



## **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

### **An Influence of the #FEESMUSTFALL Movement on student Politics: A case study of the Durban University of Technology 2016-17 Steve Biko Campus By**

**Kabelo Mokua (217080873)**

**Supervisor: Dr Fikile Vilakazi**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Social Sciences in  
Political Science, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard  
College Campus, Durban, South Africa.

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EXAMINATION COPY SUBMITTED

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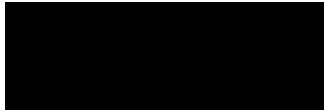
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## **DECLARATION BY STUDENT**

I, Kabelo Mokua, declare that the research reported on in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my own original research. Where data, ideas and quotations have been used that are not my own they have duly acknowledged as being sourced from other persons. No part of this work has been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university.

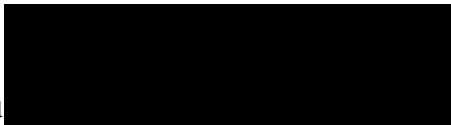
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Date: June 2020

Kabelo Mokua (Candidate)

Signature:



Date: June 2020

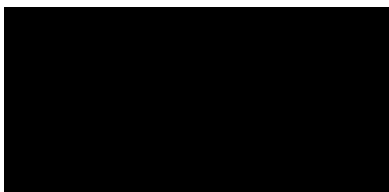
Dr Fikile Vilakazi (Supervisor)

## **DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR**

This is to declare that I have supervised Mr. Kabelo Mokuwa's dissertation to the best of my ability. As a result, it has been submitted with my full permission because the student has done all what he could to complete this research.

Signature

Date: 18 November 2022

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the supervisor.

Dr Fikile Mabel Vilakazi

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank God for giving me this opportunity, courage, and strength for completing this dissertation in a very trying time of my life. There have been moments and times I thought this project would not come to be completed, but God`s love that has sustained me and strengthens still amazes me to this point.

I would also like to thank my Mother Betty Mokua who has truly been my role model, inspiration and support with my career and this project.

To my supervisor Dr Fikile Vilakazi, I would like to thank you for believing that I will complete my research regardless of different obstacles that sought to make it impossible to do so.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

<b>AZAPO</b>	<b>Azanian</b> Student Organization
<b>ANCYL</b>	African National Congress Youth League
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>BCM</b>	Black Consciousness Movement
<b>BC</b>	Before Christ
<b>COSAS</b>	Congress of South African Students
<b>DUT</b>	Durban University of Technology
<b>EFFSC</b>	Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command
<b>EFF</b>	Economic Freedom Fighters
<b>FH</b>	Fort Hare
<b>FMF</b>	Fees Must Fall
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immune Virus
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education
<b>NWU</b>	North-West University
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>NUSAS</b>	National Union of South African Students
<b>NSFAS</b>	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
<b>PAC</b>	Pan-African Congress
<b>SRC</b>	Student Representative Council
<b>SUN</b>	Stellenbosch University
<b>SA</b>	South Africa
<b>SANCO</b>	South African National Student Congress
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>TEFSA</b>	Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa
<b>UKZN</b>	University of KwaZulu Natal
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UCT</b>	University of Cape Town
<b>UDUSA</b>	Union of Democratic University Staff Association

# **ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**



18 October 2019

School of Social Sciences  
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Mokua

Mr Kabelo Phillip Mokua (217080873)

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00000286/2019

Project Title: An influence of the #FeesMustFall on student politics: A case study of the Durban University of Technology 2016-17. Steve Biko campus.

Approval Notification – No Risk / Exempt Application

In response to your application received 09 August 2019 the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

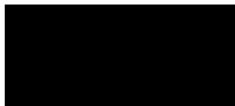
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further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

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Fikile Vilakazi

Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Maheshvari Naidu

Cc School Administrator: Mr N Memela

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee


Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4800 Email: [xmbag@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:xmbag@ukzn.ac.za) / [ethics@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ethics@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



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## ABSTRACT

The years 2015/16 were a significant period in the history of student activism in higher education in South Africa. The period resulted in thousands of university students across the country demonstrating for free decolonized education. As a result, thousands of students were subjected to police brutality, confrontation, and arrests through the use of force, rubber bullets and tear gas amongst other things. This has in many institutions of learning amounted to damage to property and affected teaching and learning. The genuine concerns and demands of students for free higher education and conducive learning spaces for the black majority in South Africa, saw the former President Jacob Zuma announcing 0% fee increment and commitment for feasibility of free higher education in South Africa. In this regard, this research sought to examine the influence of the #FeesMustFall [#FMF] movement on student politics and to understand how the university management at the Durban University of Technology, Steve Biko Campus, responded to the #FeesMustFall demands of students. The study used a qualitative approach in exploring the influence of the #FMF movement in student politics. A theoretical lens of social justice was used to engage with this research, and it advocates for the distribution of power, resources, and benefits in society without favour of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, and any other status. Study findings show that there was a positive influence on student politics from the #FMF movements. One key positive outcome was that all student political parties namely: the South African Student Congress [SASCO], the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command [EFFSC], the Democratic Alliance Student Organization [DA] and the Black Land First Student Organization [BLF] amongst others found their voices uniting under the national call for free and decolonized higher education. This unity amongst student leaders, varied political formations and various social groupings revived and encouraged youth to engage more in student politics. It was also found that the relationship between student leaders and University management at DUT became overwrought due to a violent approach and tactic used by the #FeesMustFall student movement. In some instances, this has resulted in fatalities and casualties physically, emotionally, economically, politically, and psychologically in the lives of students, University infrastructure and student politics in general. This thesis recommends therefore a need for national reflection on higher education in South Africa and student activism based on a case and lessons of #FMF movement. This national reflection needs to investigate, confront, and raise important questions with regards to equity, access, decoloniality and transformation in higher education as a critical discourse and call to action after twenty-five years of democracy in South Africa.

**KEYWORDS:** #FeesMustFall, Transformation, Higher Education, Student politics, Social justice.



# **Chapter 1**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Introduction**

### **1.2 Introduction and Background**

The year 2015-16 marked a significant period in the history of student protest in South Africa. Thousands of university students embarked and took to the streets their frustrations of rising fees in South African universities in heeding to the national call for students protest termed #FeesMustFall. Student leaders from various political parties mobilized students specifically Steve Biko campus (DUT) to heed to a national call for 0% fee increment in various universities in South Africa. While mobilizing students from different campuses namely Steve Biko, Ritson and ML Sultan campuses student leaders were met with police brutalities and several students were arrested. These mobilizations included disrupting classes, boycotting business on campuses (DUT on News24, October 2016). It should be noted however that the student's politics and protests in the Durban University of Technology campuses are tracked and linked back to the formation of the African Student Association in the 1960s. This was precipitated by meetings in Fort Hare which liberation leaders had with students and the 1961 student strikes, which defined the role student in contributing to fighting the apartheid system. In addition, the ANC and the Youth League played a crucial role in facilitating the formation of the ASA, at the forefront a member of the Youth League Thabo Mbeki then a student in the University of Fort Hare Anne et al ( 2016). With this intention, the chief role the ASA was to play among others was to eradicate the racist laws of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and the extension of the University Education Act of 1959.

On the other hand, the emergence of SASO was deeply rooted in how students related with National Union of South African Student (NUSAS), an organization which its aim was to advocate and represents the interest of South African students in South African and across borders. The elected president of ASA Ernest Galo a student at the University of Natal and other ANC Youth League leaders among others Thabo Mbeki, Sipo Makana, and Sindiso Mfeyane had this to say with views of NUSAS: "We took a decision to form the African Students Association because

clearly NUSAS [National Union of South Africa] could not represent the views of African students. We could not use NUSAS to mobilize youth and students and be more directly involved with the struggle for national liberation in South Africa.

Its composition and leadership were predominately white and liberal in terms of ideology. Therefore, we had to form ASA to cater to relatively small African student population at universities and as [a] result ASA's membership included students from secondary and high schools. Therefore, we had much bigger reach...then once the decision was taken some preparatory work had to be done and as result, I had to travel to different parts of the country, including Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Alice [Fort Hare], Kimberley, Johannesburg, and various places to introduce them to the idea we are going to form this ASA." Anne et al (2016)

According to McKay (2015), NUSAS failed in fairly representing black student views and interests while trying to maintain the loyalty of its white middle class. Which as a result led to formation black student organizations as alluded by ASA and ANC Youth league student leaders from and other black student organizations shared similar views such as 15urban student Union, Cape Peninsula students Union which will later form Progressive National Students Organization etc. SASO, (1971). Davie (2007) suggests that it was during the 1970s that in the city of Durban black and white students increasingly got involved and this as a result shaped and change the political landscape of South Africa. For example, white University student helped workers by advocating for them for increase of wages by making claims for better wages on the Poverty Datum Line (PDL). This white student reached to workers by measures unknown to the police in organizing meetings with workers and convincing them for the course they were to pursue in representing their interests, which their advantage with the apartheid system and amount of media attention they endured they succeeded. Furthermore, it during the 1970s that parties such as the ANC, United Democratic Front (UDF) were revived the Movement of Black Consciousness played its vital role as well shaping the thinking generated discussion of identity, self-worth and challenging the status quo Biko, (2004).

It is through the ideas of Black Consciousness that encouraged South Africa youths across the country to be actively engaged among other things in politics especially in the city of Durban, where the founder of BCM Steve Biko engaged communities, students, and intellectuals with heated debates around issues of being a black and unjust system of apartheid. Biko became one of the most fundamental figures in the politics in the 1960-70s as his whole life was sorely given to the struggle and ideologically played a crucial role in shaping and changing the politics in South Africa with BCM philosophy Biko (2004).

Scholars in politics, economics and international relations suggest that the Soweto uprising of June 16, 1976, did not happen in isolation; that political events before the uprising such as strikes, formations of students' organizations the ever crisis of institutionalized into economic, social and educational structures of the country-influenced the event of June 16, 1976 Hirschma (1990). Fergusson (1996) adds to the fact that BCM philosophy and its transformational demands cannot be underestimated, BCM raised awareness on issues of dignity, Black unity, Black courage, Black Self-Reliance which were spread by pamphlets articles, debates, and Biko delivering lectures at the University of Fort Hare amongst others.

## **1.2. Preliminary literature Review**

Student-led protests have to some degree demonstrated in numerous universities across South Africa that challenges experienced in these universities have a direct impact on the livelihood of South African students and societies. Scholars have to a large degree through several academic literatures shown that university students continue to encounter challenges in their spaces of learning or circles and that these challenges manifest themselves through protests and strikes. According to Golding (2017), students led protests and more especially the #FeesMustFall movement has caused major disruption in teaching, learning, damages to property and research. This therefore as mentioned disturbs the proper running and functioning of the university and progress in areas of concern to the university. On the other hand, Van (2013) in his analysis of the concept of protest and reasons of protests suggests that in many instances' protests have proven to be the tool also in improving socio-economic challenges, they, therefore, cannot be overlooked. This section of the project reviews the literature on funding in higher institutions of learning by government and challenges that universities face of transformation. In addition, this will investigate international trends of funding in higher education.

And lastly the solutions for funding in higher education in South Africa.

Various scholars such as Wangenge-Ouma, (2012), De Villies, (2009) and Ntshoe (2013) have engaged in their literature articles written extensively on higher education funding, access to higher education and the changing trends of funding in South Africa. Wangenge-Ouma (2012) claims that South African universities due to the demand of free higher education by specifically black

students, despite the means by the government of financial schemes to assisting previously disadvantaged young South Africans that HE is facing important challenges.

This according to Villiers and Steyn (2009) is because of the decrease in investment on higher education which has shifted because of the disappointment of no returns of the more investment made in the twentieth century. In addition, based on the research conducted by Universities South Africa, it highlights the fact that South African system of funding higher education is poorly funded compared to Finland, China, Brazil, Iceland, and Cuba etc. According to Ouma (2012), the challenges of funding higher education by the state is generally with the inconsistency of the state in keeping up with the pressures of enrolment more rather than policies towards HE.

On the other hand, Bloom et al (2006) stated that other African countries are not immune to challenges of state funding in HE and access, especially in the Sub-Saharan region. For the simple reason of how HE tended to view in those African countries, in that much emphasis and investment was injected in primary and secondary education than in HE. The authors accentuate when they make mention of the fact that Banks worldwide spending in the 1980s was more on higher education and declined in the 1990s. Which is even more evident in the tertiary enrolment because of reduction in spending on higher education. In addition, Sawyerr (2004) point to the changes in the global economy, which for the last thirty years have privatized and commodified knowledge. For example, Kenya went from two private universities in 1980 to nine by 1990, followed by Tanzania from one in 1990 to eleven by 2000, Uganda from two to ten, Congo from zero to four and many other African countries. The broader issues to be investigated included examining how students and campus management at DUT Steve Biko Campus responded to the national movement on #FeesMustFall and the impact this movement had on student politics. It also intended to understand the experiences of students regarding mass incarceration and police brutalities to the protestors.

## **1.4 Key Objectives and Questions to be addressed.**

The terrain of higher education have both inside and outside the country become the battle ground for students to demonstrate their frustrations and concerns. Historically, the 76s student uprising in the height of apartheid locates the voices of the youth pushing against state militarization and



dehumanization of black people. Two to three decade later the post-state apartheid the higher education still remains untransformed, and not easily accessible.

- 1.) What was the influence of the #FeesMustFall movement on the DUT Steve Biko Campus student politics?
- 2.) How did the university management respond to the #FeesMustFall protest movement at DUT Steve Biko Campus?

### **1.5. Research problems and objectives: Broader Objectives to be addressed.**

- 1.) To examine and understand the influence of the #FeesMustFall movement on the DUT Steve Biko Campus student politics
- 2.) To understand how the university management at the DUT Steve Biko Campus responded to the #FeesMustFall demands of students.

### **1.6. Theoretical and Conceptional Framework**

According to Novak, (2015) (2000) most of the challenges in understanding ‘social justice’ is simply a clear understanding of the term itself. The author contends the fact that of many books published about social justice fail in offering the definition of the concept. Jost (2010:1) defines social justice as a responsibility of the state towards the society on issues of human rights, liberty, entitlements of individuals or group of people (benefits) and treatment of people of society. In addition, the author encapsulates this concept of social justice in three features namely, of distributive, procedural and interactional justice. On the other hand, Chipking (2013:5) in defining social justice associates social justice with fairness, equality, or justice as the right of the society before the state or its government. The common factor in the above-mentioned definitions of social

justice gives the state the responsibility and by its nature the right to distribute economic, political, and social benefits to be allocated justly among its nation or society.

Firstly, Social justice includes an idea of a society in which resources are distributed fairly among the members of society whether physical, psychological, economic, or social (its invasion distribution of resources among the society). This concept promotes a society where individuals who can develop their full capacities and capable of exercising their democratic rights. Secondly, Social justice animated ideas and promotes a fully democratic government in which equality is evident in its citizens. Among other things, the #FeesMustFall movement and social movements in particular protest for reforms of unequal systems, demand greater influence over the political decision-making process and demand inclusivity of the country's political systems and institutions of higher learning Bide, (2015:1). The author argues that social movements play a vital role in bringing about positive political outcomes with many actors involved such as interest groups and political parties its contributions (social movements) cannot be ignored or denied. Social movements as an instrument for democratic principles such as the equal distribution of resources, fairness in the political, social, and economic aids not only includes fairness, justice, equality but a more peaceful society with policy-changes in areas affected HE and government. The theory of social justice, therefore, is relevant and of a good basis for the study.

## **1.7. Method and Methodology**

Hancock at al B. Hancok, (2001) point out the importance of conducting research whether using qualitative or quantitative that all research requires a suitable approach in finding out subject investigated or collecting data in relation to the question asked. Patton (1987) suggests three important types of data collection which qualitative methods employ namely: (1) in-depth, open ended interviews; (2) direct observation; and (3) written documents, including such sources as questionnaires, personal diaries, and program records. The authors all highlights that the focus of qualitative research is finding out and investigating reasons for social phenomena. Which means it is concerned in helping us to appreciate and understand the social world and why things are the way they are. Moreover, this also seeks to critically understand questions about (a) human behaviour and perceptions, attitudes, and opinions (c) which shapes our understanding in making

sense of the world around us. This study adopted a qualitative research methodology in order to collect data through face-to-face interviews. A case study of the Durban University of Technology: Steve Biko campus was the site for the study. Zainal (Z, 2007) defines a case study as a method that is concerned in investigating data within a specific context.

