might be seen amongst stakeholders that could suggest the start of the medium term changes sought (Nutle,: 2007). For example, a medium term change that demonstrates that stakeholders are serious about their intention to apply a free tuition for tertiary education policy approaches to local poverty alleviation might be putting research into use as small scale pilot activities to generate evidence of impact that could act as a platform for wide scale application in the future. To back this up, a prior behaviour change would be a request for a briefing. As a precursor to this change, a champion on the inside might need to advocate for the relevance of the free tuition for tertiary education policy approach to a poverty reduction strategy.

Thinking through what engagement strategies might help to influence this type of initial behaviour change can help to focus more precisely on specific target groups to engage with a purposeful strategy (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). Other issues to be considered may include what may change in the practices, policies, relationships and networks amongst key stakeholder groups. This is needed in the medium-term to support the long-term change. A few questions arise: What behaviour changes might suggest that stakeholders are willing to advocate for and promote a new evidence-based approach? What new mandates, relationships and coalitions across sectors might be needed? Information for this stage is derived on:

- intermediate level changes, such as policies, a new practice amongst key organisations, new sets of partnerships, different forms of consultation or negotiation of strategies (Carden, 2010).

Sequencing Step 3: This step is about changes in the short-term i.e. knowledge, attitude and skills and uses of research. In order to support changes in practice in the short term, changes in knowledge, attitudes and skills around free tuition for tertiary education policy need to be supported. These types of changes are often influenced by the use of stakeholders and collaborators for the policy design and policy makers. In identifying the specific uses that would support the desired changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and relationships that in turn would support the behaviour and practice changes in the medium term is the focus of step 3 (Rogers, 2008). Behaviour change is influenced by research outputs and evidence influence in multiple and indirect ways. The literature on evidence-based policy making suggests that it is an iterative and non-linear process, where different uses may co-exist (Jones, 2011).

Examples of research use include:

- inclusion of a study in an evidence review by a government ministry or department (Morton, 2012);
- research which is quoted in an international strategy declaration as a signal of an intention to change policy and its implementation (Jones, 2011);
- a research-based narrative which offers a compelling re-framing of an issue and starts to feature in discussions amongst development agency staff and civil society professionals involved in the area (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010);

- evidence which is used by local people to better argue their own case in negotiations with state and business representatives.

All of these are valid uses of research. Some of them may be precursors to direct applications for the benefit of poor people; others may have an indirect influence. Many of these examples of research use may fall outside of a research project's remit to influence directly and so may need to be supported by external stakeholders. The policy makers should identify which uses have the potential to support the desired changes in knowledge, attitudes or skills in the short term (Morton, 2012).

Sequencing Step 4: This step is about changes in the short-term; awareness and engagement of immediate stakeholders. A forerunner to research use is achieving awareness and engagement amongst priority stakeholders in the short-term (Sardar, 2008). Awareness of the research and an active interest in its agenda and focus is a key building block for impact. Engagement with stakeholders and potential users at an early stage of research is encouraged so that stakeholders are able to help define the research process and participate in it very actively, to support and influence their attitudes toward the issues (Nutley: 2007). A generic term used here is engagement, to convey an active and influential role for stakeholders in the research process. With that being said, stakeholders who only receive briefings or research papers cannot be considered to be engaged (Morton, 2012). There is a need to define more specifically what represents engagement for this particular context.

Information for this stage is derived on:

- a prioritised list of stakeholders, with an understanding of how they might support or disrupt the aims of the project, and the changes in their views that the project hopes to influence (Jones, 2011);
- identification of research collaborators and peers within and outside normal disciplines, immediate research users and awareness/attitude /relationship changes e.g. engaging champions, opinion-formers, introducing new ideas to a knowledge network (Carden, 2010).

Sequencing Step 5: Included in this step are programme strategy and outputs; research outputs and products, plus communications and networks. After scaling the sequence of changes the research seeks to influence, it can now be considered if the research approach and strategies are from an impact oriented perspective. By developing a theory of change for policy design, to be considered, is the range of research and evidence products required to support the changes identified, as well as the communications, networking and relationship building with stakeholders that are needed as outputs of the research process (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). There is a risk that only traditional research activities will be planned if the theory of change approach is not used to underpin the policy design.

In Rogers (2008,38) the Impact Strategy is given emphasis; the majority of the policy design activity should relate to undertaking research to develop new knowledge, but a significant proportion of planning and implementation budgets and most importantly, resources, should cover activities for building development impact. For this reason, in an impact oriented research project, the research process should convey research outputs, communications, networks and relationships to aid its theory of change. Some supporting questions to be considered would be; what strategies will generate the responses and behaviour changes needed to drive the theory of change? What will be seen as a result of engagement strategies? What else may need to be in place to support the changes that are needed (Morton, 2012)?

(iv) *Making the assumptions definitive – level 4*

Every programme is packed with beliefs, assumptions and hypotheses about how change happens about the way humans work, or organisations, or political systems, or ecosystems. Theory of change is about articulating these many underlying assumptions about how change will happen in a programme (Rogers, 2008). Making assumptions definitive may be considered as the most critical stage in a theory of change process and yet, the most challenging. Assumptions are the 'theories' in a theory of change process. The quote above, highlights the fact that every project is packed with the assumptions that people bring to the project, which are unique to their individual perspective. It is hard to make assumptions definitive because they are deeply held perceptions that have become rules of thumb that are taken for granted which often can be thought of simply as things which we believe to be true concerning a particular situation at hand (Sardar, 2008).

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Here is an example; there are obvious differences between natural science and economic perspectives on knowledge and change, some social and political science views. However, the key characteristic is the extent to which knowledge is considered to be independent of people and their social, political and geographical contexts (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). The key in making assumptions definitive is time and dialogue with others. The objective is to not only check but to test assumptions through a theory of change process in order to improve them and inspire new ways of addressing issues. In reality though, most of the time, there are different theories of change actively influencing the approaches taken (Anderson, 2005).

In most cases, organisational norms influence views on how most things ought to work. These are often declared in policy driven documents, but are not in fact how the policy is implemented. The intended beneficiaries and stakeholders may also view the role of the policy differently. The disconnect between the embraced, unchallenged theory and the reality of implementation may more often than not, lead to poor decision-making and weak strategy, hindering the effectiveness of the project in persuading change. In some cases, seeking one dominant theory can lead to tension and conflict in the organisation or policy design team. Often presence of unexplored or somewhat different theories leads to arguments about strategic choices and decisions in organisations and programmes (Van der Knapp, 2004).

The presence of different theories needs to be definitely explored in order to challenge received wisdoms and enrich strategies in the process. There will be change in context and dynamic situations. So, the aim is not to try to reach consensus on a single view on research and change, but to work with a few to ensure that there is access to a broad range of options. It is advisable to deliberately choose a number of different theories to explore and investigate, as these theories can suggest different pathways to influence outcomes (Vogel, 2012). When two or three pathways are developed, triangulating between them can become a point of learning and reflection to open up new strategic choices and innovations (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010). When there is access to a wide range of engagements and research into the usage of strategies this puts one in a better position to respond to opportunities as they occur. Through on-going dialogue with peers and stakeholder communities, strategies can further be strengthened (Caden, 2010).

3.3.The process of critical reflection

Critical thinking and insight is a level needed for a good theory of change process. This can sometimes be hard to achieve without a facilitator. The objective is that the role should be taken seriously and sensitively to ensure that dialogue is open, and should be alert to power relations in the group that might constrain challenge and ensure that alternative interpretations are put forward. All affected parties are more likely to be able to gain insight from comparing perspectives. Moreover, differences in assumptions and worldviews can be explored in a positive way (James, 2011). The stage of reflection on assumptions is most effective if it cross-cuts the other stages in the process. In some cases, it may be easier to reflect on assumptions once the process sequence has been mapped out. In other situations, opportunities to explore assumptions may present themselves as the group moves through the stages in the process. When critically reflecting on assumptions, here are some questions to consider: Which is the most important, bottom-line change which if it is not achieved, would mean the policy would fail? Why is that the most important one? From whose perspective is it important and significant? Are there trade-offs to consider? What else would need to be happening to support that change? What is the main mechanism for change (Morton, 2012)?

A. What process should be followed?

It is a collaborative process to develop a theory of change. Critical exploration of views and assumptions about the change process is of paramount importance. Developing a theory of change as a desk-based exercise without consultation will fall short of the desired outcome. The comparison of different perceptions on the change process and involving people with local knowledge is a key part of the approach. Vogel (2012, 52), suggests that it is widely agreed that theory of change analysis should be a group process. Some people find that involving stakeholders as well as the other actors is helpful, as it provides a useful triangulation and reality check (James: 2011). Some practical considerations when starting a theory of change analysis are outlined below.

3.4.   Enabling factors

The following are a number of the factors that have been identified as contributing to the effective development of theories of change. These factors include the perspective that:

- Theory of change is a process and a product. Therefore, it should be exercised as an on-going process of discussion-based analysis and learning to support policy design, implementation, evaluation and impact assessment (Nutley, 2007).

- A theory of change process quality rests on making assumptions definitive. Sensible experience highlights that this is not easy to do as it takes time and discussion for it to be able to challenge assumptions (Jones, 2011).

- In order for the theory of change to work effectively, time and resources need to be taken seriously. Stakeholders are all under time pressures. Pragmatic approaches can get theory of change habits started, but institutional and funding support for theory of change processes is needed to get the benefits in terms of better design and implementation of policies (Nutley, 2007).

It is challenging to work with theory of change thinking. But if applied well it can create a strong organising framework to improve policy design, implementation, evaluation and learning. This becomes possible if some enabling factors can be achieved. Theory of change provides a platform to discuss and exchange personal, organisational and analytical assumptions with an open learning approach (Nutley, 2007). Moreover, theory of change thinking is used to explain rationales and how things are intended to work, but also to explore new possibilities through critical thinking, discussion and challenging of dominant narratives for the benefit of stakeholders. Critical thinking is cross-checked with evidence from research inclusive of qualitative and quantitative paradigms. It also works properly in instances where wider learning brings other analytical perspectives into the equation. In this context, different stakeholders and beneficiaries should be exposed to contextual knowledge (James, 2011). TOC is identified as relevant pathway to impact on any given initiative, rather than a single pathway, with acknowledgement of the non-linearity and emergent nature of these.

Funders and grant-makers are able to find ways to support justified adaptation and refocusing of programme strategies during implementation, while there is time to deliver improvements to stakeholders and communities (Vogel, 2012). On these grounds, TOC is a critical theoretical framework and is relevant to the present study.

3.5. *What makes for a rigorous theory of change?*
Rigour in theory of change is achieved through the following mechanisms:

- Intensive analysis of context and the baseline analysis of the issues as well as gathering appropriate sources of knowledge (Nutley, 2007);
- Making assumptions precise and critically examining these appropriately against available evidence and perspectives (Morton, 2012);
- Testing the impact potential of the policy design strategies against the behaviour changes sought from actors and stakeholders and therefor looking at available evidence on the cause and effect mechanisms embedded within strategies (Ortiz and Macedo, 2010);
- Using, reviewing and revising the TOC with stakeholders to support on-going learning to guide policy implementation (Morton, 2012).

It is of paramount importance to remember that theory of change is only a conceptual map, it is not the territory. Importantly, it may not always be smooth. Therefore, bumps in the road, twists and turns are always inevitable (Van der Knapp, 2004). The value of the approach lies in balancing. The first is validity with simplicity; recognising the limits of representations of complex change but aiming to capture key non-linear aspects. The second is being an adjustable model with enough definition for decision-making. A focal point on impact with responsiveness to adapt pathways and strategies is the third. The next one is a plausible yet expanding impact statement. The fifth is non-linearity with a sense of progress towards goal; and lastly, accountability with learning (James, 2011). These are some of the characteristic features of TOC. As the discussion above has demonstrated, TOC is a credible theoretical framework which aims to achieve a particular goal. Given the nature of this study, TOC was deemed relevant and applicable in trying to understand the complexities of the #Fees Must Fall movement whose dual aim was to address the immediate situation of rising academic fees and to reverse social inequalities predicated inter alia on race, ethnicity, gender and class.

3.6. Conclusion

There are multiple ways to represent a programme's theory of change. It is a tool used to communicate with others. For it to be effective, it should be represented in an accessible manner. The apartheid system created educational inequalities through overt racist policies. The reason for this research was to assess the feasibility of having a policy which promotes equality in the higher education system (Jones, 2011). For this reason, this guide provides an introduction to theory of change which can enable that to happen. The key message is that making definitive how with research, one can contribute to change and engaging stakeholders and partners at an early stage in the research process should enhance the potential for the research to make a real difference to poor people and communities in the country, especially those in low-income homes (Sardar, 2008).

In this chapter we have discussed the importance of understanding just what TOC is all about and unpacked its four stages which are: Context for the strategy, Long-term change, Chain of events and Assumptions. The above discussion explains how activities are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impacts. The importance of theory of change is to ensure that it adequately represents what the intervention intends to achieve and how – to the satisfaction of those who will use it. Ideally, a theory of change explains how change is understood to come about, rather than simply linking activities to expected results with an arrow. Theory of Change was used to understand policy planning to identify the current situation with fees must fall in terms of needs and opportunities, the intended situation and what needs to be done to move from one place to another. The aim was to design more realistic goals, clarify accountabilities and establish a common understanding of the strategies to be used to achieve the goals.

Now that Chapter 3 has presented and discussed the theory on which the study was anchored, the next chapter (Chapter 4) will discuss the research methodology that was followed in carrying out the research project for this dissertation. Such a chapter will enable the reader to appreciate the results presented and analysed in Chapter 5 later.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4. Introduction

In order to assess the feasibility of having a policy which promotes equality in the higher education system, the South African education policies, the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) must be looked at but also could be compared to some international education policies. This needs to be done in order to understand how it is that South Africa is faced with this pandemic. We must start by revisiting the past. This means looking at policies which existed during apartheid. The Apartheid system created educational inequalities through overt racist policies. Since these policies ensured that the content and amount of education perpetuated social inequalities, changing these policies in a post-apartheid era was the logical step towards social equality (McKaiser, 2016). As a result, the study will add to existing studies with specific emphasis on the racial disparities in education policies and related financial implications for students in Higher Institutions of Learning. The study is guided by the principle that everyone has the right to education. It argues that while it is appreciated that free education is available at basic level, this is not enough because all students should also have the right to access and enter tertiary institutions too regardless of their financial constraints accumulated due to having a previously disadvantaged background. This study, as a result, seeks to contribute to knowledge as it will remind society about apartheid policies on the one hand and the policies that were implemented after 1994 in order to address education inequalities in South Africa.

The present chapter focuses on the research methodology that was followed to carry out this study. Normally, researchers choose between qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. According to Mbembe (2001, 37), qualitative research is designed to help researchers understand people, and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Such studies allow the complexities and differences of worlds-under-study to be explored and represented. This is the most important part of the dissertation or thesis as the methodology used to collect this information and data can make or break the study. The research methodology section or chapter sometimes causes great difficulty to both experienced and inexperienced researchers as there is a very broad diversity of methodologies available to the researcher (Bain, 2003).

Before beginning the research it is advised that one should study the various kinds of research methodologies one could use to conduct research. One should choose or design a method that can be considered appropriate for the research topic. Any research methodology should comply with the requirements of reliability, validity and feasibility. The research methodology chosen must generate the best possible results (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003)**.**

This research methodology chapter will attempt to explain in detail the plan that was followed to conduct the research to find answers to the research question. Among the questions asked by researchers upfront are the following: Will there be any experiments conducted, if so how? How will data be collected? What kind of data will be collected and how will one go about analysing it once collected? It is imperative that these methods are correctly and effectively utilized as this is primarily the research methods to be used and applied in a way that confidence is instilled in the contribution that is made by the study to the field of research (Cassell, Bishop, Symon, Johnson and Buehring, 2009). The following questions should be considered when choosing a research methodology. Firstly, the researcher has to consider if the proposed methodology is valid. Will this methodology provide the kind of information, data and statistics needed? Secondly, the researcher has to consider if such a methodology is feasible, i.e. will s/he manage to carry out the study with the samples concerned in the time available? Some things just take longer to do than others. Will the researcher manage to finish the research project using the methodology chosen? Thirdly, does the methodology chosen measure what it is supposed to measure? And lastly, is the methodology reliable, is it explained clearly enough so that someone else could follow the description and repeat the research by using this methodology? (McKaiser, 2016).

4.1. What is Research Methodology?

One of the best ways of describing this concept would be to draw a distinction between research methodology and research methods. In a nutshell, research methodology is broader in its context while research methods are more specific in nature. Researchers see research method is a strategy of enquiry, which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design, and data collection. Research methodology normally falls under two types, i.e. qualitative and quantitative paradigms. These two approaches refer to distinctions about the nature of knowledge based on how one understands the world and the ultimate purpose of the research.

Another point worth reiterating is that research methods refer to the way in which data are collected and analysed and the type of generalizations and representations derived from the data. Quantitative research methods were originally developed in the natural sciences and were developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural spheres (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003). Quantitative and qualitative research studies are both conducted in education and neither of these methods is intrinsically better than the other. One determines the suitability by context and nature of the research and sometimes one can be an alternative to the other depending on the kind of study being conducted. It is also common to use the mixed methods approach or what other researchers refer to as triangulation. When it comes the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods one clear difference is that the former deals with numbers or quantifiable data sets while th elater deals with people's lived experiences or qualitative data sets. As mentioned above, some researchers have the ability to merge these two methodologies for use in a single research project (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005).

4.2.Research Design

Research design is similar to an architectural outline as it ensures that the procedures undertaken are adequate to obtain valid, objective and accurate answers to the research questions. To ensure this, it is important to select a study design that helps to isolate, eliminate or quantify the effects of different sets of variables influencing the independent variables. Research design can be thought of as the logic of research that throws light on how the study is to be conducted. It shows how all of the major parts of the research study such as the samples or groups, measures or programs can work together in an attempt to address the research questions (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). In a nutshell, the research design can be seen as the actualisation of logic in a set of procedures that optimises the validity of data for a given research problem. The research design serves to plan, structure and execute the research to maximise the validity of the findings. It derives direction from the underlying philosophical assumptions about the research and data collection processes (Bain, 2003).

4.3.Research methodology and methods

One word that comes to mind when trying to captivate the essence of qualitative research is 'naturalistic'. The reason is that it attempts to study the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural setting.

It is particularly useful to study educational settings and processes. In essence, "Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter; it attempts to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). According to Mckaizer (2016, 3). these authors continue to argue that qualitative research aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem at hand, because very little is known about that problem. There is usually uncertainty about dimensions and characteristics of the problem. They also espouse the view that it uses soft data and gets rich data.

One of the key factors in order to determine a clear distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is the form of data collection, data analysis and then lastly, data presentation. Quantitative research awards statistical results in the form of numerical or statistical data. Under this approach, researchers measure variables on a sample of subjects and express the relationship between variables using effect statistics such as correlations, relative frequencies, or differences between means; their focus is to a large extent on the testing of theory. On the other hand, qualitative research awards data as detailed narration of words. Here, questionnaires, surveys and interviews are used to gather data that is revised and tabulated in words as opposed to numbers. While quantitative research is characterised by the use of statistical analysis, qualitative research attempts to understand developments in what can be best described as natural settings (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). By the descriptive use of the phrase *natural settings* it can be gathered that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret developments in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Bain, 2003).

Bain's (2003, 60) claims of different knowledge, strategies of enquiry, collection of data methods and analysis are employed in qualitative research. Sources of qualitative data are inclusive of not only the researchers' observation but fieldwork too which can be classified as participant observation. Participant observation entails being in the field and seeing things for yourself as a researcher. Some argue that it also includes questionnaires, interviews, documents and texts, as well as the researcher's apprehension and reactions. Other sources of data can be drawn from attitudes and environments, opinions, written descriptions of people, events or combinations of these which can also be used as sources of data.

One is then able to derive data from direct observation of behaviours, from interviews, from written opinions, or from public documents (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). As can be seen from the discussion above, there's a distinction between qualitative and quantitative emphasis on the personal and impersonal role of the researcher and not only in explanation but also in understanding the purpose of the inquiry. Another key in distinction is that qualitative research is inductive while quantitative research is deductive in nature. The element of qualitative research being deductive can be seen as a major difference because in qualitative research, a hypothesis is not needed to start research because it employs inductive data analysis to provide a better understanding of the interaction of mutually shaping influences and to demonstrate or develop the interacting realities and experiences of both the researcher and he participant (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005).

Therefore, this process allows for a design to evolve rather than having a complete design in the beginning of the study because it is difficult if not impossible to foresee the outcome of interactions due to the diverse perspectives and value systems of the researcher with his or her participants and their influence on the interpretation of reality and the outcome of the study. It is necessary to note that all quantitative research requires a hypothesis before research can begin (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). This rule is not applicable to qualitative research although some researchers still feel free to insert a hypothesis in their qualitative research projects out of choice, not necessity. Carter, Clegg and Kornberger (2008, 7) state that the researcher is the fundamental instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative studies as the researcher initiates the situation and makes sense of the multiple interpretations where required.

This is done as one strives to collect data in a way that is not intrusive so that the study is able to unfold naturally without predetermined constraints or conditions that control the study or its outcomes. There are three basic purposes of quantitative research which is to describe, compare and attribute causality. It can then be further broken down into five research purposes for which qualitative studies are particularly useful for understanding the meaning that participants in a study give to the events, situations and actions that they are involved with and of the accounts they give of their lives and experiences. It is also required for understanding the particular context within which the participants act, and the influence this context has on their actions.

There is an important role in identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences and generating new, grounded theories about them. This does not mean forgetting or not understanding the process by which events and actions take place and lastly not developing causal explanations (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003).

Qualitative case studies in education are often framed with theories, concepts and models. An inaugural method is then used to either support or challenge theoretical assumptions. The research process in qualitative research is inductive but it can be noted that most qualitative research inherently moulds or changes existing theory in that data are analysed and interpreted in light of the concepts of a particular theoretical orientation (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). The findings are usually discussed in relation to existing knowledge which in some cases is theory with the aim of demonstrating how the present study has contributed to expanding the knowledge base. There should however be a caution that qualitative research is an approach that acknowledges the researcher's subjectivity. It requires that the "biases, motivations, interests or perspectives of the inquirer" are identified and made definitive throughout the study (Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, 2008). There are other disadvantages of qualitative research as alluded earlier.

These points are useful to the researchers so that they can try to minimise their effects during the course of the study. The first one is that one bias can affect the design of a study and can enter bias information into data collection as sources or subjects may not all be equally credible. Therefore, the analysis of observations can be biased. Some of the subjects may be previously influenced and this affects the outcome of the study. A study group may not be representative of the larger population.