Therefore, the researcher chooses a specific geographic area or number of individuals as a subject of focus. The author highlights the case study method as a multifaceted tool in exploring and understanding the subject of focus. This method becomes a powerful tool in research when the study requires in-depth investigation. Exploratory research is defined as research that is conducted to gain insights, discover new ideas, and contributing to the knowledge of phenomena. The study attempts to explore the exploratory and purposive sampling by means of 20 face-to-face interviews, which will be conducted with Steve Biko Campus students, SRC leaders, a student in general, lecturers and academics. Participants will be grouped and gathered using the nonsmiling method, which is judgement sampling. On the other hand, the purposive sampling method was utilized in order that selection of SRC leaders, students, lecturers, and academics based on their availability, knowledge, willingness, understanding and experiences of the FeesMustFall movement in the study. The purpose of this sampling is to gain more understanding and enable the researcher to explore the subject at hand more in detail. Interviews as a qualitative method of research in area of social science is an important method of research which is commonly used to collect data King & Harnocks, (2010:6). 7 The study will therefore make use of the face-to-face interviews to obtain the insight of the participants perspective. The area of this study is Durban University Technology (Steve Biko Campus). Interviews will be conducted with SRC leaders, lecturers, academics, students. The SRC leadership was consulted for the permission and informed of the study to be conducted in DUT (Steve Biko Campus).

## **1.8. Limitations of Research**

The limitations of the study are that the topic projects and focus is mainly on participants at DUT Steve Biko Campus. The study therefore will not speak in general of the experiences of other campus in South African universities as it is unique and captures the research finding realities of DUT Steve Biko Campus. In addition, the participants are from the SRC leadership and management staff members, therefore it will be incredible for the study to represents other students who are not in SRC leadership positions and non-management staff members.

## **1.9. Ethics**

Sarantakos (2005:16) asserts that ethics plays a huge role in research whether qualitative or quantitative research. The author refers to ethics as a set of rules and principles that are formulated to protect and ensure the safety of the participants e.g., Physical, and mental harm, covert or hidden research, invasion of privacy, violation of anonymity and confidentiality, deception, coercion, plagiarism (for more information see Orr, 1999; Pfeifer, 2000). In addition, this (ethics) promote and respect the rights of participants to voluntarily participate without force Baloyi, (2012). Institutions of higher learning and professional organizations have incorporated these codes and principles to be followed by researchers in ensuring proper and professional procedures when conducting research Sarantakos, (2005). The researcher therefore will subject himself to all the procedures in collecting data from the participants involved in research, and informing the participants of the methods and probabilities of (what, how, when and why) the research conducted. Fundamentally, this means that those participating in research or study need to be fully aware of what it means to be part of the research (the risk and benefits involved in research). In following ethics and procedures, it also means that the researcher does not place the participants in a place that is risky and ask questions that are potentially are of a harm to the psychology of the participants.

In social research and scientific research there are standards that guides researchers in protecting the participants involved in the study conducted from harm, this namely are Anonymity, Confidentiality and Privacy. The participants are promised and ensured that their names are not going to appear on the data collected to link participant to the information published on the research conducted or any possible way of exposing the identity of the respondent.

## 1.10. Structure of dissertation

**Chapter one:** This chapter deals with the introduction and background of study. The definition of concepts, the reasons for choosing the topic and literature reviewed, research problem, the research objectives, the research questions, methodology and design, study population, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, limitations of the study, chapter outline and conclusion.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter focuses on the literature in the subject of the study. Literature in this chapter investigates issues such as the South African system of higher education, funding of higher education during apartheid and post-apartheid. Moreover, the study investigates the global perspectives of higher education (funding). Lastly the researcher will focus on the implications on student politics.

**Chapter Three:** This chapter concentrates on the theoretical aspect of the study. This then will employ and give in details the assumptions of the social justice theory in application to the topic of the study at hand.

**Chapter Four:** This chapter mainly focuses on the design and method of the research such as population sampling, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study.

**Chapter Five:** This chapter investigates the research findings, presentation, and analysis of the study. It investigates the influence of #FeesMustFall movement on student politics and managerial aspects of the university, and then further analyses the findings and perform an educated interpretation of the situation of the study based on the findings.

**Chapter Six:** This last chapter of the study gives recommendations based on all the data gathered. The research then suggests recommendations to any problems found.

## 1.11. Conclusion

The South African history presents a rich historical experience of struggle for political and economic freedom from the apartheid system. The South African students in higher education and secondary education have played a crucial role in participating in the process of liberating SA with the challenges experienced by students in higher education. After the dismantling of the apartheid system in 1994 with respect to the education sector government made efforts to redress the injustices in higher education by formulating policies to transform previously disadvantaged black universities. While the desires and intentions of the ANC government were good, this has proven to be a slow pace of transformation with a large number of South African youth from secondary education not gaining easy access to institutions of higher learning, and thousands of drop-out students for the failure of financing their education, as a result of poverty and unemployment. There are on the other hand positive aspects of improvement in the education sector, with the good outweighed by the bad. The effects of these realities have had a tremendous impact on student politics and universities in South Africa, which has led to protests named the #FeesMustFall movement. This study investigated and assessed the influence of the #FeesMustFall movement on student politics with the focus on the Durban University of Technology Steve Biko Campus. The next chapter looks into issues such as the South African system of higher education, funding of higher education during apartheid and post-apartheid. Moreover, the thesis looks into global perspectives of higher education (funding) and related implications on student politics.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2. Literature Review**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

Given the topic and a brief background in the previous chapter, the main aim of this chapter is to review the existing possible literature concerning funding in higher institutions of learning in South African with more emphasis on the South African experience. This chapter is divided as follows: a look into the African continent in higher education with regards to funding. It secondly explores global experiences and then South African literature on the subject at hand. The researcher has made sure that while investigating and interrogating all the literature through this linking factor in reviewing higher institutions of learning that the purpose of the study is appreciated by carefully examining the research questions. Whilst engaging literature the chapter gives background while exploring various aspects of higher institutions of learning from different geographical backgrounds. This is followed by a venture into reviewing the weaknesses and strengths of all the data reviewed as it is not only to present what is written but to robustly engage and question the literature in hand as well. It should be noted that the chapter reasonably highlights gaps from the literature to justify the present study. In an attempt to close literature gaps further research is required, some of which necessitated this thesis. However, it is reasonably practicable that some gaps may be outside of the scope of this thesis, which may require a study of its own outside of the current study, and these are highlighted for the benefit of the reader. The review begins with the historical background of higher education in Africa in section 2.2.

## **2.2. Higher education in Africa (Historical background)**

The concepts tertiary education, higher education and further education are concepts that are inseparable even in usage. According to Maier (2017) in his first lecture in 1969 he defines higher education as “any schooling past high school leading to a degree or certificate and includes institutions that are not universities: community colleges, seminaries, medical schools, and vocational schools”. In addition, all forms of professional schooling or training after higher school is considered higher education.

Woldegiorgis, (2013) when following the evolution of advanced education in Africa begins from Egypt in the last few centuries BC and AD, with the Alexandria Museum and Library and other forms of religious systems. Kimuli, et al., (2017) point-out one significant factor which should be considered when reflecting on the genesis of HE in Africa, and that is the unavoidable contribution and positive role of religion in HE. Evidence in support of this position, can be seen through cases “of Alexandrian Academy (University Museum Library at Alexandria), University of AlKaraouine, Al-Azhar University and Fourah Bay College” Banyan, (1993). It is clearly asserted by many African scholars of the influence of religion in institution of higher learning, even though academia e.g., societal values, philosophy, and fields of medicine amongst others. It is, however, important to note that the main focal point of research and studies conducted were conducted with an aim to solving societal challenges and improving society. Simultaneously, the same education colonial powers used to oppress and colonize the African continent, through the arrival of missionaries and the influence of Christianity as opposed to up-lifting and improving livelihood Polcyn, (2015).

Walter (cited by Nanospike et al., 2011:626) argues that even before formal education in Africa, Africans viewed education in the following features: their relationship with social life, both spiritual and physical sense, the natural world, and child development. They further expound the philosophy of African education that consists of the understanding that the mental, spiritual, social and physical (my emphasis) manual labor/productivity and mental education are inseparable, and the understanding around the concept was harmonious development of a human being to be fit into to society. Amin Y. Noamana, (2017) acknowledges the fact that in some sense formal education was also found, meaning a well thought programme with a student and a teacher. However, it is equally true that African leaders saw Western education as a tool for resisting and fighting



colonialism and oppression. As a result, educated African leaders requested the establishment of the Western system of education and its institutions for Africans. And many of cadre's liberation movements in Africa went overseas to study in preparation for freedom.

For these following reasons: firstly, African leaders believed and saw acquiring education as a strategic way of fighting colonialism and oppression. Secondly, it was an act of demand for equality (if it was useful and helpful for Europeans was likewise useful and helpful for Africans). And finally, most of the prominent African leaders believed they needed to prepare for freedom if they had to take power to be able to have man and woman educated and skilled to lead. Amin Y. Noamana, (2017) accentuates the point that because of the scramble for Africa because almost all African countries were under colonial rule, therefore, colonial ideologies of colonial governments shaped the education system in Africa. Moreover, the end of (world war2) witnessed more establishment of higher institutions of learning in Africa as opposed to the previous years.

Michaelowa, (2000) notes that from the 1960s-70s the African continent went through a significant period in history, with massification in primary and secondary education of 3.4% to 27%. This momentous period on the African continent contributed positively in most African countries with manpower needed in the social and economic sectors. In most of African countries European institutions of higher learning were established, for example, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Algeria received funding from their colonial powers for this purpose. In addition, the World Bank (2017) confirms the good and positive contribution of tertiary education in nation building, diversity, social union, and strengthening of democracy. It is generally reported of the importance of education as a tool for economic growth, advancing national solidarity, and its undisputable impact in improving life.

It can clearly be seen from the above analysis of the importance of education that the issue cannot be overemphasized. Undoubtedly, equitable access to education should be one of the priorities of higher institutions of learning UNICEF, (2008). And it is of positive response for most of the African nations to be making efforts to broadening access to higher education and changing their advanced education framework. The next section looks at higher education in South Africa before 1994.

### **2.3. Higher education pre-1994 in South Africa**

The history of South Africa with regards to the system of education before a democratic South Africa is one that is characterized by racial lines, this as a result categorized people according to their race or ethnicity. The apartheid government created an education system that was in nature discriminating and disqualifying of the majority black community from the economic opportunities enjoyed by the few racist whites Naicker, (2000; 24).

There were no legal restrictions though for young black man attending white privileged universities, but circumstances and procedures involved for admission made it impossible for admission of blacks. This sad reality necessitated government in creating spaces (Universities) for different races (blacks, coloured and Indians) to cater for separate development. In addition,

Thebejanea (2013: 3) in his paper titled “History of Apartheid Education and the Problems of Reconstruction in South Africa.” Alludes to the fact that the Apartheid system of education encouraged views of hierarchy enforcing in the minds of many an ideological consciousness of superiority of the whites over the black majority. And this degrading policies of the apartheid government on education was engineered in various institutions and blacks, coloured’s and Indians were the victims of the system. African indigenous people at the bottom of all the classes created were the worst of the cruelties experienced of the system. Clearly, the education system under the apartheid government was designed to benefit the minority whites or elites, and access was denied for those seen and classified inferior by government such as blacks, coloured’s and Indians Schuster, (2011:40). And it was infused in their educational policies the view that a person was entitled to opportunities and their responsibility determined by their ethnic identity. Due to this ideological view the government channelled funding and financial resources to historically white privileged universities and white schools.

The word “apartheid” is generally accepted and known or defined as ‘segregation mainly on the bases of race’ it is in most cases linked to the experiences the South African people have gone through since 1948 when the National Party assumed power up until the demise of apartheid in 1994. According to Bronkensha, (2010) segregation even dates far back to the settlement of the Dutch in the Cape (1659) when Governor Van Riebeeck commanded his man to erect a fence which will as a result divide the whites from the blacks. This event in the history of South Africa was a very significant period, because since that time SA was never to be the same again. Several laws in ensuring and entrenching racial division among the blacks and white were passed Anon,

(2015). Among these laws was the Bantu Authority Act, 1951, Group Areas Act of 1950 which promoted separate residential areas. As a result of this by the apartheid government blacks were excluded from taking part in shaping and building their country politically, economically with the rest of the world. Equitable access before 1994 became the center of discussions and debates in higher education for blacks to access of HE. This emanated from the statistical facts with regards to institutional segregation of African, Coloured and Indian, because in 1980s the general participation was 17%. And clearly participation vehemently reflected racial dimensions in the country, with 40% Indians, 13% Coloured, Africans 9% and 70% whites (HESA 2014).

Even though the largest population in the country were African which consisted of about 89% of the population, African students barely made 50% of the student base in universities Machingani, (2011). On the other hand, white South Africans constituted about 11% of the population, nevertheless white student made-up of 48% of enrolment. The challenge of access for the historically disadvantaged blacks is not only limited to numbers of enrolment and employment, but this reflected even issues of gender exclusion. Clearly these above-mentioned statistics are evidence to the exclusion policies of apartheid on the bases of the skin colour and not merit.

The historically 'white' privileged institution of higher learning carried-out the majority of the nation's research output, this was clearly on the postgraduate (Masters & Doctoral) studies and articles published Thobejanea, (2013). By 1994, the socio-economic of South Africa's culture and population were not reflected in the managerial positions and other key positions in universities. For example, according to Badat S. a., (2014) the university committee (council) tended to be all white, all selected by the then president. This will in the later stage tend to be a challenge for transformation in many universities across South Africa.

An equally significant aspect of apartheid is the resistance and the struggle by blacks for an equal society. The struggle and robust debates and engagement of the leading and important organizations in the liberation movement such as the African National Congress, Azanian People's Organization and the Pan Africanist Congress advocated for among other things equal access for blacks in higher institutions of learning Thobejanea, (2013). As mentioned above access to higher institutions of learning to the previously white universities by blacks, Indians and coloured's were among the challenges that these organizations fought. For example, in 1988 blacks in Technikons accounted for 11.37% enrolments and percentage in universities was more less with (32%) as compared with whites (69.7%), Indians (40.4) and Coloured's with 13% (University of Pretoria). But on the other hand, issues of access by the disadvantaged in the past is not to be viewed only on enrolment solely, but more on the programs enrolled for. For instance, Legodi, (2001) argues

that the enrolment of blacks in 1991-2000 in field such Business, Computer science, agriculture and engineering were fewer (32%). And on the other hand, whites in professional degrees related to physics, chemistry, geology the figures were significantly high (70%-75%).

## **2.4. Higher education post-1994**

The dismantling of the apartheid system and the new dawn of democracy was in many respects welcomed with a lot of enthusiasm, political will, and expectations locally and internationally.

From a previously divided and racially based system of education, the ANC government was faced with a huge task of transforming institutions of higher learning to ones that reflect a more democratic South Africa. According to Saleem and Sayed (2014:126) this was based on the correct assumption by many about the role that education plays or has to play in addressing the societal needs in our communities and a tool to building a more inclusive developing economy for the newly voted government in power. However as articulated by many scholars the ANC government inherited a deeply fractured system of education where resources were distributed unequally with unequal access, unequal opportunities, and outcomes as a legacy of apartheid.

To be able to clearly understand the shift from apartheid to a democratic South Africa with respect to changes within the higher institutions of learning post-1994; African National Congress (ANC), Union of Democratic University Staff Association (UDUSA), the National Commission of Higher Education (NCHE), White paper on Higher Education, and South African Student Congress (SASCO) position on Higher Education policy; become a critical point to start the conversation of higher education in South Africa. According to Odhav (2009) this documented perspectives envisioned in these documents allow us to appreciate the transition from apartheid to post-1994 in giving clearly what was envisioned and achieved with respect to the vision on HE post-1994.

Badat S. , (2009) highlights in short the notable vision of this key organization of policy as follows; -to expand the higher education system for national development needs, and to redress systems, inequalities between historically black and white institutions, and to -review the university funding formula, increase intake of disadvantaged students and establish new student finance policy through bursaries, loans, scholarship, - and more emphasis on access for especially disadvantaged

student which include issues surrounding the criteria (race, gender, disability and geography were to be considered because as mentioned above historical background). The department of education clearly puts it as follows: “Our vision is a South Africa in which all people have equal access to lifelong education and training opportunities which will contribute towards improving the quality of life and build a peaceful, prosperous and democratic society.” Ecology, (1996). This is what the ANC government committed itself to pursue with relevant stakeholders in addressing historical inequalities. For this reason, Huda, (2010) points-out that following the commitment made by South Africa’s new democratic government in 1994, there has been efforts by government in seeking to effect institutional change.

This amongst other things includes robust engagement by different stakeholders, institutions, and the state on issues such as funding, policy formulation, adoption, extensive research around critical issues which contribute to realizing the changing the status-quo. These efforts have in many cases presented government with challenges and achievements which continue to test the abilities of government on higher education which as a result have a huge impact on processes of pace and desired out-come. It should be noted though that the efforts made by the government since 1994 in reforming higher education have yielded good and positive changes in transforming and improving our society Schuster, (2011). A close comparative study of the education system during apartheid and post-1994 clearly shows that things have changed for a good and this has proven to be a good example not only to African countries but to the rest of the world. Keet, (2015) acknowledges this shifts and notes that post-1994 higher education has experienced a more integrated system of education with the formation of 26 public universities and 95 private higher education institutions in 2015, from a previously institutionalized racism of higher education of about 36 public and more than 300 private institutions in 1994. The number of Africans (blacks) in higher institutions of learning have increased significantly from 49% (1995) to 65% (2009).