Any group that is studied is altered to some degree by the very presence of the researcher and thus any data collected is somewhat skewed. It takes time to build trust with participants that facilitate full and honest self-representation. Short term observational studies are at a particular disadvantage where trust building is concerned (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003). In defence of qualitative research, Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, (2008), state that most writers suggest that judgement should focus on whether the research is credible and confirmable rather than imposing statistical, quantitative ideas of generalisability on qualitative research.

To sum it up, one can gather that qualitative research is a systematic inquiry into the nature or qualities of complex social group behaviours by employing interpretive and naturalistic approaches. It lends itself to the thick narrative description of the group's behaviours in the group's natural environment (Bain, 2003). There is also an attempt not to be manipulative. This takes into account the unforeseen views of the participants as the purpose is generally to aim for objectivity. Qualitative research projects are most appropriate when one wants to become more familiar with the phenomenon of interest, to achieve a deep understanding of how people think about a topic and to describe in great detail the perspectives of the research participants (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003). For the purpose of this study, a mixture between quantitative and qualitative methods was used and data were collected via interviews and surveys. This decision was informed by the desire to diversify data sets. Each method is expounded below.

4.4 (a). Surveys / Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a written list of questions, the answers to which are recorded by respondents. In a questionnaire respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down their answers. The only difference between an interview schedule and a questionnaire is that in the former it is the interviewer who asks the questions and if necessary, explains them and records the respondent's replies on an interview schedule. In the latter, the answers are recorded by the respondents themselves. This distinction is important in accounting for the respective strengths and weaknesses of the two methods. In the case of a questionnaire, as there is no one to explain the meaning of questions to respondents, it is important that the questions are clear and easy to understand (Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, 2008).

Also, the layout of a questionnaire should be such that it is easy to read and pleasant to the eye, and the sequence of questions should be easy to follow. A questionnaire should be developed in an interactive style. This means that respondents should feel as if someone is talking to them. In a questionnaire, a sensitive question or a question that respondents may feel hesitant about answering should be prefaced by an interactive statement explaining the relevance of the question to the research project being conducted. It is a good idea to use a different font for these statements to distinguish them from the actual questions (Bain, 2003).

Questionnaires can be used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, although one will not be able to get the level of detail in qualitative responses to a questionnaire that one could in an interview. They require a great deal of care in their design and delivery, but a well-developed questionnaire can be distributed to a much larger number of people than it would be possible to interview the equal number of informants within the same amount of time used to distribute questionnaires. Questionnaires are particularly well suited for research seeking to measure some parameters for a group of people such as a percentage agreeing with a proposition or level of awareness of an issue (Jarzabkowski, and Whittington, 2008).

There are a number of advantages for using a questionnaire. One that quickly comes to mind is that it is less expensive as one does not interview respondents and can save time and human and financial resources (Mudimbe, 1985.) The use of a questionnaire, therefore, is comparatively convenient and inexpensive, particularly when it is administered collectively to a study population, it is an extremely inexpensive method of data collection. It offers greater anonymity. There is no face-to-face interaction between respondents and interviewer. Therefore, this method provides greater anonymity. In some situations where sensitive questions are asked it helps to increase the likelihood of obtaining accurate information (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). Although a questionnaire has several advantages, there are also notable disadvantages of a questionnaire. It is important to note that not all data collection using this method has these disadvantages. The prevalence of a disadvantage depends on a number of factors, but the researcher needs to be aware of them to understand their possible bearing on the quality of the data. These are application limited.

One main disadvantage of a questionnaire is that application is limited to a study population that can read and write. It cannot be used on a population that is illiterate, very young, very old or handicapped. As a result thereof, the response rate is low. Questionnaires are notorious for their low response rates, that is, people fail to return them (Whittington, 2006). If one plans to use a questionnaire, it must be kept in mind that because not everyone will return their questionnaire one's sample size will in effect be reduced. The response rate normally depends on a number of factors which are not standard. These include but are not limited to the interest of the research sample in the topic of the study, the layout and length of the questionnaire, the quality of the letter explaining the purpose and relevance of the study and the methodology used to deliver the questionnaire. Researchers could consider themselves lucky to obtain at least half of the number of questionnaires which was originally distributed to the informants (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003).

As previously mentioned, the response rate is not a problem when a questionnaire is administered in a collective situation. There is a self-selecting bias. Not everyone who receives a questionnaire returns it. Therefore, there is a self-selecting bias. Those who return their questionnaires may have attitudes, attributes or motivations that are different from those of the researcher (Mudimbe, 1985.) Therefore if the response rate is very low, the findings may not be representative of the total study population. The opportunity to clarify issues is lacking. If for any reason, respondents do not understand some questions, there is almost not as much of a good opportunity for them to have the meaning clarified unless they get in touch with the researcher as much as they would if it were an interview (Whittington, 2006). If different respondents interpret questions differently, this will affect the quality of the information provided. Spontaneous responses are not allowed for mailed questionnaires are inappropriate when spontaneous responses are required, since the questionnaire gives respondents time to reflect before answering. The response to a question may be influenced by the response to other questions. As respondents usually read all the questions before answering, the way they answer a particular question may be affected by their knowledge of other questions. Also, it is possible to consult other respondents. This is applicable to both mailed and hand-delivered questionnaires.

In situations where a researcher wants to find out only the study population's opinions, this method may be inappropriate though requesting respondents to express their own opinion may help. A response cannot be supplemented with other information. An interview can sometimes be supplemented with information from other methods of data collection such as observation. However, a questionnaire lacks this advantage (Jarzabkowski and Whittington, 2008).

4.4 (b). Interviews

One of the most flexible and widely used methods for gaining qualitative information about people's experiences, views and feelings is the interview. Interviewing is a commonly used method of collecting information from respondents. In most walks of life information can be collected through different forms of interaction with others. There are many definitions of interviews. According Whittington (2006, 620), 'an interview involves an interviewer reading questions to respondents and recording their answers'. According to Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, (2008) 'an interview is a verbal interchange, often face to face, though the telephone may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person'. Any person-to-person interaction, either face to face or otherwise, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind is called an interview. When interviewing a respondent one has the freedom to decide the format and content of questions to be asked to respondents, select the wording of questions, decide the way one wants to ask them and choose the order in which they are to be asked. This process of asking questions can be either very flexible, where the interviewer has the freedom to think about and formulate questions as they come to mind around the issue being investigated or inflexible, where ones has to keep strictly to the questions decided beforehand including their wording, sequence and the manner in which they are asked.

This happens where there is an interview schedule that has been prepared upfront. Interviews are classified into different categories according to this degree of flexibility (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). An interview can be thought of as a guided conversation between a researcher and somebody from whom the researcher wishes to learn something. The level of structure in an interview can vary, but most commonly interviewers follow a semi-structured format.

This means that the interviewer will develop a guide to the topics that he or she wishes to cover in the conversation, and may even write out a number of questions to ask (Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, 2008). The interviewer is however, free to follow different paths of conversation that emerge over the course of the interview or to prompt the informant to clarify and expand on certain points. Therefore, interviews are particularly good tools for gaining detailed information where the research question is open-ended in terms of the range of possible answers. Interviews are not particularly well suited for gaining information from large numbers of people. Interviews are time-consuming and so careful attention needs to be given to selecting informants who will have the knowledge or experiences necessary to answer the research question adequately (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

4.4. (c). Structured interviews

For the purpose of this research, a structured interview was used to solicit the views of the informants. This is where the researcher asks a predetermined set of questions, using the same wording and order of questions as specified in the interview schedule. An interview schedule is a written list of questions, open ended or closed, prepared for use by an interviewer in a person-to-person interaction. This may be face to face, by telephone or by other electronic media. An interview schedule is a research tool for collecting data, whereas interviewing is a method of data collection. One of the main advantages of the structured interview is that it provides uniform information, which assures the comparability of data. Structured interviewing requires fewer interviewing skills than does unstructured interviewing (Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, 2008).

4.5. Theoretical Population

The major question that motivates sampling in the first place is: "Who do you want to generalize to?" Or should it be: "To whom do you want to generalize?" In most social research the interest is more than just the people who directly participate in the study. In most applied social research, the interest is in generalizing to specific groups. The group often wished to generalize is often called the population study. This is the group preferred to sample from because it is the group of interest (Jarzabkowski, and Whittington, 2008).

The interest of generalising in the case of this study is students from and at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College). The students of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) were also the accessible population.

4.5.1. Sampling Frame

A number of twenty five students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) constituted the sampling frame for this study.

4.5.2. Study population

The study population for this research were students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College). They represented the study's theoretical population.

4.5.3 Sample size

A number of twenty five students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) constituted the sample size for the survey. Of that number, five students were earmarked for qualitative face to face interviews and twenty students were chosen for the survey. These figures were decided because of the time limit for the study as well as resource constraints.

4.5.4 Sampling procedure

Bain (2003), identifies purposive method sampling strategies to increase transferability. For surveys, purposive sampling is used to identify the theoretical population. This is the logic which informed this study. Twenty participants were selected randomly from the accessible population. For qualitative face to face interviews, five participants purposively targeted from the accessible population on the basis of their knowledge and experience about the persistent inequalities in the higher education system of South Africa, the fees must fall movement and the policies around education in general and higher education in particular.

4.5.5 Sampling technique

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling. It was used to select the participants in the present study.

As a norm, purposive sampling only uses participants who are knowledgeable about the problem at hand because of their involvement and experience regarding the situation under investigation, in this case regarding the issue of tertiary education concerns by students. The selection of the sample is based on judgement and purpose of the study (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability technique is used by the researcher to select a purposive sample that represents a broader group of cases as closely as possible.

4.6. Measurement of Variables

To ensure reliability of the surveys and interview, the study used the split- half method which suggests that the measurement of any complex social concept should be made more than once. To ensure validity, the study used the content validity which measures the range of meanings included within the concept (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

4.7. Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection and analysis inform or drive each other, with the result that the analysis becomes a higher level synthesis of the information. The iterative cycle is repeated and course design and development checked and revised as the process continues. Data is derived through direct interaction with the phenomenon being studied. In the present study, as part of data collection, there was documentation of data which was categorised into concepts. The concepts were then connected to show how they influence each other. Alternative explanations were evaluated and legitimized then the findings reported (Jarzabkowski, and Whittington, 2008). As mentioned before, twenty students who attend the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard College) were used as the sample size for the survey and five students were used for qualitative face to face interviews. These data collection methods were used to solicit information.

4.7. (I). Thematic analysis

Babbie and Mouton (2012), describe this form of analysis as historically a conventional practice in qualitative research which involves searching through data to identify any recurrent patterns. A theme is a cluster of linked categories conveying similar meanings and usually emerges through the inductive analytic process which characterises the qualitative paradigm.

The exploratory power of this popular technique can be enhanced by the analyst lacking previous knowledge of the research topic as they are not guided by any preconceptions. Thus, the analyst does not have to be an expert in the research topic (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003). However, in order to begin analysis one must have at least some conceptual understanding to guide the insight processes. There is no simple distinction between qualitative analysis, which is naturalistic, contextual, idealist in description and quantitative analysis, which is experimental, positivist and realistic. Since analysts move back and forth between new concepts and the data, all research involves processes of induction and deduction, especially thematic analysis whereby induction creates themes and deduction verifies them (Babbie and Mouton; 2012).   .

Thematic analysis and grounded theory are methodologically similar analytic frameworks but the manner in which themes, concepts and categories are managed varies considerably between these approaches. They both attempt to represent a view of reality via systematically working through text to identify topics that are progressively integrated into higher order themes, via processes of de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation. Their procedures are more conceptually demanding than content analysis which employs a much simpler ordering of data (Whittington, 2006). However, thematic analysis and content analysis are often confused. The former, through focusing purely upon meaning, promotes a more discursive interpretation since individual codes can cross-reference multiple themes, whilst the latter employs predefined mutually exclusive categories to count the frequency of a theme and is more appropriately used to statistically test any hypotheses (Bain, 2003).

An important aspect of data analysis is the search for meaning through direct interpretation of what is observed as well as what is experienced and reported by the subjects. Data analysis can be better explained as "working with the data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesising them, and searching for patterns" (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). The aim of analysis of data is to discover patterns, concepts, themes and meanings. The process of data analysis begins with the categorisation and organisation of data in search of patterns, critical themes and meanings that emerge from the data. The need for searching the data for patterns which may explain or identify causal links in the data base is the driving factor.

In the process, one concentrates on the whole data first, then attempts to take it apart and re-constructs it again more meaningfully (Jarzabkowski, and Whittington, 2008). Categorisation helps to make comparisons and contrasts between patterns to reflect on certain patterns and complex threads of the data deeply and make sense of them. The goal is always to create descriptive, multi-dimensional categories that provide a preliminary framework for analysis. These emerging categories are of paramount importance since in research one tends to use inductive analysis (Whittington, 2006). Therefore in this research where education inequalities and policies in South Africa are addressed, the data collection and analysis can also go hand in hand in an iterative manner in that the results of the analysis presented below will help guide the subsequent collection of data in future research projects. For the purpose of this study the interview and survey/questionnaire were recorded and transcribed. A couple of open-ended questions were posed to which students were required to respond in writing. In these processes useful information that may be closely linked to their experiences can emerge. The responses are analysed, compared and categorised with the results of transcription and subsequently triangulated and are interpreted to draw conclusions (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003).

4.7. (II) Analytic process

The analytic process goes through various stages. These are discussed below.

a. Preparing the data for analysis

Here, the researcher transcribes the interview into text and formats the document so that the margin could be used for identifying individual bits of data. This can be done by assigning line numbers as identifiers for cross referencing.

b. Reading the text and noting items of interest

i. Initial reading of the text

An inductive approach to thematic analysis allows themes to emerge from the data, rather than searching for pre-defined themes. During the first reading, the researcher has to make note of major issues as they come to mind in order to acquire a sense of the various topics embedded in the data (Bain, 2003).

ii. Re-reading the text and annotating any thoughts in the margin

The researcher has to examine the text closely, line by line, to facilitate a micro analysis of the data. This also promotes open coding which identifies any new information by de-contextualising bits of data embedded within the primary material (Bain, 2003).

c. Sorting items of interest into proto-themes

This is where themes begin to emerge by organising items relating to similar topics into categories. Computers are great for pasting the line references together. This should be a fluid process so that categories can be modified, developed and new ones allowed to emerge freely. At this stage keeping the themes as simple as possible assists flexibility in the categorisation process whereby any re-ordering of the clusters of categories can help create and re-define the initial themes (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

d. Examining the proto-themes and attempting initial definitions

This phase of trawling back through the data examines how information was assigned to each proto-theme in order to evaluate its current meaning. A provisional name and flexible definition should now be created for each emerging theme (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

e. Re-examining the text carefully for relevant incidents of data for each proto-theme

This second process of trawling back through the data is also called axial coding. It involves re-contextualisation whereby any data is now considered in terms of the categories developed through this analysis. Taking each theme separately and re-examining the original data for information relating to that theme is a vital stage in the analytic process because human perception is selective and the relevance of data can be easily overlooked. Furthermore, pieces of data previously assigned to a theme may in fact be contradictory (Babbie and Muton, 2012).

4.7. (III). Constructing the final form of each theme

The name, definition and supporting data are re-examined for the final construction of each theme, using all the material relating to it. This stage of re-contextualisation focuses more closely upon the underlying meaning of each theme (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

4.7. (IV). Reporting each theme

The researcher is expected to finalise the name of each theme, write its description and illustrate it with a few quotations from the original text to help communicate its meaning to the reader (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). This is deemed to be standard procedure.

4.8. Ethical and Credible Considerations

This being a qualitative study, one needed to interact deeply with the participants thus entering their personal domains of values, weaknesses, individual learning disabilities and the like to collect data. As a researcher, one should always remember that while doing research, they are in actual fact entering the private spaces of their participants. I was always mindful of this fact as I carried out the present study. Understandably, this raises several ethical issues that should be addressed during and after the research has been conducted. As a researcher, one has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informants (Cassell, Bishop, Symon, Johnson and Buehring, 2009). There are issues that one should consider when analysing data. It is necessary to be aware of these and other issues before, during and after the research has been conducted.

Some of the issues involve what is called informed consent. This literally means that participants should have full knowledge of what is involved in the study. Secondly, the researcher has to ask the question: is there any harm and risk involved? Participants should know if there is any way in which the study can hurt them. Honesty and trust should also be a consideration (Whittington, 2006). As the researcher, one has the responsibility to be truthful in presenting data. There should also be privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity to consider.

Also, carrying out the study should not intrude too much into the individual or group's internal affairs. Should participants display harmful or illegal behaviour, what should be done to reduce the impact? This is where intervention and advocacy comes in. Lastly, one of the normally unexpected concerns relating to ethical issues is the cultural sensitivity as the relationship between the researcher and the subject during an interview needs to be considered in terms of the values of the researcher and the cultural aspects (Carter, Clegg and Kornberger, 2008).

According to Whittington (2006, 615), credibility in research is defined as the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. This is the most critical technique for establishing credibility. Credibility is analogous to internal validity, that is, how research findings match reality. However, according to the philosophy underlying research, reality is relative to meaning that people construct within social contexts. Such research is valid to the researcher and not necessarily to others due to the possibility of multiple realities (Mudimbe,1985). It is upon each and every individual reader to judge the extent of the study's credibility. Such judgement is based on his/her own understanding of such a study in question. Most rationalists would propose that there is not a single reality to be discovered, but that each individual constructs a personal reality. Thus, from an interpretive perspective, understanding is co-created and there is no objective truth or reality to which the results of a study can be compared. Therefore, the inclusion of member checking into the findings, that is, gaining feedback on the data, interpretations and conclusions from the participants themselves, is one method of increasing credibility (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005).

4.9. Confirmability and Transferability of the Findings

Balogun, Huff and Johnson, (2003) state that confirmability is the degree to which the research findings can be confirmed or corroborated by others. It is analogous to objectivity, that is, the extent to which one is aware of or accounts for individual subjectivity or bias. An act of auditing could also be used to establish confirmability in which one makes the provision of a methodological self-critical account of how the research was done. It is a good idea that one archives all collected data in a well-organised and retrievable form so that it can be made available if the findings are challenged (Whittington, 2006).

Research findings are transferable or generalisable only if they fit into new contexts outside the actual study context. Transferability is comparable to external validity, that is, the extent to which findings can be generalized. Generalizability refers to the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times or setting than those directly studied. Transferability is considered a major challenge when conducting research due to the subjectivity of one researcher. This is the key instrument and is a threat to valid inferences in traditional thinking about research data (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). However, in research, one can enhance transferability by detailing the research methods, contexts, and assumptions underlying the study. Transferability is achieved by providing a detailed, rich description of the settings studied to provide the reader with sufficient information to be able to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings that they know (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003).

It is a requirement that one documents and justifies the methodological approach used in the study, and describes in detail the critical processes and procedures that have helped him to construct, shape and connect meanings associated with those phenomena. Further, throughout the process of this study, one has to be sensitive to possible biases by being conscious of the possibilities for multiple interpretations of reality in qualitative research. Generalizability is sometimes simply ignored in favour of enriching the local understanding of a situation (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). However, the generalizability issue has to be resolved by the reader of the research report based on the judgement of the context and phenomena found which allows others to assess the transferability of the findings to another setting (Mbembe, 2001).

4.10. Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability is very similar to the concept of reliability in quantitative research as it is concerned with whether the same results would be obtained if the same phenomenon could be observed twice. Due to qualitative research advocating flexibility and freedom, it may be difficult to establish unless you keep an extensive and detailed record of the process for others to replicate to ascertain the level of dependability (Balogun, Huff and Johnson, 2003).

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others. It is only possible if one follows the process in an identical manner for the results to be compared (Cassell, Bishop, Symon, Johnson and Buehring, 2009). All these issues were borne in mind while conducting research for this study.

4.4. Conclusion

Research methodology should comply with the requirements for reliability, validity and feasibility. The research methodology chosen is with intent to generate the best possible results. Therefore, the above chapter includes describing the theoretical concepts that informed the choice of the research methods applied in the study, placing the choice of methods within the more general nature of research for the feasibility of educational policies which promote free tertiary education. The research methodology discusses the problems that were anticipated and the steps taken to prevent them from occurring or the ways in which they were minimized or why these problems do not impact in any meaningful way the interpretation of the findings and reviewing its relevance to examining the research problem (Mbembe, 2016).

In a nutshell, this chapter has discussed in detail the methodological approaches used in carrying out this study. The different data collection methods used in the study were enumerated in this chapter. Importantly, the reasons for choosing these research methods were provided as justification. Having discussed the research methodology, the next chapter will now present the results of this study. This is an important chapter in the sense that it will demonstrate how the present dissertation contributes to knowledge on the theme under investigation.

Chapter Five: Research Results and Analysis

5. Introduction

The previous chapters have presented the outline of the study, the theoretical framework, research methodology and all related information to provide the basis for the analysis. The present chapter will present the results of the study as well as the analysis of those results.

Post-apartheid higher education in South Africa has never been more eruptive than it is currently. Arguably, the piece of the whole training area that has progressed most as far as accomplishing and propelling the national objectives of quality, equity and change is concerned has taken a different direction (Du Plessis, 2006). With that being said, there is much that higher education can claim to have achieved which is integration as a system from its scared past; a single and somewhat dedicated national department, 80% development in the quantity of African students and a higher research output along with international recognition for large research projects; the allocation of financial aid to many more students than twenty years ago and lastly having nationally coordinated projects and grants to address some of the identified areas for improvement. There may be other achievements not mentioned here but the above are just a few worth highlighting. Even though there are many advances and achievements in higher education, the widespread 2015 student protests across the country painted a different picture. This incident shut down universities with demands for "free higher education for all" which thus prompted the appointment of the Fees Commission and more recently a Presidential Task Team of Ministers to help solve the crisis (Nwadeyi, 2016).

This stemmed as a result of the righteous indignation about the fact that academically deserving students are excluded from university due to their inability to pay their fees and living expenses simply because they are poor. This led to a freeze on fee increases for 2016, promises of increased state funding for universities and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), and consecutive demands from some student groups for free higher education.

These events created strong focus on the financial accessibility of higher education in South Africa, a critical element of the wider issue of equity of access and outcomes (McKaiser, 2016). The #Fees Must Fall movement in 2015 was not the first of protests at South Africa's universities. Students at poorer institutions that cater almost exclusively for black students such as the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Fort Hare University and the Tshwane University of Technology have been protesting routinely against rising fees and the cost of higher education since 1994. However, not only did their protests not make headlines in newspapers but their protest action was largely ignored by the various media houses. This then changed with the most recent "Fees Must Fall" protests which involved students from not only historically advantaged but historically disadvantaged universities. It then attracted widespread media coverage and sparked solidarity protests in London and New York (Mkhize, 2015).

As mentioned above, there was very little media attention given to the protests that took place earlier at historically black universities versus widespread coverage and international solidarity for protests at historically white universities (McKaiser, 2016). The two very different responses are a stark reminder of post-apartheid South Africa's embedded inequalities which are rooted in the apartheid era. The case for free higher education depends on two fundamental premises; (a) social equity: expanding advanced education access for poor people, particularly recently minimized networks, even with expanding educational cost charges, and (b) development externalities. Given South Africa's abnormal amounts of abilities deficiencies, free advanced education is regarded important to get human capital speculation to proficient dimensions. These premises are the very same ones that educated the free advanced education test in other African nations (Du Plessis, 2006).