In addition, in 2010 in higher education the percentage increased drastically by 15% which was 80% (714,597) of black student composing student body of 892,943, with comparison to white (19.9 percent) students and blacks (66.7 percent) (Higher Education [CHE] 2012, 1). “So, it is no longer surprising that German development aid for the South African education system focuses on secondary and tertiary education and vocational training” Schuster, (2011:44). Including increased number of staff members in these institutions and more interest of black academics pursuing master’s degrees and doctoral degrees in various fields of study. There has additionally been excellent advancement regarding sexual orientation value as well. Statistically by 2010, ladies

constituted 57.4% of the entire student body (CHE 2012, 1). It is of a serious concern for political, social, and economic reasons, if the sector for higher education is unable to be just in absorbing those of the previously disadvantaged by the apartheid government McGregor, (2014). Enrolments at historically white universities keep on reflecting a lower extent of blacks than their demographics statistics, and white students continue to accumulate in these universities. This is also continuing to be the case even in historically black universities. Social factor is affecting every aspect of life: as it was said during apartheid that opportunities, access were deeply shaped by race, this is continuing to be a reality in a democratic South Africa.

However, there are still underlying challenges facing higher education amidst all the achievements by government improving and structuring the education system from a racially based education to a more inclusive, embracing values of democracy system of education. Firstly, a lack of more South African young people pursuing higher education in areas of science such as engineering fields. Ramdas (2009) points out that universities have produced several graduates in the field of engineering and these numbers as noted have doubled, which is positively motivating however the number remains low with the increasing need in the economy. According to (Kwok, 2003) the challenge is mainly among other things underperforming students in areas of mathematics and science which impact the choices of fields of study. It is recorded that there is an increasingly high rate of the students registered for social sciences as opposed to science (chemistry, mathematics, agriculture etc.). Secondly, there is a challenging experience for South Africa of youngsters finishing their high school years (matric), but a smaller number of students entering further education and training. It is said that 4% of African youths or less enter advanced education and the governments seeks to attract high number of them in TVET colleges Ramdas, (2009). In addition, some of the shortcomings in the higher education (HE) sector relate to numbers of postgraduate student enrolled and the outcome continue to be low as compared to the numbers of postgraduate enrolled.

Thirdly Buthelezi. S. and Le Roux, (2002) also points out one aspect which has been neglected by participants in discussions and debates around issues in higher education, and that is neglecting the very past/history of which played more important role in engineering South African higher education. Badat S. a., (2014) are of the opinion that because of this neglect and fear to rupture on the social order by its pursuits of radical change, have limited the government and stakeholders involved to the expected results. Fundamentally, there was a very limited idea of transformation, which informed policies and legislation around issues of transformation. Radical change (meaning redistribution etc.) according to many scholars in politics and various fields could only be achieved

through the political consent of the historically privileged which in many instances in pursuits of addressing structural segregation based on the apartheid policy blurred the line and cause of challenges in HE. Lastly, as noted by the Minister of Higher Education and training, Blade Nzimande in his May 2015 budget speech in parliament after a series of demonstrations by students movements in University of Cape Town (UCT), North West University (NWU), Stellenbosch University (SUN), his words captures and acknowledged some of the serious limitations and challenges of transformation when he said that: ‘Despite the significance of symbols such as names and statues, we must not conflate these with more fundamental matters of transformation.

There remains an urgent need to radically change the demographics of our professoriate; transform the curriculum and research agendas; cultivate greater awareness of Africa; eliminate racism, sexism, and all other forms of unjust discrimination; improve academic success rates; and expand student support’ Keet & Swart, (2011). Race continues to remain a means of inequality in the education system. Moreover, McCartney, (2019) is of the idea that this form of inequality has taken many branches which plague the system and continue to exclude people on their race, religion, language, sexual orientation, this among other things as legacies of apartheid. This has been evident in various cases in different institutions of learning in South Africa and particularly historically white privileged universities.

## **2.5. Global picture of higher education**

South Africa has been an important role player in the international community, with the apartheid government and newly democratic government, and the roles played varies according to time and policies of government in place. And the role of the international community in relation to the apartheid regime is critical in understanding the transition from apartheid to democracy Gregory, (2007). Barnes, (2008) states that even though the international community was not intense in its efforts to criticizing the apartheid regime policies of racial segregation, its minimal efforts were significant in dismantling apartheid. This was because of the strategic and economic role South Africa played in the West; with its important commodities, such as coal and gold that provided important markets for Western products. As a result, this has influenced how the world related with the apartheid regime. However, over the years South Africa became increasingly isolated in the global space through series of sanctions by the United Nations. According to Reddy, (2008) this economic sanctions covered trade and finance and affected South Africa’s relation with the

rest of the world. These international efforts according to many scholars were intended to put pressure on government to end apartheid in South Africa. Therefore, the South African higher education sector has also faced similar and varied challenges related to ending apartheid.

Observers across the globe are conflicted in many instances as they are confronted with the realities and challenges of the concept of global and internationalization of higher education, which has emerged as of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Arabkheradmand, (2015) in their definition differentiate between internationalization and globalization of higher education, by referring to the former as all the practices and activities of the states in which borders are held intact with a global recognition among states.

This is enhanced by the fast growing and even improving communication and technology, new information, use of the English language internationally and other forces that continue to shape higher education worldwide. While on the other hand globalization is defined as a “notion that disregards borders and tries to shun their effects while increasing the frequency of cross-border interaction” Enayat, (2017). Other scholars define globalization as a range of policies and programs by universities together with government in responding to globalization. According to Enayat, (2017) despite the multiple definitions of the concept mentioned above, the central idea around this concept is the issue of cross-border and the implication of the ever growing and changing economy.

The global scene towards the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s introduced the concept and idea of the ‘new world order’ which became more of a reality, and it has since then shaped issues in the international community. The collapse of communist regimes and a move to markets dominating economic activities and limiting the state in economic life was a significant factor of the ‘new world order’ P.A.M. Maassen, (2002). These environments consequently affected governments and shaped events during the 1990s and demanded socio-economic and political change in many areas even in higher education. Many scholars suggest that South Africa be not looked in isolation with this global trends and socio-economic and political pressures, but as part of the changing world. P.A.M. Maassen, (2002) notes that the democratic settlement in 1994 is part of the planetary change and encompasses globalization. For example, report showed South Africa in the mid-90s that it went through a process of restructuring the higher education in alignment with the international requirement Mather, (2007).



In 1998 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), held its conference and the outcome at that conference, shows that the problems and challenges have not changed in nature. What is new, in any case, are the impacts of worldwide change belief systems that on a very basic level test the idea of institutional self-guiding in advanced education P.A.M. Maassen, (2002). The fundamental assumption of this worldwide change is the idea of ‘stripping’ of state autonomy that is steered externally, its activities, performances being reviewed and evaluated by the markets and not the states themselves. Mather, (2007) and many other scholars confirm the consistency of the challenges in HE, and acknowledge massive changes within HE which as noted continue to shape issues in academia and may do so probably for next decades to come. According to Hattingh, (2018), the impact of this shift (globally/internationally) is heavily felt because they are global in nature.

But further she notes the important of these changes internationally, on how they continue to influence innovation and the relevance of education. The focal reality of the past five decades in the global space has been the massification of advanced education. Selyutin, (2017) when explaining the concept of massification, views it as process by which institutions of higher learning which create favourable condition for access and acceptability of a global phenomenon. According to MacGregor, (2014) massification involves “lowering of academic standards, greater social mobility for a growing segment of the population, new patterns of funding higher education, increasingly diversified higher education systems in most countries and other tendencies,”. The sentiments expressed above revolves around and embodies the idea of higher education opening services for the masses that were previously excluded.

The end of World War II has among the things experienced the increase of enrolment in student base in higher education around the world. This trend has become global phenomenon, with Britain, France, China, Africa, and other major countries in Europe despite their differing systems of education Selyutin, (2017). In fact, Mohamedbhai, (2008) among other scholars like McGregor, Mihalis, Bullivant, and Giannakis all refer to the effects of massification on education as minimal in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as opposed to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This has come to be known among scholars around the world as “modern day revolution” looking at the pace, size, and impact of it (massification) not only in education but economically and otherwise.

It is however of great significance to note that massification has to some extent positive and negative impacts on education and government. Firstly, because of the tremendous impact not only

in numbers, but the shift of thinking, ambitions, broader understanding of technology and the world of student has an ability to change advanced education and the state for the good of society Hornsby et al. (2014). Evidently, a report Baum, (2007) proves this fact that a society with high level of education is likely to experience low unemployment rate. And not only do graduates have sense of awareness on issues of health, environment but their increased participation in societal programs, including voting, volunteer work, and blood donation contributes positively to the economy and improves the society. This argument of education as public and private good is also advocated by Hornsby, (2014) who in his argument associates private benefit with “rise of employment prospects, incomes, and ability to save and invest money. Secondly, it leads to a formation of human capital, improving on knowledgeable individuals as human resources for nations. Tertiary education also helps the economy to grow by research to improve and not fall back with the ever-growing world of technology and skill in entrepreneurship.

And finally, a well-educated workforce with high salaries likewise increases tax revenues for government and decrease in government finances Baum, (2007). However, this differs from nation to nation and economy to economy. Having considered the positive contribution and impact of massification on education, economy, and government, it is reasonable to look into negative impacts. Giannakis, (2016) and Mohamedbhai, (2008) claims increase in enrolment in higher education among other things poses a real challenge on quality on teaching and learning, but more as well with student life (student accommodation, career services etc.). As a result, there has also been a shift and move towards private education for quality and better services. McGregor, (2014) further argues that this has changed even how education is viewed, from being a state burden and responsibility (public good) to global community greatly influenced by neo-liberal policies which emphasizes market (private good). Moreover, funding has proven to be another challenge because many countries especially in Africa where universities depend on state for financial aid. The decline in state funding consequently has encouraged increase in tuition fees. For example, the United State since the mid-1990s their level of tuition fees increased significantly Mpofu-Walsh, (2017). And a national shut-down of institutions of higher learning in South Africa where students took to the streets their frustrations of ever rising fees, is a result of state fund decline on HE. According to (Mohamedbhai, 2008).

*“Funds available to run higher education institutions in Africa are grossly inadequate, making them subsist on a ‘starvation diet’.”*

There are also two patterns discernible in higher education institutions globally. To start with, there seems to be efforts made by government to get more involved in higher education, and the unwillingness by government for financial assistance Alsaawi, (2014). Badat S. 2., (2009) describes this trend both involved managerially and financially showing less support. Consequently, according to many scholars this has being the point of contention between higher education and government and especially on the issue of autonomy of institutions of higher learning. This overall pattern has been manifested in different terms, for example: - administratively – globalization and state plan with institutions. According to Cloete, (2018) the prevailing neo-liberal ideology in the global space continues to pressure and demand universities to commercialize their operations, shifting more and more from a public (good) and becoming market based. Since 1980s, higher education in the majority parts of the world has been cleared into an arrangement of administrative and authoritative change which promotes business models and production. And higher institutions of learning around the world, incorporating those in South Africa, are subjected to different external forces which influences its function.

For example, the corporate modification of higher education, changes the administration frameworks of higher organizations and influences the usefulness of academic research Badat, (2016). The academic culture of collaborations between universities and colleges is compromised by requirements demanded, which are reflected in performance indicators placed. Selyutin, (2017) argues that this kind of behaviour and practices tends to shift the focus of higher institutions from teaching, learning and community involvement to profit making and market-based productivity.

## **2.6. Student Activism and Higher Education**

The Soweto-uprising of 1976 is often signalled as the epitome of student activism against the racist government of apartheid. It is of course true that the event of 1976 was an important event in the history of student struggle and one that should not be forgotten in many of the minds of South Africans. However, the 1976 event did not emerge from a political vacuum in higher education. Ginwright, (2002) traces the role of young people back in the 1920s through the South African Communist Party (CPSA) in numerous boycotts and protests. The Lovedale protests in 1946 which resulted in thousands and many of the youth been arrested, banned and charged with public violence is recorded to have been a turning point in student activism. Despite this pressure from the government and authorities, students still continued resisting the system of apartheid through

protests, boycotts and mobilizing other students to join the liberation struggle. It could be said that, students appealed to authorities through peaceful and democratic means which yielded no results and these extreme majors were a last resort.

There is also, however, a further point to be considered which is the formation of the ANCYL in 1944, which collectively gave the youth a voice in the political spectrum Heffernan, (2016). The ANCYL developed tactics and strategies in fighting the “evil and perfect policy of separation” and protests, boycotts this the ANCYL embraced as its strategies of defiance against the government. According to Ginwright, (2002) most of these significant events laid a strong foundation for Defiance campaign of 1952 and Congress Alliance in 1955. In addition, the Youth League’s manifesto is clearly depicted as follows.

*“Africans must struggle for development, progress and national liberation so as to occupy their rightful and honourable place among nations of the world.... African Youth must be united, consolidated, trained and disciplined because from their ranks future leaders will be recruited....”*

The above policy position of the Youth League not only clearly state the youth collective broad perspective of the liberation not confined within colonial borders but extending to the African continent. Shamyurira, (1979) adds to the fact that many of the youth increasingly linked their struggle with the day-to-day hardships of the oppressed, not only locally but even outside of their home borders. Evidence in support of this position, can be found “In 1949 when students expressed their solidarity with nurses at the Victoria Hospital, joining them in a 14-day sit-down strike” Reddy, (2008). This as a result informed the character of student activism in South African politics of higher education.

The 1950s and 60s was an important period not only for South Africa but for the African continent and holds a special place in the collective understanding of our history. It is according to scholars during this period that National Party extended the Bantu Education Act to higher education level Thompsell, (2018). The author rightly states that the Act not only transferred the control of mission run schools and universities to government but separated universities both racially and by ethnicity. This meant that only Xhosa’s could attend at the University of Fort Hare and other ethnic groups respectively according to their allocated homeland universities. Heffernan, (2016) points out that many students at Fort Hare University refused and confronted the idea of the university (Fort Hare) been reserved for the Xhosa people, which initially was founded (Fort Hare University) for all Africans across the continent in 1916. Consequently, this generated discussions among student

leaders for organizing as youth and many during this period joined the African National Congress (ANC).

An equally significant aspect of this period is the fact that it was during this time that the ANC and other political parties were banned from the political scene. And the ANC saw how important the role of the youth will be in carrying forward the aspirations of a democratic and free society and putting more pressure on the state and liberating the oppressed majority Cele & Koen, (2003) and Costello, (2005). Research on the tone and mood of 1960s Hurst, (2008); Hardy, (2016) shows that it was both inspiring and difficult time for leaders on the ground, after the Rivonia Trial which included prominent leaders been arrested such as Nelson Mandela, Robert Sobukwe, left many discouraged and tried. Inspiring because during the 60s many African countries got their independence among this were Nigeria, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire to just mention few. This as a result gave courage and inspired many of the student leaders in South Africa. It must be noted that the emergence of student activism in to its prominence in the 60s was marked by a series of protests, boy courts, sit-ins, student mobilization and formation of student's movements.

The formation of the South African Students Organization (SASO), with its prominent leader Steve Biko and black Consciousness movement, shifted drastically the psychology of black students. Biko (1973) asserts that "SASO emerged at the end of a decade in which there was a virtual lull in black resistance, and the Black Consciousness Movement led to a revival of political activity at a critical moment in South Africa's history" as mentioned above. And more important is the contribution of Black Consciousness movement and its inspiration to outstanding political action during the 70s, including the 1972 mass protests at universities, Pro-Frelimo campaigns of 1974 and the Soweto Uprising of 1976 Janson, (1990). The black Consciousness philosophy focused on boosting black people self-esteem and rightly having a sense of responsibility for their liberation. Biko strongly believed that freedom for blacks was first freedom from the psychological oppression, as many scholars put it that the powerful "weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed" Maimela, (1999). According to Nengwekhulu, (1976) in addition, points out to the Black Consciousness philosophy reinforcing the importance of black's value system, as being economic, political, and cultural values. The author further extrapolate to the fact of the awareness of this value system by the black people would allow blacks to reject any value systems alien or foreign to their value system. Evidence in support of this position, can be found in the statement made by Steve Biko (1973) which states that,

*“We are aware of the terrible role played by our education and religion in creating amongst us a false understanding of ourselves. We must therefore work out schemes not only to correct this, but further to be our own authorities rather than wait to be interpreted by others.”*

It was during this period that as a result of political activities in the country that were influenced heavily by student movements and Black Consciousness movements that some students were jailed with other protestors. It is publicly documented that 700 deaths occurred between 1976 and 1977 with hundreds of demonstrators imprisoned Schroeder, (2012). Due to state`s ruthless reaction to the protestors and students, the ‘uprising constrained a huge number of youths into exile. Reddy, (2008) maintains that positions within the MK and PAC`s APLA, initially known as Poqo increased consequently. Many of the student`s activists were sent into training and preparing camps in some parts of Africa and in Eastern Europe. They later returned as cadres of MK`s 16 Separation. Following the banning of SASO in 1977 students began to search and felt the need for another student movement formation.