It is a known fact that there are multiple roles for South African higher education. Within that context, there are at least three major themes explored in this dissertation. The first one concerns South African higher education over the last twenty years having had to be fundamentally reimagined and redesigned from its cracked, unjust and segregated politically-sanctioned racial segregation inheritance so as to meet the human asset needs and the national objectives of a modernizing economy (Lagardien, 2014).

Topic one is the modernizing state which incorporates the strategies, procedures and components utilized to direct a profoundly isolated division into another periods portrayed by reconciliation, an increasingly normal institutional scene and the accomplishment of national objectives. One example is the more prominent value of access and accomplishment for understudies from all populace gatherings of South Africa so as to promote the financial and social improvement of the nation (Msimang, 2015).

Secondly is the social justice and democratic imperative. One of the themes of this chapter is social transformation. There is the need for the fundamental transformation of the system and the institutions within it to create a better platform in which both races and classes have equal opportunities to realise their potential as part of the democratisation project and in which past inequities should be redressed (Msimang, 2015). Then lastly, the other theme is to learn from others regarding free higher education. Here, South Africa should seek advice from its northern neighbours on how to implement free higher education in the country without disadvantaging other sectors. In the African context, free higher education has not been characterised by universalisation of access to advanced education nor the acknowledgment of social consideration (Gqola, 2008). As much as changes and achievements in higher education in South Africa have been brought about through deliberate policy efforts on the part of the national departments concerned with education, individual institutions as agents, other national departments focused on science and technology or health or agriculture, particular individual leaders, national bodies such as the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), professional bodies, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), staff and student unions and their activities have each had some level of impact on the development trajectory of the system (CHE, 2004).

Summed up, the three themes encompass many of the concerns that were evident in other higher education contexts at the time such as seeing higher education in the context of the knowledge economy, the need to demonstrate quality and greater accountability for the way in which public monies were being used, a concern to further economic growth and the need for redress and transformation relating to the distinctiveness of South Africa's apartheid past (McKaiser, 2016). For the purpose of this dissertation, the questionnaire was used to solicit information from the informants.

This was complemented by interviews that were conducted as part of the study. UKZN Howard college students constituted the sample of the study. As mentioned earlier a group of 20 students were used to answer the questionnaire and five students were used for interview purposes. The responses to the above were then categorised into three themes as discussed below.

5.1.Results

Theme 1

a) Why did students protest for free higher education? What was the driving force or reason for wanting free education? Briefly explain.

According to the findings, the driving force behind the protests was lack of funding that prompted mass protests of the fees must fall movement over two years. During apartheid, black students had opportunities to travel abroad on fully funded scholarships and many of them did so in political exile. There were also segregated universities, which have since been absorbed into other former white-only schools or universities. Today, the population of black students has increased and young black South Africans have on average higher level of education than previous generations. Still, given the endemic inequalities in the South African society and mirrored on campuses, getting from first year to graduation remains hardest for black South Africans compared to their white counterparts. Despite the increase in state grants for education, it is still not enough. Post-apartheid South Africa's education system has perpetuated the racial and class inequalities of the previous regime. The majority of working class black students come from poorly-resourced schools and are ill-equipped to make the university grade. As it stands most non-white students are always scrapping registration and administration fees just to get into university whereas the majority of black students have no money for these purposes.

There are a number of reasons as to why South Africa's fees must fall protests remain under-stated or at worst unstated which need to be reflected on the given arrangements, the solidifying of charges and cancelling them will make the current advanced education framework advantage more South Africans. This has recently been brought up and has been recognized by the legislature. A quick observation leads to the conclusion that there are accompanying issues that have gotten little

consideration. In particular, the greater part of youthful South Africans are being flopped by the legislature and society everywhere.

The lion's share of youthful South Africans are bombed by society and the training framework. This is on the grounds that tutoring results are terrible. The possibilities of respectable individuals or any business are critical but have turned out to be more terrible. Actually, packing understudies into colleges makes it look as if this is the only that youngsters can be exposed to and that there are no prospects for anything available to them (McKaiser, 2016). After politically-sanctioned racial segregation, one of the new administration's responsibilities was to cure and kill verifiable foul play through expanding access to colleges. Although this effort was rejected and underestimated by some students and parents, it was a move with good intentions. Colleges have been under huge strain to provide more understudies to those students who saw the value in college education. Ongoing dissents are somewhat an outcome of false information propagated by those who hold the false view that every student should go to university after completing high school (Bunting, 2004).

The number of first-time students entering South Africa's colleges quickly increased from 1995 and has been increasing exponentially up to now. It very well may be said that colleges have been poorly arranged as understudies that are being offered have not ostensibly been sufficiently arranged by the fundamental instruction framework. Furthermore, the general view among analysts is that subsidizing hotspots for colleges has not stayed aware of understudy numbers as financing for fiscally penniless understudies has not expanded as quick as the expansion in their number. However, this has as of late been addressed by the ANC-led government since 1994 (Molefe, 2016). It is apparent in the high drop out and reiteration rates that there are numerous understudies that are battling. Available evidence shows that about a third (29%) of understudies have dropped out of the framework altogether. Just 37% finished their college qualifications inside four years, expanding to 58% six years later (Lagardien, 2014). Consequently, the inquiry into the status quo raises the question: should South Africa limit development in understudy numbers? College chiefs, civil servants and legislators realize that a critical number of understudies in the framework ought not to be there on scholarly legitimacy, and that financing is deficient. Nevertheless, nobody would need to endure the political or social outcomes (Letsekha, 2013).

b. Would free higher education equal quality education?

Should free higher education be possible, would that mean that education would automatically be of quality? This can be measured against the standards of basic education that is already being offered by our government as promised in our Constitution and Freedom Charter. The reality from the ground leads to the conclusion that education is unequal at all dimensions in South Africa. There is extending racial isolation at schools and colleges. Advanced education is progressively racially stratified, and it is especially clear in the convergence of dark and shaded understudies at verifiably distraught colleges. Most white understudies go to the recently advantaged colleges, similar to the English liberal Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand, or increasingly preservationist Afrikaans establishments like the Universities of Stellenbosch and Pretoria. Those institutions provided food solely to the white minority until 1994. They continue to possess top positions in nearby and universal research rankings. This comes from their getting the lot of research financing from statutory bodies, for example, the National Research Foundation (NRF). They additionally charge higher fees than the institutions that were constructed solely for blacks amid politically-sanctioned racial segregation. This trend keeps up the class structure of politically-sanctioned racial segregation in society.

It is logical that universities which charge higher fees can give quality higher education compared to those that charge lower fees due to the students they accommodate and/or service. Be that as it may, pre-existing conditions have been disturbed. In 2015 something moved unyieldingly at South African higher education institutions. Students challenged foundations' dialect approaches, high expenses, auxiliary disparities and frontier images. It was poor and common labourer's youth who drove the challenges, an unmistakable sign that it is a class battle. This is additionally underscored by the way that most understudies who dissented, in the case of 2015 or at different moments were largely dark. Race and class lie at the core of resistance to South Africa's current, selective university framework. Therefore, we can conclude that some of the vestiges of the apartheid era still remain today. This is despite government's attempt to make the playing field even.

When the students' protests began, the underlying thinking was that should Higher Education be free, he doors of learning would be open as stated in the Freedom Charter and all students would taught quality education with prospects to occupy better jobs and thus improve their socio-economic situation and their material conditions. For example, it was envisaged that social insurance and some vital administrations which give security and wellbeing to the people would be achievable even to the black majority. Also, another assumption was that in the event that somebody from a poor foundation got instructed properly in a well-resources institution, the person in question would escape from the destitution cycle. As such, better advanced education would result into better life for all and render social inequality irrelevant. Advanced education implies steady employments and work. There is a general view that in the event that more individuals are exceedingly instructed, individuals will be increasingly kind, dependable, autonomous, and solid. It was on these grounds that students held the view that all students across races should be given the right to free education to get rid of poverty and inhumanity. This of course doesn't mean the people who are not educated are inhumane. Of course, there are some uneducated people out there who are way more intelligent and ethical than people who are educated.

In all fairness, monetary need or the need thereof ought not to be an impediment to understudies for those students who meet all the requirements to enter college at a reasonable scholarly standard. In assigning open accounts, it is basic to perceive that even deliberately planned changes in financing won't tangibly lessen disparity in the public eye all in all. In an ongoing Statistics South Africa Quarterly Labour Force Survey 30.5% of 15 to 34-year-olds are jobless and just 3.5% are in college training. Having said that, some scholars argued that evacuating university charges is not the most ideal approach to help South Africa's youngsters who are poor (Nwadeyi, 2016). One of the first questions to be asked is: who makes it to university? A study published by Dr Hendrik van Broekhuizen and Professor Servaas van der Berg shows that of 100 children that started school, 14 of that number would actually qualify for university, only 12 would actually enrol and 6 would get some kind of undergraduate qualification within 6 years. Therefore when university is spoken of, what really is spoken of is about the 12% of students that actually make it to university (Molefe, 2016).

The next question that would then arise is: who are the students that actually qualify? Looking at those coming straight out of grade 12, about 60% of that number who qualified came from the wealthiest 30% of high schools, i.e. quintile 4 and 5, most of which charged fees. Then of course those who attend the fee charging schools are those largely wealthier students whose parents can afford the fees. If this is looked at by race then about half (47%) of white matriculants go to university compared to less than a fifth (17%) of Black and Coloured (20%) matriculants (Nwadeyi, 2016).

Looking at the above stated figures, it is evident why blanket fee-free education is considered to be highly complex. Therefore the fact that the children from the wealthiest households are many times more likely to get into university means that they would benefit disproportionately from a blanket fee-free system. It should thus come as no surprise that the World Bank (2014) estimated that as much as about half (48%) of the university funding in South Africa accrues to the richest 10% of households and two thirds (68%) accrues to the wealthiest 20% of households (Nwadeyi, 2016). McKaiser 2016 notes that this constitutes an "extreme bias towards spending on the rich if all students are equally subsidised." The above facts call for the reason to revisit some of our policies that were in place pre-democracy and then the policies created and formulated post democracy (Maserumule, 2015). This includes looking at the Freedom Charter as well which states inter alia that "education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children, Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit" (Freedom Charter, 1955).

Government has kept these promises but only to the extent of providing free basic education and in terms of improving poor standards. Apartheid-era inequalities have not been addressed or removed. However, as ongoing demonstrations prove, the students' demands have been deeper than this. They have called for the decolonization and transformation of higher education institutions as well as the curriculum taught in those institutions (Nwadeyi, 2016). As more students get university degrees and college diplomas, life gets better. Jobs that required a High School diploma are now demanding Associates and Bachelor degrees. The lower your degree the more years of experience are demanded from you by the firm you are applying to. As a result, a college degree is becoming a necessity for High School graduates in order to find a job that pays a living wage.

Now, some of the questions asked in the context of Fees Must Fall included the following: if education is free, will we value it more or less? There is an ongoing view that if we make education entirely free the value for education would plummet in a downward spiral. Some people hold the view that the reason why we value our higher education so much is because we know that we are putting a lot on the line for the education we seek. The loans we have taken out for this education is what reminds us why we're pursing this dream. The argument is that if it was free we would not have as much drive and not to mention that many would abuse this education policy. Another question was that if we made education free how would the professors who teach us get paid? Or how would the faculties that serve us survive? Therefore, it appears that when one thinks deeply, there are many issues with making education free. But if they could lower tuition and give higher education more funding to help support students with their educational needs that would be the proper solution to this issue.

Theme 2

a) Should education be free for poorer students or for everyone? Yes or No

Please motivate your answer. While some students are demanding free education for the poor, the majority seem to want free higher education for all. However is it fair that even those who can afford tertiary fees will now be getting free education which would be a waste of resources but also not promote "equality"?

There has been a general view that making higher education free is a fiscally and socially responsible decision that will ensure everyone has a chance to earn a degree without having to jump through hoops in order to get enough money to attend a college/university. This country could have a well-informed and educated population that contributes a great deal to our nation. As it stands today South Africans are perceived as one of the least educated among first world nations. The reason or belief that many people have is that this is because higher education is out of reach for so many. This needs to change. If the government officials want to truly stimulate the economy, they will write-off student loan debts so that people can get that piece of paper that qualifies them for a job, start their lives, and get the money flowing out of the pockets and into the economy.

The other issue is that while remarking on how much the legislature spends on advanced education there is excessively dependence on the level of the GDP as a monetary measurement. Poor youths are not the problem because they did not cause the current status quo. As such, they should not be punished for the mistakes made by their predecessors, i.e. apartheid operatives. All that the students demanded in 2015 was fee free higher education because they realised that poor youngsters were struggling to get to colleges and universities. This was fundamentally in light of the fact that their tutoring results from high school did not fulfil official passage prerequisites to enter tertiary level. The outcome is that most understudies originated from family units that are essentially more extravagant than the South African average (Mkhize, 2015).

Therefore, spending more cash on understudies going to advanced education is not equivalent to helping poor understudies and poor youngsters by and large. Advanced education is one of the minimum dynamic types of social consumption. This is further tangled by the way that messy, logical utilization of the expression "poor" darkens the constrained advantages of proposed approach changes for poor understudies. Addressing this situation should involve raising the family unit salary so that the social standard could improve. Students with higher education qualification stand a better chance to improve their socio-economic lives and those of their families. It was on these grounds that students demanded free higher education. Implicit in their call was a demand for social equality that would be driven by free access to higher education.

Evidence shows that there is enough cash to provide free advanced education to poor people. This becomes clear when looking at the salaries of senior officials in both the public and private sector. Moreover, if the money lost through corrupt activities could be saved, government would have enough money in the coffers to provide for free higher education. But while these measures are being considered, subsidizing the individuals who really qualify as poor is a good starting point. For poor students, this is not currently the case (De Wit, 2012). An understudy whose yearly family unit pay is R20, 000 gets no more need than one whose family pay is R122, 000. Except if there's an adjustment in the manner by which monetary guide is designated, higher edges could make significantly more prominent injustice for the poorest students (Lagardien, 2014).

Fees Must Fall proposed a higher edge for "low salary understudies" and the Department of Higher Education and Training considered expanding the edge but focusing on the percentage of the GDP is a thoughtless measurement (Msimang, 2015). Higher education in South Africa is underfunded in light of the fact that the country's GDP is low contrasted with different nations. This is one of only a handful of a couple of reasons why the South African government is struggling to execute on its mandate to provide universal free education. One can gauge government's thinking by reading several government policy documents and reports. For example, in Chapter 9 of the 2012 National Development Plan and the 2013 Ministerial Committee Review on subsidizing of colleges one gets a sense of what government has in mind compared to what is happening on the ground. Analysis of the over-dependence on the current measurement goes before 'Expenses Must Fall'.

TA study on the examination of essential instruction consumption in 2013 raised related concerns while educating Parliament advisory groups on correlations with respect to South Africa's assessment to GDP proportion to different nations (Mkhize, 2015). Short-sighted examinations crosswise over nations neglect to represent an assortment of imperative neighbourhood factors. It is critical to take note of the fact that in advanced education these incorporate the level of the populace who are youthful in age. There are likewise extraordinary structures of advanced education financing frameworks, diverse types of post-school instruction and obviously the nature of fundamental training. So as to mirror the point about the financing framework, we need to consider the way that college expense pay is excluded in the aggregate consumption number. The explanation behind this is on the grounds that it is not government consumption per se but a confluence of other contributing factors. Correcting the wrongs of the old order should be concerted effort between government officials on the one hand as well as institutions of higher learning and society at large. Government spending on education would rise exponentially yet the assets accessible to the framework would be the equivalent (Letsekha, 2013).

b) Education rights are contained in section 29 of the South African Constitution. In terms of section 29, everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education; [1] and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must be progressively available and accessible (Chapter 2, Section 29 (1)(a)(b) RSA Constitution). Based on the above right, do you feel it is possible for our Educational policies to bolster the idea of free advanced education? Please motivate.

Of all the narrative, the most popular one that has fuelled continuing protests at South Africa's universities is that students have been promised the right to free higher education for many years and yet this did not happen. Threads of this narrative go back to the Freedom Charter, the statement of principles that guided the struggle for the liberation of South Africa. Some point to the country's constitution and say that it contains a commitment to this promise. Others point to a decision taken by the ruling African National Congress a decade ago that promised this outcome. The charter and the constitution are carefully crafted documents. They however these documents do not specifically make reference to "free higher education", this has set both students and the South African society down a cul de sac. It is this idea that has framed the continuing protests at our universities under the banner: "free higher education in our lifetime' (Mkhize, 2015).

Mbembe (2016, 30) suggests that there are some students who argue that the ANC has betrayed the promise of free higher education made in the Freedom Charter. The charter states; "The doors of learning and culture shall be opened. Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children (Freedom Charter, 1955). Higher education and technical training were imagined differently. Compared to universal access to basic education, the conceptual idea of "shall be free" was not used in the formulation that relates to higher education and technical training. This, it was envisaged, would be achieved "by means of state allowances and scholarships" (Mbembe, 2016). Most aspects of the charter became part of the constitution of the post-apartheid Republic of South Africa, a document lauded as one of the best in the world. Education is one of the socioeconomic rights enshrined in the constitution.

It states inter alia that: Everybody has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education; and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible (Chapter 2, Section 29(1) (a) (b) RSA Constitution). But the terms of the provision of education are different compared with the other socio-economic rights. The constitution premises the feasibility of delivering the other rights on the availability of resources. The right to education doesn't explicitly have this as a condition. Instead, the constitution provides that it should take place gradually. Notwithstanding, the fees must fall course was a noble course as it tested the usefulness of the socioeconomic rights enshrined in the constitution, specifically the right to education (Mkhize, 2015). The existing state interventions including a freeze on fee increases in 2016 and the recent commitment to provide further funding to students may constitute reasonable measures for progressive realisation of the right to free higher education. It can also be argued that the state in fact is giving practical effect to this right. However the ructions on campuses are a clear indication that these questions are part of a fledgling society's complexities which go beyond the call for free higher education. Students were saying that progressive realisation of free higher education could not be an endless pursuit without tangible milestones, hence their demand that the state commits itself to a time line (Mbembe, 2016).

Possibly, the biggest problem is that the promise of free higher education is a construct of the African National Congress's rhetoric and populist policies. By the time students protested, it had been almost a decade since the party passed a resolution at its 52nd National Conference promising free higher education for the poor. The resolution committed the party to 'Progressively introduce free education for the poor until undergraduate level' (Mbembe, 2016). This, coupled with the initial promise that created expectations for free higher education, fuelled students' demands. The reason for it was because it had not yet been realised. Consequences of this decision are still being felt. The increasing state largesse and politicians' reckless pronouncements for populist ends negate policy pragmatism. It can thus be a curse for a party that revels in the sanctuary of being in power (Mkhize, 2015). A Commission of Inquiry was instituted to investigate the feasibility of free higher education. There was a level of curiosity in that a judicial inquiry was instituted given that the question being posed by university students was not a legal one but rather a political economy issue.

McKaiser (2016) suggested that the Commission asked the wrong question and felt that rather "free higher education is a misnomer." It is part of the seductive political language of "free this, free that" and that if one does not directly pay for a public good it doesn't mean that it is free as it is paid for by the state with citizens' money through taxes. What the country should be talking about is state-funded higher education, not free education. Just as all largesse that carries the qualifier "free", the notion of free higher education wittingly or unwittingly spawns entitlement and the culture of freebies". National Student Financial Aid Scheme is a good example of this. It is the way in which some students are responding to the repayment of their loans incurred from them. Some people are defaulting on repaying their loans despite the fact that they are in a position to do so. Therefore the question which begs for attention is: how is the scheme to be sustained when in fact the scheme's very existence is threatened? The scheme recorded its lowest ever level of debt recovery at 4% in 2014, as it emerged in the fee commission (Mbembe, 2016).

Judging by this example, free higher education may be a dangerous notion. Perhaps state-funded higher education would be a better option. This is a much bigger concept and one which can shock or excite a historical commitment that all South Africans are responsible for ensuring education is a public good. The issue at hand though is not the substance of the students' demand, but the concept and language of its expression which populist politics aid and condone to distort the discourse (Msimang, 2015). Government should fund universities and colleges directly rather than give out loans to students so that the students will not be overburdened by debt and be forced to move back with their parents. People are more reluctant than ever to start a family because they feel they cannot handle the expenses of a child while the married couple have yet to pay Uncle Sam his money. People will be less likely to spend money, which is bad for the economy and businesses, especially when people are underemployed because of the current economic climate (Gqola, 2008).

Here are some pertinent outlooks of the context that were taken into account: Institutions as well as students have major differences in funding needs and sources of revenue (McKaiser, 2016). Notwithstanding this, there have been significant changes, affecting all universities, in the proportion of funding received from the various sources of institutional revenue, especially since the proportion provided by state funding has decreased and thus the proportion from student fees has risen.

The rise in fees, coupled with increasing enrolment, has created strong pressure for continual growth in the total funding made available to NSFAS by the state. There is difficulty experienced by students in funding their higher education studies created by the real growth in fees which has increased. Only a certain number of students continue to be able to source adequate funding from their families, private or institutional scholarships and bursaries, and commercial loans. Enrolment growth has led to an increasing number of the student intake being unable to access such sources and hence having to rely predominantly on NSFAS. The implications of this are that the NSFAS approach to distributing the state funds available for student financial aid is not ideal (Msimang, 2015).

It is important to clarify the goal. For example, there is a critical difference between 'free higher education for all' and 'free higher education for the poor', with major implications for resources. There is a great likelihood for conflict between developmental objectives, particularly between increasing access and improving success. Conflicting priorities within the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector and within the education system as a whole will exist. The question becomes: does Basic Education have a greater claim on new resources than higher education? A long-term view must be recognised, while the demands for immediate change are being made. South Africa's overall economic outlook constrains what can be achieved (Nwadeyi, 2016).

The policy framework should foster the transformational goals as articulated in Education White Paper 3 (DoE 1997). CHE, (2004) states that "equity and redress require fair opportunities to enter higher education programmes and to succeed in them. This transformational goal involves abolishing all existing forms of unjust differentiation and introducing empowerment measures, including financial support, to bring about equal opportunities for individuals and institutions." Along these lines we understand that advancement requires that in such conditions there is a need to encourage the change of the advanced education framework. This empowers it to add to the benefit of everyone in society. There should be a high level of self-direction and authoritative autonomy concerning understudy confirmations, educational modules, techniques for instructing and evaluation, foundation of scholastic controls and the inside administration of assets produced from private and public sources for institutional autonomy.