The late 70s saw formation of various youth movement organizations very much like other youth political structures –such as Azanian Student Organization (AZAPO), South African National Student Congress (SANSCO). Consequently, many young people affiliated and identified to the above-mentioned youth organizations. According to Maimela, (1999) the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), successfully mobilized many young black men and women in secondary schools across South Africa.

The 1980s in student activism is a period marked with protests and quiet several challenges all over South Africa, from boycotts, strikes and sit-ins. This allowed student leaders from different student`s organizations to unite in the fight for liberation and gave these fights against apartheid a unique character. According to Hardy (2016) this sense of unity among the youth created a friendly atmosphere for any religious, political, social, and cultural movements to count themselves in for liberation struggle, comprising of faith-based groups, youth clubs, and sports organization, SANCO, NUSAS and COSAS. The author brings out the sacrifice many of the youth made during that time, with many endangering their lives for imprisonment, death, and torture. Youth of South Africa played a significant role and continue to contribute positively to South African politics.

It can be seen from the above analysis the important role student movements played in separating the hindrances of race between youthful individuals. Many of the white college students had their

perceptive tested accordingly. It is rightly said that some of the young white man started conscientiously challenging their parent's views and joined the struggle against apartheid. They were disregarded by their white networks and some of them experienced jail sentences. In 1991, after the unbanning of the ANC, the ANCYL was reignited to rally the youth after the vision of the ANC of transforming not only the education system but the socio-economic welfare as well. The African National Congress, enacted by law the right to access quality education by the passing of the South African Schools Act of 1996.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

This chapter has provided an exhaustive record of past data/literature, clearly distinguishing, where proper, applicable subjects, and reasonable models and perspectives in different issues of higher education, transformation, student politics and riots. Moreover, in this chapter I have investigated the writings and observations other scholars have made on student activism and higher education, protest, and the significant role student played in the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa. The perceptions, realities and evaluations by different scholars have been acknowledged. The next chapter provides a discussion of the theoretical framework on which this study is based.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The following chapter presents a detailed understanding of the theory of Social Justice, thus laying the foundation of the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter further provides a basic understanding of what is meant by theoretical framework in research in section 3.2. It proceeds to the definition of the concept Social Justice in section 3.3. Thereafter, it focuses on the principles of social Justice in section 3.4. with specific emphasis on Social Justice and fairness. Lastly section 3.5. looks at Positions of Social Justice (Conservative and Liberal understanding of social justice) and section 3.6. covers the theme of Social Justice and Higher education followed by a conclusion.

#### **3.2. Theoretical Framework**

According to Adom, (2018) theoretical framework is the foundational guide in understanding research conducted considering the theory selected. Furthermore, other scholars give and offer illustrative examples of the house and that a theoretical framework forms part of the foundation in which the research construct/builds his house. Theoretical framework involves multiple theories which broaden one's understanding of a selected topic and defining the concepts of the study. This brief understanding suggests a structure through which the reader can and will be able to navigate through the study. Grant and Osanloo (2014:13) also refer to theoretical framework as a guide that is based on a set of principles of a theory, which helps in giving structure to the examination of the matter at hand. According to Sinclair and Miller Adom, (2018) the concept of theoretical framework can also on the other hand be understood as a road map that guides the driver to a particular destination depending on where the driver wants to reach. Likewise, theoretical framework helps in guiding the researcher so that one will not diverge from the academic and scholarly road.



There are several benefits and advantages in research work. Firstly, theoretical framework gives order and structure in how the research should be understood Adom, (2018). The author further asserts that it helps in making sense of the theory contextually. Amanda and Rockinson-Szapkiw, (2013) points-out that “Foundations are important. Jesus tells the parable of the two builders. One builder builds his house on a solid foundation. When storms come, the house remains standing. The other builder builds his house on the sand. When storms come, the house falls. The truth conveyed here is that those who choose to lead a life in accordance to God’s word labour not in vain; whereas, those who choose a life of disobedience to God’s word labour in vain”. The author points out an important principle in the parable of Jesus above which is equally applicable in empirical research, that a theoretical framework provides a foundational premise for research. Scholars concur to the fact that a theoretical framework helps researchers in moulding their work as an academic and scholarly work in the field of research. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014) a theoretical framework gives a basic worldly accepted perspective or a focal point from which to help one’s reasoning of a particular issue at hand.

### **3.3. Defining Social Justice**

According to Chetty, (2016) the birth of social justice is to be rightly placed in the eighteenth century mainly in Britain and France. This in the later years started extending to other countries such as Germany and Sweden, which became important points of reference in relation to the concept of social justice. On the other hand, other scholars such as Reisch,, (2002) Defining social justice in a socially unjust world traces social justice from the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a concept which is to be understood as a response to social and economic circumstances of a particular group/nation directly affected by the inequalities. Socrates the father of the concept “social justice” through the writings (The Republic) of Plato (1974) questions and articulate issues of justice and fairness. The United Nations (undated: 1) states that “Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, or disability.”

The concept of social justice in social sciences viewed more as a tool to dismantling and breaking the promotion of economic variances (with the have and the have-not) and promoting equality and fairness. Social Justice is distributing appropriately social privileges and responsibilities according to the set-up standard procedures nationally accepted and set-up rules, laws, rights by the state or relevant stake holders without favouritism among citizens. Moreover, social justice is distributing power, resources, and benefits in society without favour of gender, race, ethnicity, religion and ability status. Reidy, (2004) envision the state of social justice as the absence of discrimination in society where everyone and all groups of people can participate, and they are included equally. There is in this state of society an equal share or distribution of resources among all people and all endure societal, economic and security benefits.

Underlying principles that are fundamental in these definitions includes fairness, equality, cooperation, and opportunities that are distributed fairly. According to Sue, (2009) this abovementioned principles form and are the foundation of a democratic society. However, Franklin, (2012) argues that despite the ideals of social justice in society, the economic, societal, security benefits among others, determine the status of an individual, group of people or race. Power relations and influence has more in determining how an individual, group of people and race are treated. This is clearly demonstrated by two examples the author suggests for consideration in understanding the concept presented at hand. Nonkululeko who completed her early education in the year 2002, was denied admission mainly because she was not accompanied by a parent. Nonkululeko's mother died from HIV/AIDS, and she now stays with her mother's friend. The school that denied her access only admitted her after the issue caught media attention.

On the other hand, Sentle in the Northwest Province (Freedom Park), with a similar experience is taking care of her six siblings and mother who is formally from Lesotho. Sentle's mother is also unfortunately suffering from HIV/AIDS in its last phase. Because of this unfortunate circumstances Sentle was forced to stop schooling. According to Littenberg-Tobias, (2015) despite the right to basic education in the constitution both Sentle and Nonkululeko access to education was impeded. In Nonkululeko's case it was more of an administrative matter and protocols and Sentle's was unfortunate forced circumstances. These two cases are just a true reflection and highlight of the prevailing normality in that individuals continue to be excluded from the societal benefits despite law and policy.

According to Singh M., (2011) investigation of the concept of social justice there is a difference, from one hand, to define the hypothetical and normative measures of social equity as a major aspect

imagining a just and fair society. And on the other hand, the messier commitment with lessening winning social treacheries. It is inconsequentially consistent with attest that real battle for social equity require some blend and parity of the two. Surely, useful commitment proposed to achieve social change expect one to translate hypothetical and normative assertions about social equity into practical techniques and solutions which are applicable and suitable for specific settings of social fairness. Scholars suggests a more meaningful and practical social justice practices and policies translating into real and practical solutions.

### **3.4. Social Justice as Fairness**

(Gundogan, 2009) defines justice as the essence of institutions and practices, and the ideas of justice are better known as limiting principal authorities their power, especially institutions which describe and explain to societies their rights, liabilities, responsibilities, and powers. Be that as it may be, Rawls limits himself to the feeling of justice in connection with how it's used. Rather his emphasis is on the simple concept of justice, which require harmony between the two conflicting contemplations. According to Gundogan, (2009) Rawls understanding of fairness in this instance refers to "right dealing between persons who are cooperating with or competing against one another". The real question with fairness has to do with the two parties or persons who jointly agree whether something is fair or not. They both (two parties involved) define and decide what is reasonable and fair. This is acceptably just and fair for both, since nobody gets advantage of the other. Rationality through proper engagement between them both is of the greatest Importance for a mutual understanding and agreement. In addition, this process is only possible with the willingness of the parties and voluntary participation.

Many Scholars take a position and among many Rawls insists that the concept of justice and fairness are one and the same thing and practical. Cooke, (2014) argues differently that there is a clear difference between justice and fairness, and this goes further than its ideas as articulated. The author goes further to say the difference between both concepts are far beyond the ideas around these concepts. According to Reidy, (2004) the concept of justice as fairness hangs on two principal ideas, which on one hand are reasons in hand and the other factors that can be determinant. In other words, wherever inequality, injustice, violation of human rights and poverty for example is found is because of factors in human's control (though justice as fairness lenses). Therefore, this

understanding then necessitates one to clearly identify those controllable factors which in many cases are the very results there is inequality and unfair distribution of wealth and income.

In a reasonable practice, parties recognize a binding agreement (obligatory) against each other and in relating to this obligatory ideal in accordance with the practice. One whose freedom is confined considering agreement of practice he entered has directly over the other people who profit by his accommodation to the limitation. It is at the reasonable practice (wilfully embrace) from that each individual advantage. The rights and obligations here are not as a forced circumstance but acknowledges the past activities deliberately attempted, of which parties engaged and wilfully embraced the benefit.

According to some scholars, political commitment does not translate to a voluntary act as it is thought in the implicit understanding of the hypothesis. As mentioned above with the mutual and voluntary agreement might be superseded though in the last mentioned, one cannot get away from the commitment simply because compliance is required.

### **3.5. Positions on Social Justice**

#### **3.5.1. Conservatism and Social Justice**

Thyer, (2010) defines conservatism as a political rationality which bases its ideals on a conventional way of state of things and stability. This is achieved through or by ensuring establishment of institutions (which work and promotes its ideals) and leaning towards slow and steady advancement to sudden change. For example, rationally lowering taxes, and the limiting government regulations with regards to investing and business, strong national security (military), and lastly individual obligations regarding individual needs. This definition allows no space for misconceptions and prejudice, homophobia, holding to customs not embracing a global view of things, and or dictator rule. But includes all ideals of freedom, rule of law, independence, and justice etc. This notion or position of conservatism is worldly known to exalt the rights and centred more on the individual rather than the good of group or community.

According to Tjabane, (2010) conservative position on social justice is more towards supporting the capitalist understanding of economy and social welfare. Those on this position advocates for state that is governed, or institutions of state ruled by able people according to merit, as opposed to the inherently qualified notion of societal benefits. Starr and Rizvi, (2013) points-out the fact that in most cases in this state of affairs others tend to succeed by taking advantage of others. It is solely the responsibility of an individual to work within the predominant socio-economic system and in this regard an individual's efforts or actions have absolute bearing on them failing or succeeding. In other words, conservatives would support initiatives and social welfare programs that are for individuals who are in their position cannot and not able to support themselves as opposed to those that are able Thyer, (2010). Korgen, (2010) argues that conservatives understanding of social justice offers and makes justice accessible and readily available for everyone; only depends on the individuals. The authors go further linking this concept to Malcolm Knowles's humanist approach which promotes logical thinking, responsibility and accountability for self-improvement.

Those advocating for this concept of social justice view inequality as a serious challenge caused mainly by not everyone having to play their appointed role and contributing positively to society (more towards individual responsibility and efforts). However, conservatives have faced attacks and many times portrayed as lacking human sympathy and socio-cultural relevance but rather cold Thyer, (2005). Thyer, (2010) maintains that Conservatives will always support policies and ideas that lessen the intervention/interference of the state and encourage individuals to determine their own destiny, even if it means trampling upon the rights of others. In other words, in a conservatism mind-set, it is morally just for society to remain unequal with regards to wealth, income and resources mainly because some people work harder than others. According to Tjbane, (2013) the "Conservative Party in Britain and the Republican Party in the USA espouse some of the elements of the first mentioned tradition".

In addition, the author points out the fact that the economic model and policy that supports this traditional thinking is the laissez faire model of economy as partially mentioned above. This position dates back in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century of the enlightenment period, with among its advocates OBE, (2016) and McKinnon, (1992) whose conviction was that the legislature ought to pursue a freer enterprise monetary strategy. Clearly as articulated above these ideals and position the conservative tradition holds, will indeed not be likable to a socialist and Marxist-Leninist

scholar. This is because this position exalts the good of an individual than the common good of a group or community, and don't ascribe to a fair distribution of socio-economic resources.

### **3.5.2. Liberalism and Social Justice**

Scholars rightly claim and asserts the fact that the theory of social justice find more of its fundamental roots in traditions of liberalism. There are clearly identifiable similarities between the two political and philosophical beliefs, especially, such as justice as fairness and that in a society all must succeed despite of their race, religion, occupation, and background (McLaughlin, 2006). And all human beings are qualified to equal pride and dignity, despite their background, occupation, and circumstances. Liberal traditions as rightly cited by Tjabane, (2013) promote and advocate for equal rights and principles of democracy where everyone in society can be afforded equal opportunities and rights. In addition, liberals support that all individuals must have equality with regards to opportunities whilst socialist lean more in equally distributing the wealth. At the same time, liberals also believe that liberty has limitations so not to infringe in individual liberty and freedom.

Both sides view and acknowledge that social justice should be pursued within the existing capitalist model of economy. However, liberals are not of the same mind with regards to limiting the intervention of state in regulating economic matters as opposed to conservative tradition. In fact, liberals support the idea of the state as a fundamental role player in advancing the interest of the community as a whole and regulating the economy for the benefit of the majority. Equally the same Democratic Party in America identifies itself with some principles and policies of liberalism and the Labour Party in Britain. Liberals as they are known advocate for social democracy where the ideas of democracy are promoted, with the distribution of resources, opportunities, rights to those who are disadvantaged and the government being the role player. The foundational roots of liberal customs of social equity can be clearly traced back in the seventeen century scholars and among many ideas of enlightenment. Among others Cilliers, (1981) is one scholar who is the father of liberal convention. Without doubt Lock's impact is still felt today, especially the concept of social equity as freedom and equality. According to many scholars Locke's ideas of natural liberty and liberty in society is regarded the most advanced of ideas currently. In his (Locke) theory of liberal tradition Locke develops the idea of natural law and natural moral rights. In this he advocates that naturally man is born entitled to rights, rights to life, dignity, health, freedom, and

God have given these rights to everyone. These rights as commonly known as individual rights and as enshrined in the Bill of Rights are according to Locke God given rights. In addition, these individual rights have clear linkages to the concept of social justice, especially with regards to the liberal tradition.

John Locke is also well-known for his promotion of rationality instead of force. He advocates for reason in dealing with whether political, social, or economic and free engagement of issues. This he believes advances and promotes principles for human interests and good in relation to social justice as it clearly captures human rights. Certainly, Emmanuel Kant and his philosophy of reason/judgement which was greatly influenced by Locke's philosophy makes them contemporaries with regards to liberal ideology. Kant's role in the enlightenment age was very significant and continues to shape the thinking even today. According to Tjabane M., (2010) as observed by a commentator says...

*“Kant wrote his social and political philosophy to champion the Enlightenment in general and the idea of freedom in particular. His work came within both the natural law and the social contract traditions. Kant held that every rational being had both an innate right to freedom and a duty to enter a civil condition governed by a social contract to realize and preserve that freedom Uzgalis, (2007:1).”*

The statement above embodies Kant's position of social justice as clearly articulated in his theory of freedom and equity. Kant believes that rationality is the arbiter of truth to all judgements, including even all the challenges facing mankind (all possible by reason). After the impactful influence of these two philosophers Locke and Kant in the seventeen hundred, the 20<sup>th</sup> century welcomed a socialist scientist, John Rawls. Rawls has written intensely about social justice and more on social justice as fairness. Kant 's account of social justice is embodied in his theory of freedom and equality. Equally important is Kant 's account of rationality and theory of knowledge which advances the notion that, through reason, mankind can find truth and just solutions to problems caused by dogmatism and authoritarianism Uzgalis, (2007:20). While Locke and Kant may be regarded as the embodiment of the liberal tradition of social justice, the 20th century ushered in yet another liberal social scientist and philosopher who equally championed freedom and equality with almost similar tones to theirs, as found in the ideals of John Rawls (1921-2002).