Institutional autonomy is completely linked to the demands of public accountability (CHE, 2004). Consequently, public accountability requires that institutions receiving public funds be able to report on the effective and efficient spending of the funds along with the results that they achieve with the resources and lastly how they have met national policy goals and priorities (Gqola, 2008).

Theme 3

a) Are the existing Education policies (Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and Higher Education Act 39 of 2008) adequate to ensure a society with free higher education? Are there loopholes or provisions which suggest free higher education is possible in our society?

b) Which are the countries that have free higher education policies and what are their policies? Please make reference to neighbouring countries and other countries which have such policies? Could such policies work for South Africa?

Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and Higher Education Act 39 of 2008 aim to promote good-standard education beyond formal schooling. These Acts regulate higher education in South Africa and govern all the legislation related to the establishment and operation of a Council on Higher Education and the funding and operation of public higher education institutions. One of the purposes of the 1997 Act is to redress past discriminations and ensure that there is equal access, this suggests that there are loopholes. Education is one of the main pillars of any economy. It produces both public and private benefits, contributing immensely towards social equity, democracy, and economic and social development. Many advocates of free tertiary education oversimplify the issue by saying that because education is an investment, it should not be classified as a cost. This reinvents the laws of accounting as all investments, including education, cost money, which has to be obtained from somewhere. The cost of education does not fall away if parents are not paying anything but is instead merely borne by the government by means of taxpayers. Another assumption which must be cancelled is that every student who gets assistance will pass. This does not dispute that fact that the availability of funds may help increase throughput rates. The reality stands that there are students who will not make it as this is life.

However because some students have failed, the state's commitment to those students does not fall away because of inability to perform for a year. The cost of paying for their education in an unsuccessful academic year has to be written off as a bad investment. Thus, this will result in that numbers will increase each year, requiring a larger pool of funds to pay for their education. This means that the investment is worth it as long as the student progresses. However, it is also possible to invest in a student who is pursuing a qualification in which it is difficult to find employment. If that student cannot find work, as it happens to a fair amount of graduates, the envisaged return on that investment is either delayed or is not realised. I am not introducing these realities to discourage the idea. I am simply demonstrating that free education is not free in reality. The parents simply pay no fees directly but still pay for such education through taxes. Secondly, someone has to crunch the numbers to estimate the cost of the entire scheme. The country has to estimate the cost in terms of its long-term planning so that it can make sufficient provision.

It should be clear from the start as to where the money will come from to sustain the decision to provide fee free education. The reality is that such funds have to come from somewhere. That 'somewhere' is the government, taxpayers. The most important consideration is affordability now. We must accept that there are no easy choices. We will have to reduce spending in some priority areas and this will impact people negatively. The politicians must explain that this is a conscious choice and all of us who are affected will just have to survive the consequences. We also have to agree that poor students must be prioritised. As much as students may feel passionate about fee-free education for everyone, government finances are in a dire state. There is simply no more money in the kitty. We are living beyond our means as a country.

There is also the state's commitment to fund fee-free education. This must be accompanied by a detailed analysis of universities' cost structures and a proper recognition of their constraints. They have bills to pay, research to fund and staff to pay. They have to maintain buildings and build new facilities. The money from government is just not enough. They cannot be straddled with a commitment that will, in no time, compromise the quality of education students get. We also need to consider that fee-free education cannot mean admission for everyone who qualifies. There are only so many desks and lecturers.

If this process is handled recklessly we will soon deliver exceptionally poor graduates, if any, to the very economy the theory of "education as an investment" hopes will repay the money with faster GDP growth. Finally, we must accept that until we can afford to offer fee-free education to everyone, we must work on a formula where parents and the state share costs. Parents must pay what they can afford while the state fills in the rest. In this formula, private sector contributions can be included to subsidise the scheme through corporate bursaries. Only parents who cannot afford must be exempted from paying anything. Evangelists of fee-free education have a higher moral purpose but they have a duty to study and share the practicalities and constraints; and not to mislead the public with tales of silver bullets.

Free education in South Africa is an objective worth seeking after, particularly for students who are poor and need access to tertiary institutions and the individuals who accurately consider it to be a privilege and formative basic right for the nation. Germany has accomplished it yet tragically there is no African nation which offers free higher education. There are nations which have attempted it, however the cost, all things considered, was immeasurably excessive. The immense test is to make the trademark of "free training" a reality. There isn't sufficient cash from any source. What's more, government, as the greatest sponsorship supplier, is not doing admirably. Therefore, while the call for fee-free education is genuine, the issue has to be approached in a rational manner. The notion of "free higher education" is a dream.

5.2. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the results of the study obtained from various sources. Statistical data sets have been presented to demonstrate how the issue of fee-free education had evolved. The politics behind it and the economic/financial implications have been considered. Importantly, my opinions on certain issues have also featured in this chapter. Yes, there are many things we could do to accommodate as many students at tertiary institutions as possible. This could include certain people subsidizing others' education, or taxing the poor through sugar tax and other forms of tax thereby sinking the economy, or privatizing institutions such as South African Airways and using that money to finance free education, or taxing the rich more in order to raise funds for free higher education.

All of this is doable, but we should expect serious negative consequences on our education when it is all done. One such negative consequence would be the quality of education. It is true here in South Africa as it is all over the world that quality education calls for an investment in it. What is disheartening about this national debate on university fees is that we are not being honest to ourselves as a nation. We don't bother asking ourselves about the implications of free education. Those advocating for free education speak of "free and quality" education. But we know, and they should know, that when something is free, it is usually short of quality. If the price of a good or service is free, then it won't be of high quality because in a competitive market the price is an indicator of the quality of a good or service. For example, we can compare South Africa's free hospitals with those that are not free. The free hospitals are in deplorable conditions.

No one can dispute the fact that people would rather choose to spend their earnings on medical aid schemes for private healthcare when there's free healthcare in public hospitals. The reason is because public healthcare, realistically speaking, is of low quality because it is free. Look at the difference between the free and low fee public schools and independent schools that charge a price for their education, you'll find a similar thing. Over the past fifteen years independent schools that charge a price on education have really grown while free and low fee public schools continue to decline thus proving that parents are opting for private schools that charge a price instead of free and low fee public schools. Simply put, this is because they want quality education for their children and quality always has a price attached to it. This is true in all business activities we conduct in our lives; it is economics. When something is free, its quality will be low; because nobody values it; the seller does not value it, and the buyer does value it. It is free, why should they bother? We should expect a similar outcome when students have got their free education as our universities will be like free hospitals and free schools. Is that what we want for our children, third class education? This is the question we all should ruminate about as we discuss the issue of free education. This will also amount to more qualified graduates competing for jobs which will reduce pay and salaries for all. There are already tons of graduating students out there competing for the same few jobs. The more desperate they become, the more likely they will be to accept those "good" jobs at lower pay.

Also, it says a lot about a person who worked really hard to come up with the money to put themselves though school. Should education become free, employers will expect it from everyone as a basic requirement, and having a degree won't mean much more than having a high school grade 12 certificate. This country cannot afford to be offering any more hand-outs. Therefore, while the idea of free higher education is a noble one, it has to be handled properly. If it cannot be sustained as was the case in other African countries, the public should be informed on time to avoid raising hopes which cannot be met indefinitely.

Chapter Six: Summary of Key Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

6. Introduction

The point of this exploration venture was to evaluate the practicality of having a policy which advances equity in the higher education framework. Hence, the South African education policies, the Freedom Charter and the Constitution was taken a gander at yet in addition compared with some worldwide instruction policies (Mamdani, 1998). The question was: If fees were to fall, would this rectify the persistent inequalities of South Africa's higher education system?

The present study was sparked by the most recent "#Fees must fall" protests. These protests were marked as historic as in the past, non-whites would often strike for a better and affordable education system. However, this latest strike was one which included both black and white students coming together for the sole purpose of calling for the fees to fall at tertiary level. This then added to existing knowledge on the theme of this dissertation. It did this by adding new information and reinterpreting pre-existing information with specific emphasis on the racial disparities in education policies and related financial implications for students in Higher Institutions of Learning. The study focused on the need for everyone to have the right to education. The main argument was that one should have the right to access and enter tertiary institutions regardless of financial constraints accumulated due to having a previously disadvantaged background. As a result, the study seeked to contribute to knowledge as it will reflect on the struggles of the past and the policies that were implemented to address education inequalities in South Africa (Ramoupi, 2011).

6.1. Key Objectives achieved

The case for free higher education relied on two principle premises: (a) social equity: expanding advanced education access for poor people, particularly recently underestimated networks, notwithstanding expanding educational cost charges, and (b) development externalities. Given South Africa's abnormal amounts of abilities deficiencies, free higher education is deemed important to get human capital speculation to productive dimensions. The aim of the study was to establish the extent to which South Africa was ready to provide free higher education. The main objective was to find out if such a policy would address endemic inequalities in the country.

When the study was conceived it sought to address the following questions:

a)   Why did the students protest for free higher education?

According to the findings, the driving force behind the protests was lack of funding that prompted mass protests of the fees must fall movement over two years. During apartheid, black students had opportunities to travel abroad on fully funded scholarships and many of them did so in political exile. There were also segregated universities, which have since been absorbed into other former white-only schools or universities. Today, the population of black students has increased and young black South Africans have on average higher level of education than previous generations. Still, given the endemic inequalities in the South African society and mirrored on campuses, getting from first year to graduation remains hardest for black South Africans compared to their white counterparts. Despite the increase in state grants for education, it is still not enough. Post-apartheid South Africa's education system has perpetuated the racial and class inequalities of the previous regime. The majority of working class black students come from poorly-resourced schools and are ill-equipped to make the university grade. As it stands most non-white students are always scrapping registration and administration fees just to get into university whereas the majority of black students have no money for these purposes.

b)   Should education be free for poorer students or for everyone?

The reality from the ground leads to the conclusion that education is unequal at all dimensions in South Africa. There is extending racial isolation at schools and colleges. Advanced education is progressively racially stratified, and it is especially clear in the convergence of dark and shaded understudies at verifiably distraught colleges. Most white understudies go to the recently advantaged colleges, similar to the English liberal Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand, or increasingly preservationist Afrikaans establishments like the Universities of Stellenbosch and Pretoria. Those institutions provided food solely to the white minority until 1994. They continue to possess top positions in nearby and universal research rankings. This comes from their getting the lot of research financing from statutory bodies, for example, the National Research Foundation (NRF).

They additionally charge higher fees than the institutions that were constructed solely for blacks amid politically-sanctioned racial segregation. This trend keeps up the class structure of politically-sanctioned racial segregation in society.

c)   To what extent do the existing policies on higher education (Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and Higher Education Act 39 of 2008) make provision for free higher education in South Africa?

There has been a general view that making higher education free is a fiscally and socially responsible decision that will ensure everyone has a chance to earn a degree without having to jump through hoops in order to get enough money to attend a college/university. This country could have a well-informed and educated population that contributes a great deal to our nation. As it stands today South Africans are perceived as one of the least educated among first world nations. The reason or belief that many people have is that this is because higher education is out of reach for so many. This needs to change. If the government officials want to truly stimulate the economy, they will write-off student loan debts so that people can get that piece of paper that qualifies them for a job, start their lives, and get the money flowing out of the pockets and into the economy.

The case for paying nothing for higher education depends on two principle premises: (a) social equity: expanding advanced education access for poor students, particularly recently underestimated networks, despite expanding educational cost expenses, and (b) development externalities. Given South Africa's elevated amounts of aptitudes deficiencies, free advanced education is deemed important to get human capital venture to productive dimensions. These premises are the very same ones that educated the free higher education explored in other African nations (Gqola, 2008).