However, critics including communitarians for instance share a view that liberal claims are self-centred. And that these claims nullify the importance of family, community relations and ties which the individual is part of (Reisch, *Defining social justice in a socially unjust world.*, 2002). According to McLaughlin, (2006) liberalism is exalting the individualistic ideal and self-interest to the point of lessening humans to mere machines. The author accuses liberalism of not affording humans their dignity and respect of being humans. Feminist on the other hand have accused liberalism of leaning much towards favouring and allowing the male figure to take a dominating role. It argues that the ideology of liberalism is androcentric and inherently sexist Crosthwaite, (1987). Nussbaum, (2000) argues contrary to feminist view of liberal positions that it's not as individualistic as portrayed. She strongly believes that the look into social justice must be centred not on one's community, gender, class, or family but more on the person to check how they manage in respect to the fair distribution of goods or abilities. The author further contends for instance of woman financial independence to free them from harsh types of reliance. This understanding of liberalism investigates every individual as of deserving of recognition, aside from family, network of culture they have a place with. The quest of a specific group for robbing the individual of that worthiness ought not to be a focal point of political consideration, but instead consideration ought to be facilitated towards the prosperity of the individual Nussbaum, (2000). The individual is an end, not an unfortunate obligation.

Liberalism that neglects to separate between individuals inside a culture, a network or a family adds to the maltreatment/mistreatment of woman and children by failing to appreciate the struggles of woman such as hunger, marital rape, aggressive behaviour at home, and unequal access to educational pursuit.

### **3.6. Social Justice and Higher Education**

In post-apartheid South Africa, it is generally as of late and new that the concept “social justice” has entered the vocabulary of advanced education, which in most cases will be motioned with the term transformation. Case, (2017) points out that the term “transformation” and its use since post 1994 acknowledges injustices done under the system of apartheid, which therefore need to change. It can also be said that with more attention, research, policy deliberations on social justice issues even in areas of higher education, it shows the failure of government in addressing inherited



injustices of the past. In addition, this shows the sensitivity and urgency of addressing issues surrounding social justice by all stakeholders involved.

Gordon S. E.-S., (2017) asserts the vital importance of higher education in issues of social justice, because of the constant demand of educational relevance and speaking to issues of diversity. The growing need in societies for better life and proper livelihood, has as a result challenged university to adapt their research, teaching, and policies to the growing societal need. In fact, the overall population and those enrolled in universities anticipates universities to offer a relevant and diverse education. This anticipation and desire among students have fully matured with constant and continuing protests and social movements in universities across the world. It is vital therefore, for universities to embrace legislative and policy positions which address power and disparity issues.

It is important to note however, that South African policy framework, from the early nineteen hundred, has vowed in favour of making education accessible in advancing social justice agenda Wilson-Strydom, (2011). Evidence in support of this position, can be found in significant documents namely, the National Plan for Education and Education White Paper 3 which clearly articulated a framework for higher education transformation (Ministry of Education 2001; Ministry of Education 2007). Arnes, (2015) acknowledges positive results with respect to implementing this legislative and policy positions in higher education. For instance, with accessing higher education a growth in number of Africans enrolled in 1993 to 2007 has being noted of 23% and the number increasingly growing in years which followed. According to Case, (2017) these statistics as positive as they may be, do not reflect the reality of the National participation which continues to be the same and accomplishment in advance education stay skewed by race.

These challenges many scholars concur to the fact that, they represent and are multitudes of social injustices with regards to student socio economic contexts. An equally significant aspect of the debate around the concept of social justice and higher education is the driver, institution, vehicle to administer social change. There are various diverse standpoints which are convincingly contending that the university can't be the institution to administer social change Case, (2017).

Wilson, (1995) states that "the debate on the mission and proper role of the African universities continues unabated. The validity of the universal missions of teaching, research and public service remains unquestioned. But in the words of James A. Perkins: '[Teaching], research, and public service-in what proportions? The advancement or application of knowledge-in what measure?' (p. 179)". As Professor and activist Robin Kelly puts it when commenting about protest and social movements in the US universities says:

*... "as institutions they will never be engines of social transformation. Such a task is ultimately the work of political education and activism. It takes place outside the university."*

Robin Kelly`s understanding according to the statement mentioned above is of the idea that the area for social change and transformation, is political regardless of whether democratic and nature of political arrangement. This is supported by the fact that the university is not the domain for policy making and does not offer health care, clearly this is an area for government and the state to administer. What then is the role of universities and higher education within the social justice agenda as clearly embraced in policy for higher education?

According to Gordon S. E.-S., (2017) in answering this question he points out that the university`s role is to embrace practices that advance social justice, which assists students analytically to make sense of issues of socio-political diversity in teaching, research, administration, and social engagement as these are the internal factors for educational practice. Furthermore, Sanders, (2017) mentions core practical examples of social justice practices the university can and should embrace in support for societal equity. Firstly, the author points out the vital role of campus administration with regards to social justice, by developing a formal university diversity statement. According to Beck U., (2018) university diversity statement reflects and promotes values of equity, justice, inclusion, and diversity in the university. In developing a formal university diversity statement, the institution is raising awareness and creating an atmosphere of the culture of the university. These principles and values of inclusion, equity, justice, and diversity is promoted in hiring and all the dealings of the institution.

Secondly, having difficult dialogues and critical conversations across all departments with the intention of implementing and incorporating frustrations of students and opinions on campus life. And lastly, Sanders also believes that incorporating social justice issues into to the classroom is another way of promoting equity with students learning about diversity and many other practices.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

In conclusion the concept of social justice is part of the educational lexicon of higher education. And surely, in the context of South Africa`s higher education post-apartheid, though incorporated into policy and legislation democratic government has failed in administering social justice in HE. However, social equity has been integrated into policy and strategies, more especially in areas of access, and platforms which vehemently give emphasis growth in the economy, competition, development of staff more than social goals involving rights-based claims for justice and fairness. This has resulted into many interpretations of social justice which is hypothetical and normative within teaching and learning environments.

## **Chapter 4**

### **4. Research Methodology**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

According to Kothari (2004) research methodology refers to an approach which the researcher chooses in examination of the research problem at hand. The author suggests that this can also be understood as how the study is going to be conducted. In addition, Rajasekar et al (2006) states that research methodology is to be defined as a clearly outlined procedures on how the research is to be undertaken in predicting, expounding, and describing the phenomena. Scholars emphasize the importance of the logic behind the methods chosen over other methods, which makes the most part of research methodology. The methodological procedures applied in the study are discussed below which comprises; research design, sampling procedures, research instrument, data analysis and validity as well as the ethical consideration observed.

#### **4.2. Qualitative Research**

This research made use of the qualitative approach for to study. Qualitative approach is to be understood as a method that seeks to explain the social world: addressing questions of how, why and what Hancock at all, (2009). Any research question that seeks to understand the experience of people in a particular context whether it is maybe war or conflict experiences and how they played a part in that role, or any real-life issues requires a qualitative method in understanding the phenomena. Hancock et. al (2009) further explains that qualitative research is more useful in giving meaning to the social world, which aids people in appreciating their surroundings and how things ought to be. Scholars in social sciences use this method to understand behavior of people and why people behave the way they do, perceptions people hold, beliefs and attitudes. (Babatunde, 2015) refers to qualitative research as a preparatory rough sketch inquiry which is clearly outlined for the search of knowledge and understanding. Qualitative research in its nature seeks to venture into the social world for answers and explanations with the topic in hand Given, (2008). In much cases

qualitative research is or involves people and their interactions with the physical world e.g. factors influencing woman to venture into business, experiences of Muslim woman in the working place etc. In seeking to understand and answer these questions a qualitative approach provides in-depth understanding of the question at hand. Given, (2008) argues that qualitative research has in the past faced many critics as opposed to quantitative approach yet through time researchers have sought to use both methods (mixed methods).

The importance and relevance of qualitative methods lies in its method of giving meaning to the existing world and its explorative nature in routines, feelings, and people behaviours Flick, (2013). In addition, Flick, (2013) maintains the fact that qualitative research distinguishes itself from quantitative research by its pluralization of life world. This pluralization is influenced by the changing and growing world, patterns and changing way of living. In this case, the researcher concentrated on the experiences from the participants lived perspectives. Qualitative research can be understood as a tree that has many branches with many leaves, which signify many approaches and its flexibility to venture to other areas in a quest for collection of data Adam, (2018). This approach allowed the researcher to understand the DUT experiences of the movement of the #FeesMustFall and its impact in student politics.

#### **4.3. Research Design**

Exploratory approach of research in essence explores the subject investigated. This approach of research allows the researcher to clarify concepts and build hypotheses. Stebbins, (1997) refers to exploratory research as one that stands-out from other method as prearranged, purposive, and efficient method of research in social sciences. This method is useful in many areas and mostly employed by artists, stand- comics, social scientist. Exploratory studies are more of a complex approach in which method yields more results or are more fruitful Costello, (2005). This approach is more useful in finding out what has transpired, clarifying concepts, and asking questions to answer and solve a problem. Therefore, the study used explorative approach in seeking to make sense of the #FeesMustFall movement and its influence in student politics.

#### **4.4. Gaining Entry and Reason for Selection**

The Durban University of Technology (Steve Biko Campus) was selected mainly for the colonial history it bears. The Durban University of Technology as mentioned above has a raw and rich history of colonization and it has in the past being home for controversies and media attention. The formal procedures of obtaining access in the Campus and an agreement by participants to participate in the study was followed by informing all participants gate keepers, and all the participants on what, how, when the researcher shall collect data needed for the study based on participants' agreement. This means that the researcher sought permission from the DUT Steve Biko Campus premises before conducting interviews with participants involved. The researcher in his interaction with the DUT university always identified himself as a registered student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Howard College.

#### **4.5. Non-probability Sampling Methods**

The researcher carefully selected the non-probability sampling method, which in other cases is referred to as a judgment sampling. The selection of this method was motivated by the fact that participants should be selected based on their availability, willingness to be part of the study, ability to communicate, and their knowledge of the #FMM movement as it relates to the Steve Biko Campus (DUT) experiences. Moreover, the selection of this method was also to make sure that the data collected will give a more clearly detailed narrative and will not be subjective of the subject investigated. The researcher selected the Durban University of Technology (DUT) (Steve Biko Campus) which is based in Musgrave, Berea, KwaZulu-Natal. The Steve Biko Campus (DUT) was named after the notorious freedom fighter Steve Bantu Biko in honouring his legacy. The population for this research included among others SRC leadership members, final year students, staff members and lecturers which in total was fifteen participants. The study avoided gender biases by including both male and female respondents to take part in the study. The study required the researcher to select the participants to be selected purposefully by judgment of how knowledgeable they in the subject are investigated.

Sampling is simply understood as a manner of gathering data through a selected group, organization, objects, items from which samples are taken, individual persons which will be supposed to be the true representation of the outcome of the study Latham, (2007). Latham, (2007) indicates that its use in various disciplines does not distort its meaning and how this method is understood. Mugo, (2002) refers to sampling as a study of a sect of a population to gain information of the whole. In this study the participants were carefully selected from the DUT Steve Biko Campus in KwaZulu-Natal province in Durban. The collection of data in this manner has proved to be reasonable and practical because the population of DUT Steve Biko Campus is vast and quite large. The sampling method which employed the purposive sampling complemented the study as an exploratory study.

The main aim of purposive sampling is to seek part of a selected population for research study according to a particular character (K., 2003). Other scholars define purposive sampling as one of the non- probability samplings whereby a place of investigation is chosen for assessment of the study at hand. The choice of a purposive sampling technique is frequently advantageous and more applicable with a knowledgeable insight of the site studied.

#### **4.6. Preparing respondents for data collection**

With the research objective in mind, the research questions concentrated on investigating the influence of the #FMF movement in student politics in the DUT Steve Biko Campus. The research questions are as follows:

- 4.6.1.** What was the influence of the #FMF movement on DUT Steve Biko Campus student politics?
- 4.6.2.** How did the university management respond to the #FMF protest movement at DUT Steve Biko Campus?

The above-mentioned research questions were suitably formulated/designed into a questionnaire. As part of the tools for research, this questionnaire consisted of ten interview questions administered and audio recorded by the researcher during the interviews. The way the questions

for the interviews were formulated/designed, they covered the position or sub-unit, official job title, political allegiance, and the overall understanding of the #FMF movement. Furthermore, as mentioned above the respondents understood and signed the consent forms which guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. And as for the proper procedures to be followed the declarations were read and signed before the interviews with the participants in the study. The duration of the data collection took two weeks for all recorded interviews.

#### **4.7. Informed Consent**

The researcher ensured that the participants were well grounded on what the study sought to reach and how that would be accomplished. This enables those participating in the study to make the choice of being part of the study, aware of all the details involved. The researcher worked well with all participants in obtaining the relevant data for the success of the study. A consent form was granted to all participants to sign before data was collected. *See annexure 4.7*

#### **4.8. Confidentiality and Anonymity**

The confidentiality of the participants is one significant aspect in the study, and this was done by protecting information provided. Anonymity meant that participants remained anonymous throughout the study. They did not reveal their personal details. Participants were informed beforehand that it was within their right to withdraw anytime should they feel so or decline to answer questions if they do not feel comfortable to answer.



## **4.9. Data Collection**

According to Mbokazi, (2015) he defines research instrument as a “tool used to collect data and designed to measure knowledge, attitude and skills”. The researcher adopted a qualitative research design to collect empirical evidence. The focus is to collect data through face-to-face interviews only. The data was collected as mentioned above at the DUT Steve Biko Campus and it included SRC members, students, management, and staff. It further included women as participants to avoid biases as far as gender representation is concerned. The number of participants interviewed were fourteen participants. The questionnaires were designed in a way to examine and investigate the topic at hand. The participant’s thoughts, feelings and actions were captured as the true and relevant data regarding the study at hand. Marshall C. a., (2006) notes that the involvement of the participants in the study conducted was voluntary. The questions were designed to have a clear understanding of the issues around #FMF.

## **4.10. In-depth Interviews**

“Interviews are ubiquitous in everyday life. We have all been interviewed, at school, at university, for jobs, in a medical setting, and seen or read interviews with others” Jamshed S., (2014). According to (Alsaawi, 2014) there are different types of interviews, and the choice of particular type is informed and depends mainly on the intention of the study and aim, ranging from structured interviews, unstructured, Semi- structured and focus group interviews. The process of interviewing is also understood as interrogating and investigating a person for information, experiences and beliefs on a given research focus which many scholars argue it requires certain skills and techniques.

The interviews were conducted in English most of the time, except in few instances where participants preferred to speak in isiZulu. (Kanda, 2017) emphasizes the importance of knowing other people’s culture and how language is a powerful tool in doing so. The informal setting of the interviews as planned, was very significant and open-ended questions to allow participant’s to freely express themselves for more and relevant information. The researcher’s mobile phone was utilized for recording interviews with participant’s consent during the interviews. Each interview

lasted for 15 to 30 minutes in duration. It should be noted as well how restricting in-depth interviews can be as many scholars alludes. It is expected especially when conducting qualitative research, that it's not always the case where participants are able to clearly state their experience while others neglect to refer to significant things pertaining the study. The researcher had to probe.

#### **4.11.Data Analysis**

Flick, (2013) points-out that data analysis lies at the heart of qualitative study. The author describes qualitative data analysis as bringing order and understanding to all the data collected (recorded, documenting a natural phenomenon and experiences. Thorne, (2008) clearly posit that the analysing of the data is the most taxing, difficult, time consuming and most exciting part of research process at the same time. The researcher employed qualitative content analysis. After data was collected through recorded interviews, it was transcribed and organized. This was organized into emerging themes from the interviews conducted. Interviews were examined with the background in mind of the theoretical framework, and secondary data and similar studies related to the study at hand. As mentioned above through the analysis of the data collected participants were given code names and the information arranged into various themes. Data analysis in qualitative study is of great significance because through this process the information gathered can be rearranged and simplified, while at the same time creating useful results to serve in different purposes. Moreover, content investigation allows the researcher to analyse the information in the manner that helps in achieving the research goals. Takayama, (2008), notes that in analysing data, human mistakes can be profoundly engaged with the content of investigations, since there is always danger with researcher's manipulating the data. This was avoided at all costs in this research.

#### **4.12.Ethical Considerations**

“Ethics pertain to doing well and avoiding harm. Harm can be prevented or reduced through the application of appropriate ethical principles. Thus, the protection of human subjects or participants in any research study is imperative. Violation of human rights in the name of scientific research has been among the darkest events in history” Takayama, (2008). As per requirements of any higher institution of higher learning the ethical clearance and the approval from the university is of great importance before conducting any field work. And it is the responsibility of Humanities and Social Science Ethics Committee (as this study pertains to) that gives ethical clearance certificate. The application must include the following: questionnaires or interviews schedule, declaration, informed consent form, title of the project, location of the study and research approach and methods. Moreover, the title of the study should be plain and of no offense. And the study should contribute to the body of knowledge thus the reasons for research also should be academic. The above procedures were followed, and the ethical clearance was granted, and an ethical certificate was issued for the period applicable to this study by the University of KwaZulu Natal.

#### **4.13.Research Limitations**

As it is custom in qualitative and quantitative research, this study had some limitations. The analysis of the influence of the #FeesMustFall in student politics in DUT, may have been impacted by elements which are not necessarily in the study. In some instances, participants have and may not always refuse to speak against their organization. The study`s sample is limited to small size- 15 participants. A larger and big size of the sample would likely enhance the quality of the exploration. The nature of the study (qualitative) isn`t permitting the estimation of the examined issues. A larger sample in future may be required to ensure generalization of the study findings.



## **Chapter Five**

### **5. Findings and Analysis**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter unpacks the research findings, presentation, and analysis of the study. The chapter discusses themes that emerged from data analysis. In presenting the findings, the demographic characteristics of participants are presented. Patterns and themes that emerged are discussed in relation to research questions. The findings from data analysis are organized to correspond with research questions. The data collected and analysed resulted in the emergence of the following themes that were presented with their sub-themes:

- i. How the #FeesMustFall protest movement is understood and explained.
- ii. The causes of the #FeesMustFall protest movement
- iii. The roles of SRC during the #FeesMustFall protest and the roles SRC play in addressing student`s challenges
- iv. Importance of student`s politics in campus
- v. Response of university management to the #FeesMustFall protest movement
- vi. Challenges that students are facing on campus in relation to the #FMF movement quest, impact of challenges on student politics and life.
- vii. Challenges of students and the roles both the SRC and university management has to play in addressing students` challenges

#### **5.2. OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION**

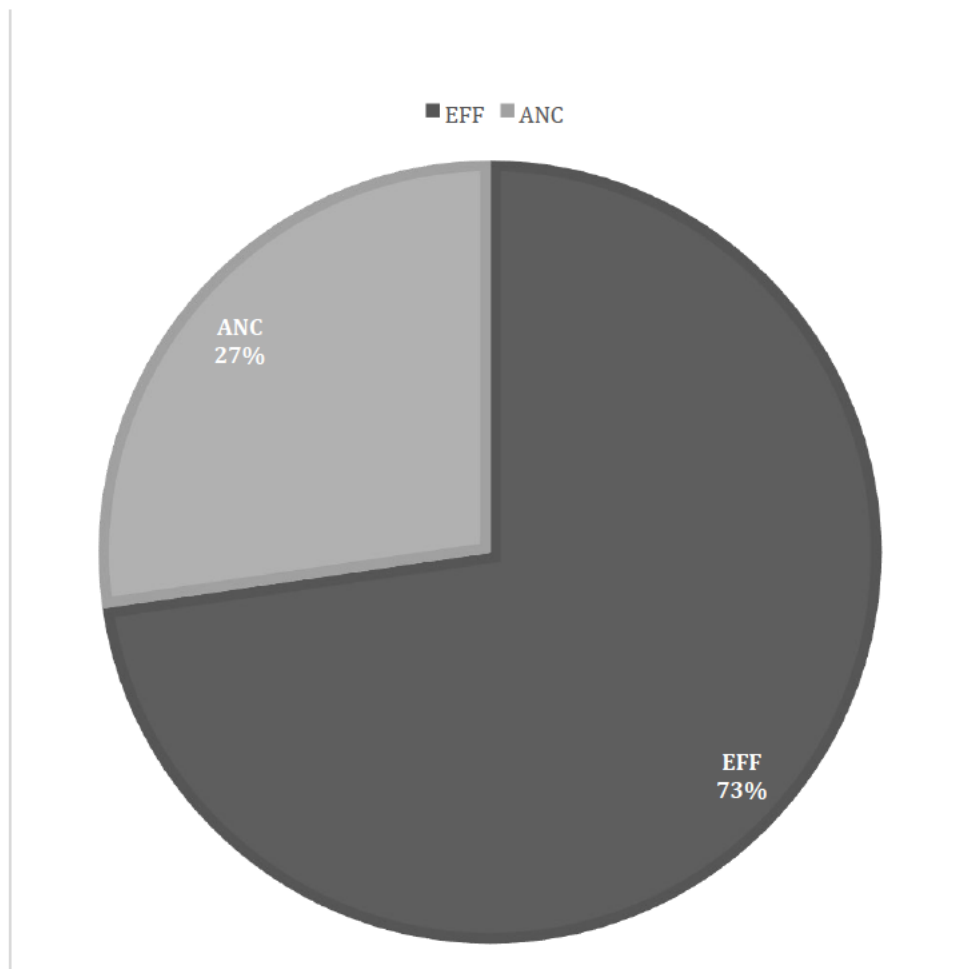
##### **5.2.1. Demographic Profile of Participants**

This section presents the participants` demographic profiles which include their age bracket, gender, work history and political affiliation. Fourteen participants participated in the study and were physically registered per site at Durban University of Technology (DUT). The participants

were invited following a purposive sampling approach, using word-of-mouth and student networks, to ensure ‘maximum variation’ across disciplines. Although initially, the study earmarked twenty participants for its sample, but due to saturation of data, the data collection process culminated with the sample of twelve participants. The participants comprised staff of DUT within the management as well as students at DUT. The justification for the small size participant is alluded to samples in qualitative research tend to be small to support the depth of case-oriented analysis by virtue of their capacity to provide richly textured information relevant to the phenomenon under investigation and ‘information-rich’ cases (Creswell, 2013); (Morse J., 2000).

As argued by (Morse, 2000) that the more useable qualitative data is collected from each person and usually fewer participants are needed. In this regard, data was gathered by interviews and all the interviews occurred at DUT campus at agreed designated places within the campus e.g., offices, park amongst others. The twelve participants were given pseudo names namely, S1-S14 (S stands for student/Staff) to protect their identity and for anonymity purposes. The selection criteria were that participants had to be current students who were willing to voluntarily share their experiences. The demographic data included almost all the participants were within the age brackets of 24-35 respectively except two staff members who were within the age bracket of 61- 65 and one studying towards her PhD. Most of the participants were male (9) and 5 females. There is no fair representation of both males and females as there were 9 males and 5 females that participated in my study. This was based on availability of participants and males were keen to participate in this study. Although the females I approached to participate in the study were sceptical at first, they later agreed. *Figure 1* provides gender breakdown by percentage.

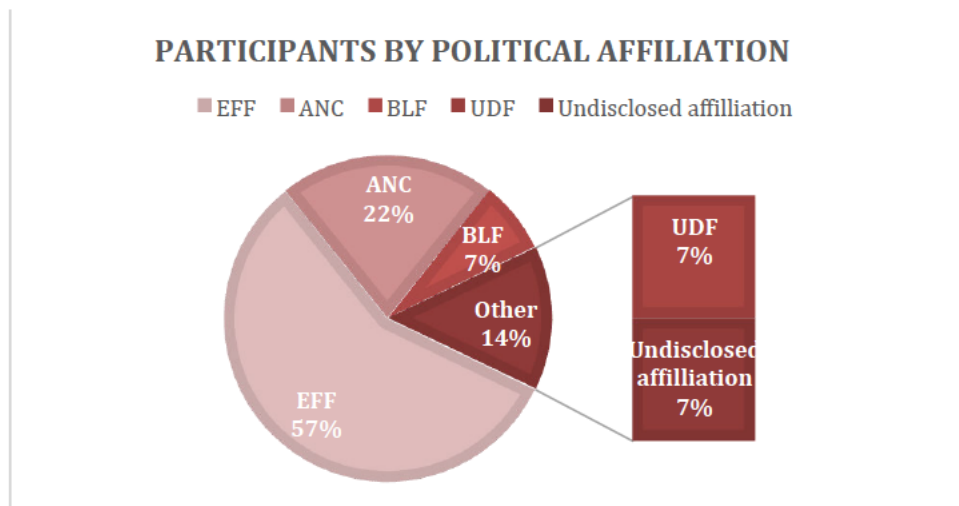
*Figure 1: Participants by gender*



### 5.2.2. Political Biography of participants

The participants for the study comprised six Student Representative Council (SRC) leadership members, four final year students and two staff members. Out of the 12 participants, 6 (3%) are involved in students' politics. Out of the five SRC Members, students have party affiliation with the EFF and the ANC. The rationale for this question was to gauge the political history of participants, political party, or alliance they belong to, position of influence e.g., executive member and how long they have been serving in such a capacity. Based on participant's profiles, it would be easier to understand the rationale why the participants joined the protest and the roles they played during the #FeesMustFall movement. Figure 1 shows political party affiliations of respondents.

*Figure 2: Participants by political party affiliation*



Data indicates that the participants have been involved in politics since their entry into university. A participant (S6) mentioned that he has been involved in politics since he became a student at DUT in 2012. This occurred when he was a member of the ANC but in his third year, he defected to the EFF in 2015, thereafter in 2017 he became the Chair but now adviser of SRC. Another (S5) stated that he joined politics in 2014 as convener for EFF and currently the Secretary. Another student has been involved in politics since 2015. S4 owes allegiance to UDF and has been involved in politics for seven years and the regional secretary for Durban Region central comprised DUT, UKZN, Mangosuthu and TVET colleges of Mlangeni/eThekweni. In addition, S7 a DUT staff is in the HIV/AIDS programme as coordinator for DUT campuses, a role she started in January 2019, and in other capacities serving in the student support services unit since 2011. S7 is not affiliated to any political party but rather, *'a free for all'* and have her own political affiliation but chose not to disclose.

### 5.2.3. Motivation for Participants joining politics

Findings indicates that most of the participants were and have been involved in student politics since their first year except a female student (S4) who was not interested in politics. On the contrary S4 indicated that she was not involved or interested in student politics because of immature way in her view in which student representatives address matters of student concern. S4 also cited an instance whereby students from the ANC party carried a coffin around the university (DUT) and singing. She alluded her lack of interest in politics to political immaturity of students in politics. *'I feel as this generation we don't know what politics is because it is not handled in a civil way'* (S4).



S4 alluded her lack of interest in politics to her view of corruption, *'I don't want to associate myself with it...it is more of election and fighting... (S4).*

### **5.3. THEMATIC PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.3.1. Views on Understanding the #fees must fall movement (what is it about and why the #feesmustfall movement)**

This theme emanates from the responses provided by participants regarding their general views and perspectives on the fees must fall movement. The pertinence of this theme is justified by the overlapping responses of the participants across the topic questions in the interview guide. Participants were asked their understanding of fees must fall movement. In this study, participants had indicated the various reasons for fees must fall movement. From participants perspectives, findings indicate that the fees must fall entails addressing issues such as increment in school fees, de-colonization of the curriculum, government fulfilment of promise of 1994 free education and addressing institutional racism. The following sub- themes were subsequently generated from the participants views on what the fees must fall movement is about. Each sub-theme namely increments in school fees, de-colonization of the curriculum, government fulfilment of promise of 1994 free education and addressing institutional racism are discussed in the next section.

##### *i. What is the #FeesMustFall Movement?*

##### **5.3.1.a. Subtheme 1: Increment in University Fees**

In this study, participants had indicated that fees must fall movement was a reaction to increment in school fees. The Fees movement is a means of communicating with stakeholders directly and indirectly (S8). S4 viewed *'fee must fall' movement as a reaction to fees increment which excluded black students because they cannot afford it'*. He alluded this to education and access based on color, which implies that black students cannot afford the increment because of their poor background. He adds that students must be accommodated according to intellectual capacity, ability and argued that *'when students are not accommodated due to increment in fees, it defeats the purpose of education'*.

The views expressed above by research participants suggests that the movement of fees must fall was not only an organized voice for students, but that the movement was a reaction to the fee increment by universities. S4 indicated that “fees increment by universities is a means of excluding black majority from higher institutions of learning on the bases of finance not merits”. The student viewed the movement of the fees must fall as a political effort by the students to fighting the underlying motives of the system of higher education of exclusion based on the past apartheid policies of government. This as it is commonly reported, it is not a unique challenge for DUT only but many universities across South Africa. Student three went to say....

*‘Fee must fall is sending a message to government to take fees away and implement free education... Those who can afford should pay while those who cannot pay should be considered, because many of the students in black dominated universities cannot afford to pay’.*

The participant brings to view the reality of the post-Apartheid South African society which is stratified and highly unequal. S3 denotes inequality in terms of economics or what other scientist will refer to as “economic inequality”, those who can afford to pay and those who cannot afford to pay. According to Seekings, (2003) alludes to the fact that most of white South Africans build their wealth from privileged positions of power and resources in an apartheid South Africa as opposed to black South Africans. In addition, former President Thabo Mbeki said in parliament that “material conditions... have divided our country into two nations, the one black, the other white... [the latter] is relatively prosperous and has ready access to a developed economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure...

The second, and larger, nation of South Africa is black and poor, [and] lives in conditions of a grossly underdeveloped infrastructure.” Gelb, (2003). In addition, Davids, (2016) alluded to the inequalities of the apartheid-era being perpetual and not addressed because of the settlement and decision taken since at the end of apartheid. Student five and six shares their opinion. S5 and S6 opined respectively that *‘fee is increasing we call for fee must fall, we are not saying we will not pay, but it is a call and stop in increase of fees ...’*. The participants also echoed that *‘the call for stop in increase of fees’* is also alluded to financial gap between white students and black students which disadvantaged black students(S1). According to participants (S8, S9) ‘some students have

bursary from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSAF) and others do not have, which further excludes them.

The participants also emphasized that students with bursary from NSFAS will also experience financial gap aggravated by the need to pay back money to NSFAS while working after graduation. As echoed by S1, *'the black child is already disadvantaged from birth which makes him struggle... the white child has a job already and is debt free...'*. (Dominguez-Whitehead, 2017) found out that despite that NSFAS funding increased rapidly, as early as 1998 there were signs that NSFAS was being funded at inadequate levels and that the amount of funds disbursed to individual students were not sufficient to cover the actual cost of attending higher education Bunting, (2006). Woldegiorgis, (2013) found out also that the amount of NSFAS funding was insufficient to fund the increasing number of students enrolling in higher education. This is also alluded to inefficiencies which continue to be apparent, with students who have applied for NSFAS funding complaining that their applications are being processed late, thus preventing them from enrolling. It is also clear that other underlining factor against increment of university fees is the socioeconomic status of students from poor background whose parents earn *'R4,500 per month and that such parent's salary is insufficient to pay these fees, also considering that some of these students have many siblings, four or more... since most Africans gives birth to many children'* (S4).

According to NSFAS (2019), the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is a South African government student bursary and loan scheme which provides loans for undergraduate students to help pay for the cost of their tertiary education after finishing high school. It receives its funding budget from the Department of Higher Education and Training. National Student Financial Aid Scheme was established in 1996 replacing the Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa (TEFSA) in 1999, The TEFSA program was a primary non- profit company which managed and administered NSFAS since its establishment until 2000, in 1999 TEFSA was converted into a statutory body called NSFAS. The scheme is supported by government funding and local and international donations. The loans cover the tuition fees, accommodation, food and travel allowances for "full time" students and only tuition fees for "part time" students. Criteria for bursary is based on students applied or admitted into public higher institution. Student meet the financial qualification based on assessed gross income of 35,000 per annum. SASSA recipients automatically meet the criteria. Other bursary requirements for NSFAS is based on conditions such as Candidates must have a grade 12 level of education. Candidates must be proficient in English. Candidates must be a South African citizen. Candidates must possess a valid South African ID. Candidates must provide proof for financial need.

NSFAS is guided by the regulatory framework NSFAS Act No. 56 of 1999. Applicants who wish to apply for NSFAS online, can create their NSFAS account on the NSFAS website. When registering an account, students are required to fill in username, own password, ID Book, cell phone number and email address. There are also electronic supporting documents required. A reference will be sent to phone number after submitting. Applicants can visit their nearest university/college Financial Aid Office to apply using the physical form or visit their close NYDA centre for help. After you are done filling the form, you be given a receipt card with a bar code attached. However, after the 2017 announcement on fee increment, the national Treasury budget allocation in 2018 to DHET introduced a new DHET bursary scheme providing a full subsidized funding for students from poor and working class in South Africa public university (DHET, 2011).

#### ***5.3.1.b. Subtheme 2: Fees must fall movement in the context of the Institutional Structure of Racism***

It is of great importance to point-out that under this subtheme that participants made note of the racial or segregationally cultures that still exist in institution of learning in SA universities. Chetty, (2016) states that “education is unequal at all levels in South Africa. There is deepening racial segregation at schools and universities. Higher education is increasingly racially stratified, and it is particularly apparent in the concentration of black and coloured students at historically disadvantaged universities. Most white students attend the previously advantaged universities, like the English liberal Universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand, or more conservative Afrikaans institutions like the Universities of Stellenbosch and Pretoria”. Student seven indicates that,

*‘Institutional racism occurs through key issues as the manner and attitude in which authority deals with students ...if you look at the manner which administration addresses us there is clearly special treatment based on race’. (S7)*

S7, view clearly reveals according to his experience that there still exists racial segregation within the administration. Many scholars have well documented evidence that racism is enshrined in the institutional culture and practice but even in many young and old whites who still perpetuate racist practices. For example, the Free State video of white four racists who made” African employees to swallow a bottle of beer, run a race, play rugby, and then kneel to eat urinated food” (Nichols, 2019). This is not only racist and shocking, but it is happening after twenty-five years of apartheid

and shows lack of transformation in the minds of many. According to Bazana, (2017) comments to the effect of this reality as a reflection of our societies as mirrored by institutions of learning.