Besides, the issue of legitimation cannot be precluded as a critical method of reasoning for the push for nothing in higher education, particularly by lawmakers. The post-politically-sanctioned racial segregation period is portrayed by tremendous desires and, with regards to high youth joblessness and an absence of elective post-optional chances, advanced education has turned into an extremely swarmed yet restricted stepping stool of chance into the white collar class (Mamdani, 1998).

Given general disappointment with the present educational cost charge routines against the higher education cooperation disparities in the nation, an arrangement of free advanced education is a conceivably helpful technique for compensatory legitimation by an administration whose 'center' voting demographic is winding up progressively but disappointed with administration conveyance (Mbembe, 2016). On its essence, an approach of free higher education would be reliable with the nation's general post-politically-sanctioned racial segregation arrangement of change and social equity. Will free higher education be the harbinger for a libertarian South Africa? This remains one of the most intriguing questions which the present study wrestles with.

6.2. Summary of key findings

Government has provided this free education but only with regards to free basic education. The reality is that apartheid-era inequalities have not yet been addressed or removed entirely. Noticeably, as the demonstrations proved, the students' demands were deeper than just calling for free higher education. They also called for the "decolonization" and "transformation" of higher education institutions – both in terms of the staff profile and the curriculum. In a way, such a call was not misplaced. Similar calls were made by the political and academic leadership as well as the students in East Africa in the 1960s. Other parts of Africa joined the fray and made similar calls too. As such, South African students were justified in their "decolonization" and "transformation" calls.

Since the end of the apartheid era, many policy changes have occurred within education to try to address educational inequalities. Education rights are contained in section 29 of the South African Constitution. In terms of this section everyone has the right to basic education, including adult basic education; [1] and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible (Chapter 2,Section 29(1)(a)(b) RSA Constitution). Integration has occurred in the school system, and school is compulsory for all races (De Wit, 2012). But, although the Bantu Education ideology has been officially left behind, schools are still under de facto segregation. Despite policy efforts to equalize education among races, there still exist many seemingly racially neutral policies to funding that may disproportionately and negatively affect non-white students (Rouhani, 2012)

According to Higher Education South Africa (HESA, 2014), the government attempts to address inequalities through a funding plan that divides schools into five strata according to income levels in the community where the lower income level receives the higher funding per pupil. This funding system is definitely a large step towards improving historical disparities, but these funds are not enough. Disparities in access, funding and quality of education are not limited to primary and secondary schools. Inequalities also exist in the higher education sector. It is impossible to address the inequalities in education without taking into account the economic disparities resulting from apartheid education (De Wit, 2012). Contrasting tiers of the work force linger in the wake of apartheid's separatist presence, a large population of working class blacks stands out against the elite professional force comprised mainly of whites. This signifies that the education system needs to rely less on individual contributions from parents for compulsory education as well as higher education in order to be able to further aim at "moving past the legacy of apartheid." This ideal reform into free public education for all and financial aid for higher education requires money (Jacobs, 2016).

It is apparent that some intervention is required in order to bridge the gap as those who were previously less advantaged cannot afford tuition fees. Apartheid may have formally ended in 1994, but the fees make attending university impossible for many black youths compared to their white counterparts. As mentioned earlier, students are also pushing for a decolonized curriculum. The most far-reaching of these was the merger process, which was meant to level the academic playing fields. It was hoped that mergers would improve historically black universities' research and graduate output and give them access to better infrastructure and systems (Lagardien, 2014).

According to Jacobs (2016, 14), student enrolments at historically disadvantaged black universities have dwindled. Students have flocked to the better resourced, historically advantaged white institutions. This was already happening in the decade immediately after apartheid, but was exacerbated by the mergers. Fewer students means less money. Government's funding formula subsidizes institutions according to student enrolments, graduation rates and recognized or "accredited" research publications. A process that was supposed to redress past inequalities has had the effect of entrenching them, and in some cases widening them.

This should not be the case. Mergers had to lead to substantial better access and greater differentiation in course offerings to cater for diverse students. But this would require taking a different approach to the current corporatization model (McKaiser, 2016). The rising cost of higher education is a global problem. South Africa is not alone in struggling with this endemic challenge. In the United States of America, many students graduate with huge student loan debts that saddle them with financial burdens. Countries such as Mozambique, China, Australia, England and Kenya once offered free higher education but have since executed policies and models of cost-sharing in different forms.

6.3. Summary of key recommendations
The apartheid funding formula for higher education and suggestions of an alternative

Three types of funding are relevant here, namely budgeted, full and formulae funding. But the latter affected historically disadvantaged institutions the most. Its basis is fulltime equivalent students and successfully qualifying students split evenly, while distinguishing human and natural sciences with bias towards the latter. In addition, different financial weightings were given to undergraduate students and the various post-graduate levels with a three year projected total. Unit costs were based on actual institutional costs such as staff levels, infrastructural and maintenance with different coefficients for natural and social sciences, and subject groupings linked to unit costs. An institution's annual cost calculations were made by relating each of its input variables to the coefficients and the appropriate cost units specified in the two formulae to the rand values for a given year.

An institution's annual subsidy total was determined by deducting from the formula the total that which the institution was supposed to collect for itself such as tuition, private sources, investment, contract and other income of between ten and twenty five percent. Institutional subsidies were adjusted, in multiplying the net subsidy by an "A" factor, less than one, as an ad hoc measure to scale down subsidies to universities or Technickons (Du Plessis, 2006). The NCHE cited problems of the apartheid era formulae, starting with its distinction of subsidisable and non-subsidisable funding. This arose from unrealised formulae intentions, making formulae applications inconsistent, as well as their objectives being only partially met.

Formulae also did not fund remedial or preparatory material, which assumed that students passed with approved qualification. Furthermore, they ignored existing inequalities in South Africa and assumed a level playing field for access to higher education. The formulae also assumed that universities functioned effectively. Yet, inefficiencies continued after 1994, such as duplication, high drop-out rates, poor throughput rates, and an under-utilisation of physical and staffing resources (Bunting, 2004). Furthermore, the role of the funding formulae in supporting national policy goals was affected by formulae incentives, since these had unforeseen negative effects such as financial uncertainty. Several factors were supposed to be incentives, but became disincentives after 1993, especially for historically disadvantaged institutions. Problems arose when there were huge spurts of growth, particularly at historically disadvantaged institutions with low access to historically advantaged institutions. This was due to the fact that government placed upper limits on the number of students it could subsidise. Other formulae contradictions included ad hoc budgets when budgets were negotiated; government weighting natural sciences but encouraging students to study in the human and social sciences in line with apartheid's grand plan to keep blacks under-skilled (Ramoupi, 2014).

The funding formula was revised and asserted by the NCHE. It contained some of the following: the need for student fees, inclusion of tuition and residence fees in order to balance institutional autonomy for equity in the system, and to negotiate policy with institutions. Although the National Student Financial Aid Scheme addresses student housing, capital housing is earmarked as it sees post-graduates gain from studies. The bulk of institutional funds and earmarked funds were mixed, with the latter to be for particular public policy purposes including resource constraints, staff inequalities, academic development, research, and information technology. Government funding amounted to R250 million p.a. There was a need to get donor funds, and to create student financial aid policies for education interest groups, including Department of Education (NCHE, 1996). There are also institutional financial, academic and rolling plans. These are meant to address equity through inputs, earmarked funds and a national student financial aid scheme for three years. Instruction, research, institutional and student support activities and the South African Post-Secondary Education funding formulae defined development activities (Letsekha, 2013).

It is critically important at this point to note that consistency with democratisation, effectiveness, development, efficiency, equity, and financial sustainability, shared costs to uphold post-secondary goals. It is equally important to distinguish levels and costs of learning and fields of learning, as linked to National Qualification Framework (NQF) categories, and to the current year of South African Post-Secondary Education funding formulae categories. For example, there is a two-dimension grid of institutional programme levels and learning fields, with input variables of fulltime equivalent and output variables to be constituted by normative rates, and to distinguish between contact and distance education (Letsekha, 2013).

Additionally, institutional grants include attached normative prices to student places, adjusted both for eligibility and by normative places. Inputs are defined as fulltime equivalent in instructional programmes, student places are expected enrolments and outputs are graduate instructional programmes, fields or levels and not success rates or research output as in the old South African Post-Secondary Education funding formulae. Student place prices are normative and actual-cost informed to support equitable or agreed funds for higher education goals. Institutional factors are economies of scale, with differences in prices or throughput for distance and contact education. Lastly, there should be clear higher education policy objectives to be met through earmarked funding, and to mobilise donor funds to match government and institutions. The Minister decides on targets and criteria for eligibility, after consulting Council of Higher Education and Department of Education. There are limitations on the use of public funds to arise only from funds earmarked for a specific purpose and from restricted funds of subsidy formulae generated funds (NCHE, 1996).

It should be clear from the start as to where the money will come from to sustain the decision to provide fee free education. The reality is that such funds have to come from somewhere. That 'somewhere' is the government, taxpayers. The most important consideration is affordability now. We must accept that there are no easy choices. We will have to reduce spending in some priority areas and this will impact people negatively. The politicians must explain that this is a conscious choice and all of us who are affected will just have to survive the consequences. We also have to agree that poor students must be prioritised. As much as students may feel passionate about fee-free education for everyone, government finances are in a dire state. There is simply no more money in the kitty. We are living beyond our means as a country.

There is also the state's commitment to fund fee-free education. This must be accompanied by a detailed analysis of universities' cost structures and a proper recognition of their constraints. They have bills to pay, research to fund and staff to pay. They have to maintain buildings and build new facilities. The money from government is just not enough. They cannot be straddled with a commitment that will, in no time, compromise the quality of education students get. We also need to consider that fee-free education cannot mean admission for everyone who qualifies. There are only so many desks and lecturers. If this process is handled recklessly we will soon deliver exceptionally poor graduates, if any, to the very economy the theory of "education as an investment" hopes will repay the money with faster GDP growth.

Finally, we must accept that until we can afford to offer fee-free education to everyone, we must work on a formula where parents and the state share costs. Parents must pay what they can afford while the state fills in the rest. In this formula, private sector contributions can be included to subsidise the scheme through corporate bursaries. Only parents who cannot afford must be exempted from paying anything. Evangelists of fee-free education have a higher moral purpose but they have a duty to study and share the practicalities and constraints; and not to mislead the public with tales of silver bullets.

6.4. Conclusion

The study focuses on the implementation of every one having the right to education. Even though it is only at basic level, one should have the right to access and enter tertiary institutions regardless of financial constraints accumulated due to having a previously disadvantaged background. As a result, the study seeks to contribute to knowledge as it will discuss the challenges experienced by the post-apartheid political leadership when designing policies that would be implemented to address education inequalities in South Africa. There are many things we could do to accommodate as many students at tertiary institutions as possible. This could include certain people subsidizing others' education, or taxing the poor through sugar tax and other forms of tax thereby sinking the economy, or privatizing institutions such as South African Airways and using that money to finance free education, or taxing the rich more in order to raise funds for free higher education. All of this is doable, but we should expect serious negative consequences on our education when it is all done.

One such negative consequence would be the quality of education. It is true here in South Africa as it is all over the world that quality education calls for an investment in it. What is disheartening about this national debate on university fees is that we are not being honest to ourselves as a nation. We don't bother asking ourselves about the implications of free education. Those advocating for free education speak of "free and quality" education. But we know, and they should know, that when something is free, it is usually short of quality. If the price of a good or service is free, then it won't be of high quality because in a competitive market the price is an indicator of the quality of a good or service. For example, we can compare South Africa's free hospitals with those that are not free. The free hospitals are in deplorable conditions.

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