However, S3 an SRC affiliated to the EFF states that ‘*university is not giving us direction we want... led by EFF, racism will be addressed... most people are shaking and having attitude change ...*’ S4 also expressed on the need to address institutional structure. She cites an example that students should have a choice to purchase their laptop from with the R5,000 (NSFAF bursary) given to them. This is considering that the university management already has a partnership with HP, but HP offers no training or learnership to the students. Students should have choice of where they would like to buy their laptops. S7 also likened the #FEMF movement to the 1976 student uprising with the issue of addressing institutional racism although she pointed out that the shades of the protest have changed. S7 also noted that she was at University of Natal as a first-year student when the 1976 protest started. She explains also that then in ‘1976 it was fight against white and institutional facilities such as cafeteria...but now the protest is led by black students.’

The June 16, 1976, uprising that began in Soweto and spread countrywide profoundly changed the socio-political landscape in South Africa. Events that triggered the uprising can be traced back to policies of the Apartheid government that resulted in the introduction of the Bantu Education Act in 1953. A study by Dominguez-Whitehead J., (2017) found out that the recent #FeesMustFall movement brought into the limelight varied issues relating to student activism, curriculum transformation, class, and race. It has also brought attention to issues concerning inclusion and exclusion confronted by students when pursuing a higher education. The perspectives of the participants corroborate Linden, (2018) arguments that the events of the 2015 Fees Must Fall movement generated a lively debate in the South African public sphere such as multiple interest groups and constituencies.

#### ***5.3.1.c. Subtheme 3: Fees must fall movement in the context of Decolonization of the curriculum.***

During the interviews, few of the participants shared their opinions and perspectives about “Decolonization of the curriculum” of what it means to decolonize the curriculum. The study has recorded some of the participant’s views on decolonization of the curriculum. However, this change within higher education requires all stake holders (universities, government, and other important role players) to be involved in the conversations around decolonization. The researcher has observed a common view among the participants mainly from EFFSC, BLF and SASCO, who proposed that there must be a sense of inclusion in teaching and learning of the African thinkers

and their world view. The consensus among them of the fact that higher education is highly dominated by “white, Western epistemological customs, histories and figures. This according to many participants is important factors that need to be addressed to contribute positively on transformation.

Decolonization of curriculum in the view of the participant is the use of African scholars and Afro centric curriculum in teaching in university. Student participant understanding of decolonization is depicted as follows: S8 EFFSC’ *We should use African scholars, Let us be taught by African scholars...be authors of our curriculum ...let us be authors of our curriculum...one race is perceived as a standard of how we perceive the world...we still learning about Shakespeare, lets learn about Africa and use African scholars in our curriculum... the standard of education, is determined by one race used as a standard of what we do*. Student five (SASCO) shares similar views but further brings an important aspect of “Western world views dominating higher education” that it affects the solutions that are devised for South Africa and Africa respectively. For example, the participant shared that *‘why are we using European solutions because research used in South Africa is based on developed country’s model forgetting our problem...*’ In addition, according to (S2) *‘Decolonialization relates to black consciousness’s’*.

S7, went on to say that,

*We are currently being fed Western propaganda or liberal propaganda for the purposes of maintaining the status quo, so that there will be no people who can revolt against the system. The education system here in South Africa is designed in a way that in social sciences and politics majors you will not find black consciousness 101 or Pan-Africanism 102. This for me reflects the dominance of whiteness in many of our institutions including higher education.* S11 (EFFSC).

However, S10 has attributed to the UKZN language standard in teaching and learning as a positive contribution into the right direction. *UKZN ‘has started attempt of decolonization making isiZulu as a language ...you cannot graduate without learning isiZulu...isiZulu is becoming compulsory for undergraduate as a module .... you cannot graduate without isizulu...it is a process of decolonizing the curriculum...there is engagement with the VC on what to take away’.* (S10).

The participants reiterate that decolonization of curriculum is important because education solves problems. S5 substantiated that there is a need for curriculum change from Eurocentric to Afrocentric approaches. S4 states that decolonization of the curriculum is important because of the

way students are taught. *‘Postgraduate learning is knowledge production...undergraduate learning regurgitates education...’*

In line with participants’ perspectives on decolonization of the curriculum, (Naidoo, 2016) notes that curricula throughout the education system are in dire need of transformation. This she alluded to students not represented in the curricula, which makes education to alienate them rather than liberate them. Secondly, she echoes that decolonization of the curriculum is insisting on blackening the curriculum and the classroom, university and its curricula be made Black.

#### ***5.3.1.d. Subtheme 4: Fees must fall movement in the context of Fee-free Higher Education for All.***

Interlinked with these reasons for the Fees must fall movement according to the participants was also the need for government to implement the *‘free education promised to our forefathers’* (S1, S2). As well as the call for free education based on the promise of the 1994 Freedom Charter. S5 indicates that *#FMF is something not understood, it is call for free education, although there was free education but was not implemented...’* (Charter, 1955) states 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 based on merit. Klein, (2007); Graff, (1993). The freedom charter agreement *was based on the tenets that* education will be free and compulsory. It is characterized by its opening demand, "The People Shall Govern!". The Charter was officially adopted on Sunday 26 June 1955 at a gathering of about 3,000 people, known as the Congress of the People in Kliptown, Soweto. Although the meeting was broken up by police on the second day, but the Charter had been read in full. But the crowd had shouted its approval of each section with cries of "Afrika!" and "Mayibuye.

In S7 words, the understanding of *‘#FMF is what students have been asking for a long time for fees to be waived, however people do not seem to be listening...it is a call for free education... but for me #FMF is about fees generally’*. *Fee must fall is decommodification of education promised as far back in 1955* (S2). S7 further expressed that, *‘back in 1964 there was declaration on free education...you need to tell me between 1960 till 2000 nothing was done, and student say enough was enough...it was fees...how it would be funded was anything for another day ... The hashtag FMF was a critical point because the social media sensationalizes things and capitalizes on the event...Government needs to work and step in because the university will say we work autonomously and independently...’*

The responses by S1, S2 and S7 show how aware participants were of their history and the promises the ANC government made twenty-eight years ago. And these views concur with (Badat, 2016) research findings, which clearly state that student protest was a result of ANC's broken promises. Higher education holds the agreement and commitment to adding to social equity, financial and social advancement, yet this commitment and promise remains unrealized. Other scholars attribute this to not much of financial muscles on the part of government, but rather to the ruling party's lack of prioritizing important things within their agenda. According to (Naicker, 2016) the ANC is to be held responsible for failing in its promises for providing free fee education. It is as a reflection of the political will and corporation with major stake holders for equipping the youth with the relevant expertise in nation building. It needs to be noted that the Freedom Charter was the statement of core principles of the South African Congress Alliance, which consisted of the African National Congress (ANC) and its allies namely the South African Indian Congress, the South African Congress of Democrats and the Coloured People's Congress. *Similarly*, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) states that everyone has the right (a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

In addition, S1 adds that,

*It is basically student activists who are trying to make or force the government to keep its promise made in 1994-1995 of free education. It is to my assessment ignorance to label and term students rebellious and ridiculing the issue of free education, because in the first place it is government that promised it. And it is the current crop that is holding government accountable to its promise it made to their forefathers in the early years of democracy.*

In view of this (Kgatle, 2018) observes that in 2015 and 2016, South Africa experienced one of the unique student-led protests since the dawn of democracy that touched the world, the '#FeesMustFall movement'. He also noted that out of the many demands that students made in the movement, is outstanding, fee- free higher education. In response to the fees must fall protest and the call for free education, the University of the Witwatersrand Panel on Funding Model(s) for Higher Education in South Africa was instituted. A Report (2016) by the panel stated amongst others that countries such as Norway, Sweden, Germany, and the Province of Ontario are scrapping university tuition for those from families earning below a particular threshold. While scrapping of tuition fees is being financed by increased taxation collected by provincial or municipal



governments (University of Witwatersrand 2016). On a parallel line, the University of the Witwatersrand Panel (2016) stated also that fee-Free Higher Education for the poor is justified on the grounds of social justice, which implies increasing access for the poor, especially previously marginalized communities, to university education in the face of increasing tuition fees.

S12 from a different viewpoint seems to point out the challenge and the problem lying more in how the concept of education is viewed by mainly other role players. He strongly feels that the state finds itself conflicted and as a result it compromises. For example, he pointed that,

*‘Education should not be considered and viewed the same way as bread. This according to my understanding is two different things with regards that the latter is sold in the market for a certain market price. And education needs not be treated the same way because it is a privilege and states responsibility to provide that privilege to its citizens. Many say in the circles of academia that education is and should be a public and common good. The university uses this price tag on education as to exclude many black students from institutions of learning because we are the poor, and we will not be able to pay’.* S12 (BLF)

This response by S12 correlates well with Locatelli, (2018) observations that the concept of education as a common good which has been for decade a primary foundation for international education development discourse, has underlying implication of state responsibility to provide education. The author acknowledges the challenging debates within the global environment that has increasingly become liberal and hostile to this idea of “education as a common good” with its economic implications. S5 from SASCO thinks that,

*‘Basically, in our understanding, our position is and has always been the call for government to re Commodify education in ways that will go as far the freedom charter document of 1955. And at the centre of this campaign is the poor and working class who have for several years been marginalized’* S5 (SASCO)

There are similarities between S5 and S12 and commonalities which seem to be relating to the aspect of economics and education. And from these responses one gets a glimpse of the frustrations and what the struggle have been and will always be about, which is the poor. Tjabane, (2010) relates to the fact that the most affected during apartheid and now are mostly those from historically disadvantaged background (poor black). The author believes that it is the poor who are financially excluded, and still fighting for free education. The World Bank Vice President Weaver, (2008)

contends that “Many of the wars of this century were about oil, but those of the next century will be over water” implying continued struggles for basic services including education for centuries to come.

Cloete, (2018) differentiated the differences between fee-free higher education for the poor and free higher education for all. Cloete, (2018) explains that Fee-free higher education for all is not a good policy idea. This is alluded to the fact that Fee-free higher can harm, rather than assist, the poor. He rather suggested that the costs must be shared between different stakeholders and student choices must be unconstrained by socio-economic status. Kgatle, (2018) argues that a fee-free higher education for all students is not an affordable or sustainable option for South Africa now because the knowledge and skills acquired while achieving higher education qualifications generate significant lifetime private benefits for successful students as well as long-range social benefits for the public at large.

Dunga and Mncayi (2016:170) concur with Kgatle, (2018) that fee-free higher education for all and implanting it is not feasible because of the following reasons. Firstly, it comprises the quality of education. Secondly, Fee-free higher education strains the inadequate resources and might end up benefiting the rich who do not need help with paying for their education. But rather Fee-free higher education policy should only be allowed if it is only targeting needy and academically deserving students.

On the other hand, there are many scholars and student leaders who offer a counterargument Nico Cloete, (2015), Kgatle, (2018), and Dunga & Mncavi (2016). Mpofu-Walsh, (2017) argues that the basis of whether “South Africa can afford free fee education, is or depends on what we mean by ‘free education’”. It is evident in the literature surrounding free education that there are different types of meanings and views of what is meant by free education. For example, with the link of the #Fees Must Fall campaign numerous individuals are reportedly calling for free education for those who could not afford, while others were calling free education for all (those who could afford and those who could not afford). Other people think that free education encapsulates the state paying for accommodation, tuition fees, study material and meals, while as well others view free education based on ability Parker, (2015). Mpofu-Walsh, (2017) strongly believes in feasibility of free education and proposes that the state can progressively provide free higher education starting with ‘free tuition, which is the first step to a fully-fledged free education’.

### **5.3.1.e. Subtheme 5: The Influence of the #FMF on Student Politics**

On the impact of the FMF and student's politics and why students should join politics, there were varied perspectives from the participants. The participants also suggest the need for students to participate in politics because they can know what they are dealing with and the atmosphere because like in Africa, president just jump in without prior background in politics. On student's involvement on politics the participants believed students need to be aware of what is happening on campus. (S7) says that,

*'I certainly would say politics had an impact because for any organization to ensure its organizational validity it must identify problems within the society, failure of which the organizational validity is null and void. So, for us to continue existing we have to identify with the masses we are serving, some will say for example why there is a drop-off, and we will revert and investigate the cause: seeing financial exclusions etc. The FMF movement validated the organizational existence whether EFF, SASCO, DA and BLF because we all are united for a common cause'.*

In the space of higher education lack of funding has become one critical issue and has generated more discussion in higher education. The state decreases in funding HE has led to universities increased fees Styger, (2014). The participant highlights an important point of the role of Student Representative Counsel (SRC) which is understood to help and benefit students with their various challenges on campus and integrate them to society Ntsala, (2016). In very different instance, Student seven looked joyful of the outcome and the impact of the movement of the FMF in student politics, pointing positive and lasting points to be remembered. He feels that the movement did not only contribute positively to the students in general, but points to how it helped student leaders to read and understand the literature around Higher education. This view he highlighted and clearly articulated below:

*'The FeesMustFall movement had a positive impact upon students and in student politics because it raised awareness among many that the call for free education is a genuine call. Because if we can allow fees to increase in our institutions, yet we're calling for fees to fall and free education that means we are contradicting ourselves (we have to stop the fees from increasing) until the call is headed. I further think that this movement encouraged student activist to research and read more on the subject (e.g., free education, South African education system, feasibility of free*

*education and economics) because some did not have proper understanding'. (S7). A participant (6) had this to say: It brought back and revived activist spirit especially among the young people of South African universities and in the country as a whole. But more important to my estimation the movement of the FeesMustFall united all political student parties on campuses across the country, there was a sense of one purpose and mind-set in the fight for free education. (S6).*

When student six was further probed about the FMF movement impact and the causes of the rise of this campaign. Student six went to say that,

*'When you think of the FMF movement you begin to realize how that the campaign for free decolonized education was not championed by one political party whether EFF, ANC, DA or BLF all this organizations united. The unity in action was a huge significance for the history of student activism since the Soweto Uprising of 1976. For example, in the past SASCO used to have hegemony of student and they will say there is no strike there will as result be no strike, but now things have changed it's not one-party having influence over the student. This taught us that if we unite as black people on whatever reason there is a lot that we can accomplish as a people (black)'. (S6)*

According to (Linden, 2018) in agreement with the view stipulated above, signalling solidarity and achievement of the Rhodes Must Fall as the chief motivator for unity in action for free education. Though different in nature and its focus many scholars suggest that many student leaders and activists found in the movement more encouragement for campaigning. S6 mentioned the lessons learned and among others that *"if we unite as black people on whatever reason there is much we can accomplish as a people (black)"*. (Houston, 2008) points to dismantling of the apartheid regime and most of African independence as a collective, unity not only of blacks but of the international community. Student five shared the following:

*(S5): This was not only positive for student it was good for the growth of the organization (EFF) and its presence in universities. During this time (FMF campaign across many campus) many EFF leaders were seen at the front of the movement fearlessly demonstrating leadership. That as a result led students to admire and identify with the organization.*

S5, reveals an important insight of how political parties were involved whether indirectly or directly, especially because the EFF is well known for its majority of its supporters being the youth.

The EFF capitalized on appeal to the youth since it was launched in 2013, even their presence in parliament with young revolutionaries from the #FeesMustFall movement (Head, 2019).

On the other hand, some participant shared their different perspectives on the impact of the movement and of student leaders compromising when in negotiations with the management. S7 expressed that *‘the SRC needs to be responsible, stand up and say to university management that let us be in the committee to discuss the issues properly. We should be in committee...but SRC are also naughty...they get a bit of accommodation also because they want favor so which makes them compromise...I feel SRC should not be corrupted.... We need radical economic transformation so I believe there is the need for radical thinking because since 1994 discrimination is still there ...discrimination is epidemically quantified, we should be moving towards justice consciousness, people should not be discriminated or excluded because...we need to strive as one Africa, not born free, we need to smash old thinking as born free but as one South Africa...’*

Corroborating the view of S7, S8 has a divergent view on student politics and puts it succinctly that, *‘sometimes students are used as pawn in a bigger picture...at times they are not pushing their own agenda but others under the guise of jobs promised to them by the big shots...that is why politics is dicey...’*

Many participants attributed much of this to the role of the Student Representative Council (SRC), which according to many as mentioned above cannot be attributed to one party but all parties playing their role. The general view noted among students about the role of the SRC, was how it was able to boost the morale of the students. However, there are differing views about which party dominated the campaign of FMF movement. (S5) from the EFF noted that *‘students never liked EFF initially because they believed EFF did not represent them. Even SASCO didn’t support fees must fall movement, but after the 2016 fees movement, the EFF was recognized because of their role in addressing student issues...’*. SRC also played a role because *we go there to complain, they inform us, complaints, grievances, and complaints are addressed (S5).*

It is further alluded by participants that,

*SRC represents student’s mandate, ‘we end our protest when all our demands have been met’.* According to S3, SRC engages with university management to address students concerns. S3 emphasized that, *‘... to achieve anything and satisfy students we do anything even having to strike which affects the academic year... and this is because the management is not always friends to our struggle but hostile which leads to violent protests, and they (management) are then willing to*

*listen only when protests get violent.* This view is supported by Bosi, (2015) that most social movements have in most cases being shaped by political violence as an effective method of achieving its goals.

In addition, the above views clearly demonstrate a sense of strong conviction of their course and commitment to financial security through free education. Prior study by scholars Moreku, (2014). Ntsala, (2016); Klemenčič, (2017) argue that where student representation is absent or ineffectual, students have historically resorted to protest action to voice their grievances and express their preferences. S4, stated that *SASCO has held multiple commissions, has had many campaigns and marches, but in 2015 and 2016, DUT protested for the same thing, safety, curriculum, NSFAS, accommodation .... The protest started at DUT, UKZN and Westville Campus and tagged in the news as 'group of seven unregistered student 'but no coverage but when it got to Wits at that point the narrative changed and organized structure language then emerged as decolonialize, so students became clearer about what needed to be done. The cry was heard because the elites began to complain about protests in the CBD that antagonized the economic hub...not about the ideas but ... discussion affected the middle class they viewed us as the 'missing middle'. 'We cannot accredit the movement to any party, but we acted collectively. But the role of SRC in fees struggle was that they managed to build the morale of students and came together not as parties but as students to fight one cause...'* (S5).

S7 likened the roles of SRC during the fee must fall to the youth uprising of 1976. This she described as different shades of student demand....' This is also considering that findings suggest that South African Students Congress (SASCO) also exist and varied opinion from the participant that 'SASCO supported the fees must fall (S12) and a contrary view that that 'SASCO did not support the fees must fall movement '(S5). SASCO did not support the fees must fall movement, but SRC students who belonged to the EFF did, while some comrades who led the protest were arrested and some are still going through court appearances. SASCO could not define leadership. From the findings it is also evident that student representation' is the formal structures and processes of elected or appointed student representatives speaking or acting on behalf of the collective student body in higher education governance within a higher education institution or a higher education system (Klemenčič, 2017). The South African Students Congress (SASCO) is a South African student organization which was founded in September 1991 at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape through the merger of the South African National Student Congress (SANSCO) and the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).

The predecessor of SANSCO, the Azanian Students Organization (AZASO) was initially formed in 1979 as a continuation of the South African Students Organization (SASO) when the latter was banned by the Apartheid government. SASO, in turn, got started by Steve Biko as a breakaway faction from NUSAS in the 1960s. SASCO is the biggest student movement in Africa. It organizes students in institutions of higher learning striving for the transformation of not just institutions of higher learning but the whole system to achieve a non-sexist, non-racial, working class biased and democratic education system. The term *comrade* is used to mean "mate", "colleague", or "ally", and derives from the Iberian Romance language term *comrade* literally meaning "chamber mate", from Latin *camera* "chamber" or "room" (Robert Scott, 1992). Political use of the term was inspired by the French Revolution, after which it grew into a form of address between socialists and workers. Since the Russian Revolution, popular culture in the Western World has often associated it with communism Sechaba, Tshepo; Ellis, Stephen, (1992).

In the South Africa context, during the 1970s and 1980s, *comrade* emerged as a popular revolutionary form of address in South Africa among those involved in anti-apartheid political activities. For example, members of the African National Congress and South African Communist Party frequently referred to each other as *comrade Bornman, Elirea; van Eeden, Renee; Wentzel, Marie*, (1998). The term *comrade*, among poor residents of the country's segregated townships, it was also used to specifically denote members of militant youth organizations. These radical activists led consumer boycotts, organized anti-apartheid rallies and demonstrations, and intimidated those suspected of having ties to the South African government or security forces. In this context, the English title *comrades* was also used interchangeably with the Xhosa term *amabutho*.

It is further noted by S7 that the treatment of the management is unfair towards student representatives when interacting with them representing all students. S7, 'University management should see SRC as adults not children, because SRC assists students because that is the first place, they go to, but SRC needs to be responsible to stand to say treat us like leaders of the masses...let us be in the committee to discuss the issues properly.

*We should be in the committee...but SRC are also naughty also...they get a bit of accommodation also because they want favour so should not be corrupted.*

The overview indicates that SRC are a vital mechanism for the articulation of student's grievance to school (university) management. The Student Representative Council (SRC) is the highest

decision-making structure of student governance in university according to the university document and SRC constitution. As findings indicates that DUT has SRC that represents all students on issues and their overall interest and social well-being in university committees. As well as been involved in policy-making and co- operative decision-making on campus. *SRC also plays role because they inform us (S9).*

The findings indicate that the movement of the FMF at DUT had significance impact on student politics and student life. Firstly, the FMF movement raised and revived student activism. Student activism refers to various, typically oppositional, forms of public expression of student power, (Klemenčič, 2017). (Klemenčič, 2017) argue that there are two categories of studies of student politics: ‘the first deals with student activism in “extraordinary” governance processes like student protests and rallies while the latter focuses on the “ordinary” processes of elections and board negotiations.’ Students are stakeholders in higher education institutions because of emphasis on the involvement and participation of stakeholders in decision-making processes based on guarantee by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (Moreku, 2014). Secondly participants indicated also that the movement of the FMF united and united front of student leaders from various political parties (ANC, EFF, DA and BLF) in pursued of free decolonized education.

Lastly, it encouraged student’s activist to read more of black scholars and increased intellectual curiosity about terms associated with the FMF movement such as decolonization, free education, South African higher education and so on.

#### ***5.3.1.f. Subtheme 6: Causes of the Fees Must Fall Movement***

Exploring further on what caused the Fees must fall protests. Findings indicate that the protest was sparked by delay in payment of student bursary, meal vouchers and student allowances by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). The participants identified financial challenges also were one of the indirect causes of the protest. However, findings indicate also that the protest was sparked by specific challenges by students in the schools (DUT) generally. These challenges are discussed in the subsequent section in this chapter. According to S6, NSAF pays DUT students R13, 000. Although S4 stated that ‘the fee protest ended after recommendation was proffered on registration of students such as the 8 per cent government grant but you suffer in residence’ and NSFAS do not respond to students nor communicate which might take the second semester or a year.



NSFAS budget for the 2017 academic year was R15 billion and is for students with family household income of up to R600 000 per year who qualified to receive subsidy funding to cover the gap between the 2015 fees and the increased 2017 fees at their institution for fee increments up to 8% Dominguez-Whitehead, (2017).

#### **5.4. Causes of fees must fall at DUT**

The causes of fee must fall at DUT was also explored in relation to the challenges that students face on campus in relation to the #FMM movement quest. Varied reasons were presented by the participants for the causes of the protest at DUT, factors such as delayed payment by NSFAS which contributed to other challenges as hunger due to lack of meal allowance, transportation issues and accommodation issues. S7 who worked with student support services stated that *‘students come to me and complain that they cannot access student residences because those in charge of it want favour’*. The participants also mentioned that daily challenges also affected some students which makes them use drugs, alcohol and affected by socio-economic status (S6). Other challenges that emerged included transportation and lack of doctors on campus.

S3 states that *‘the fee must fall started on UKZN Howard Campus then spread to other campuses*. This is also alluded to other issue of education such as ‘limited resources’ (S5). *‘Everyone joined the fees must fall particularly poor black.’* S5 made illustration *‘that poor black parents earn, R4,800 monthly totaling R 48, 000 per year and that is insufficient to pay...they will drown in debt, bank do not give low-income earners loans*. Furthermore, there were issues identified with NSFAS Administration by most participants. S4 explained that NSAF is a brainchild of SASCO that was conceptualized at a congress called *TSAF viewed as a vehicle to usher in free education including the way it will be disseminated*. *S4 further argues on the need for administration of NSAF, if NSFAS is educating students it is supposed to be educating better?* According to S4, *‘TVET College has the most reaction to NSAF, they have the 80 percent criteria policy by government ...and have access to your meal allowance you need to indicate that you have attained certain percentage of your lecture, to go to school.’*

### *NSFAS Delayed Bursary Payment and Student Hunger*

Similarly, findings indicate that delay in NSFAS affected meal voucher which results in hunger due to inability to buy grocery. According to S8 NSFAS pays DUT students R14, 000 annually for food voucher and R5, 000 yearly for books. Although *'these amounts are insufficient because tuition, residence rent, and school expenses are higher than the bursaries'* (S8).

As put succinctly by S7 that *'...yearly amounts to 6,000 and 85,000, minimum a year...'* (S2): *In an environment of educational institution as DUT were most of the students are coming from rural areas, obviously they belong to the working-class families and poor in most cases they not only have to put-up with exorbitant fees, but they find themselves with no food.*

*Student seven shared similar sentiments as that of student eight. Because it was not only tuition fees the student was struggling with going as far as transport, food and necessities that are important for a student to survive and thrive academically. It must be noted also that it is not all students who are funded by NSFAS. (S7): At DUT we have many students that are affected by the system of their allowance which is eBucks. Almost all student or the majority of student are directly affected they don't receive meal allowance in time, they don't understand the system even us (SRC). But the worst part is that eBucks officials don't understand how the system works. This also includes their cash vouchers, books vouchers even for those staying off campus don't receive their travelling allowance in time.*

The view expressed above by the student participants show clearly that lack of food or delayed food, transport, and book allowance affects the student academically and that may be said of performance as well. Student eight noted that the challenge is not much more in delayed payments but also the amounts allocated for each student (insufficient in the present economy). This is not unique to DUT only but all universities across the country (South Africa). According to Van den (Van den Berg L, 2015) among the causes of drop-out of student in higher education which is rated to approximately at 50%, as food is one important need that may contribute to student success in South Africa. In addition, student 5 from SASCO says that,

*'They (students) use this voucher to buy groceries, food for themselves to be able to attend and go with all the daily duties of the day academically. There was a time as the SRC when we conducted research among students with many challenges their facing, the findings revealed that among other causes of lack of performance, suicides (committed especially by female students), was lack of*

*sustainable means (transport, meals, books, and counselling)'. (S12) also echoed that when students are hungry, they cannot participate and concentrate in class. However, S8 expressed that the biggest challenge of student is hunger. In his words, 'NSAF do not respond even if they do maybe second semester or a year (late)...but we must applaud the university who eases the suffering of students who gets no reply from NSFAS... to ease the pain of students who suffer... the university gives students once off money to student who appeal as per minimum requirement that you have applied for NSFAS....*

*Student support unit also assists students with challenges if you are hungry...there are monthly food parcels within campus, there are structures in place, but students are not aware. In 2017 food banks which assisted were the biggest problem'. S5, an executive of EFF indicated that female students could borrow grocery from their friends but not sanitary pads that is why some of them choose to write supplementary exams. Although female students are secretive on this matter (S5). 'Although we conducted research that indicates that students cannot go to school and attend class because they do not have sanitary towels. Commenting on how the NSAF bursary is paid, S6 expressed that, 'When it comes to NSFAS payment though they have a centralized system ...as educated people and sitting with management, they are not doing anything because they say we do not have power...we are here as their customers...'. (Dominguez-Whitehead J., 2017) buttressed that NSFAS was a strategy to redress past inequalities in higher education and with the aim of helping "students from poverty-stricken backgrounds. In 1994, R20 million was allocated (by the Minister of Education) to assist under-resourced students in financing their higher education pursuits. The amount of national funding for under-resourced students increased to R300 million in 1996 (DHET, 2011). According to (DHET, 2011) NSFAS funding continued to increase in 2004 and over R900 million was made available to students who qualified.*

Similar results were revealed in a study by NSFAS (2016:3) on the impact of NSFAS over time indicates that over the 25 years, NSFAS has funded 1 700 533 students. While from 1991 to 2014, the number of higher education students funded has increased from 7 240 to 186 150, consistently showing a higher proportion of female students (for only two years of the 24 years is less than 50%), African students (most – 21 of 24 years – this is higher than 85%) followed by Colored students, then Indian and then white students (usually between 1,7% to 3,9%) (NSFAS (2016:4). The funds to support these students increased from R22m in 1991 to R6,6bn in 2014, with the most significant growth in the years from 2010 to 2014. As NSFAS scheme grew, by 2008 there were administrative problems, in the head office and particularly at some universities Cloete (2015:4) Nico Cloete C. S., (2016).

The views of the participants resonate with (Seale, 2018) assertion that NSFAS is in trouble which is evident in the crisis of student applications for the 2019 academic year, which were put on hold because NSFAS and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) struggled with backlogs of applications. Administration challenges have also been identified about NSFAS administration which necessitated investigation on NSFAS by Higher Education Minister, Naledi Pandor.

Seale, (2018) reported that Pandor addressed her concern to NSFAS board chair Sizwe Nxasana, on the “inadequate progress in processing applications and approving payments” for qualifying students. Dominguez-Whitehead J., (2017) also found out that NSFAS recipients across different institutions receive their living allowance late, with some students only receiving this allowance at the end of a term. Seale, (2018) In a letter, dated July 17, the minister lays bare the incompetence and the administrative bungling by the board in managing the billions of rands scheme meant to distribute funds to students to help them afford university and college costs. NSFAS’s lack of technological capacity and deficiencies, often leading to inaccurate data of students, were among the teething problems with the implementation of the scheme. “I am extremely concerned about the reliability of the confirmed registration numbers, the slow generation of NSFAS bursary agreements, as well as problems in the disbursements and payments to eBucks and non-eBucks (a new system to pay students their allowances) institutions as reported by NSFAS management,” Pandor wrote in the letter leaked to The Sunday Independent.

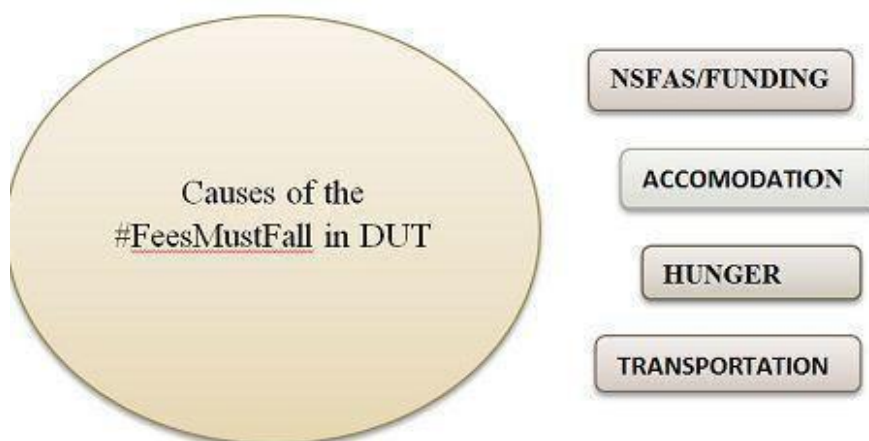
*(S5) states that they (students) use this voucher to buy groceries, food for themselves to be able to attend and go with all the daily duties of the day academically. There was a time as the SRC when we conducted research among students with many challenges they are facing, the findings revealed that among other causes of lack of performance, suicides (committed especially by female students), was lack of sustainable means (transport, meals, books, and counselling). Prior study (e.g. (Dominguez-Whitehead Y., 2017); Kgatle, (2018) reiterated the importance of food for student’s academic success. Kgatle (2018) noted that most of black students go to sleep hungry every day. While Dominguez-Whitehead Y., (2017) found out that food challenges are prevalent at higher education institutions across South Africa, with nutrition and hunger issues being faced at all universities across the country. The following participants, in spite of clearly stating in detail the challenge’s student face, acknowledged that there were more factors influencing student performance among others is lacking funding.*

For Example, (S1) states that *‘In my opinion the biggest challenge for students is funding because even the NSFAS is not enough. Having to live with R1400 is insufficient to sustain the life of a student on campus (grocery, sanitary material, transportation,), some students are parents they have to send money back home it’s a serious struggle. These challenges lead to many students being pressured by these circumstances to seek other means of surviving which is bad instead of focusing on their academic work.*

*Increased crimes on campus residences, “slay queens” young university students resorting selling sex for money to sustain themselves and to keep-up with student life all come to lack of funding’.*

Dominguez-Whitehead J., (2017) also found out that this situation exists at several campuses and food insecurity at the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Pietermaritzburg campus, approximately 20% of students were vulnerable to food insecurity. While over 60% of students who receive financial aid reported experiencing food insecurity. Dominguez-Whitehead J., (2017) argued that students are more likely to experience hunger towards the end of a term, when they have depleted their funds. Secondly, he noted that students who lack sufficient food may suffer in silence, due to the stigma associated with experiencing a lack of food. (Dickens, 2017), found that 20.8 per cent of students ‘experienced some level of vulnerability to food insecurity with 16.1 per cent reporting serious levels of vulnerability, and 4.7 per cent experiencing severe to critical levels of vulnerability to food insecurity. Figure 3 summarizes some of the causes of the #FeesMustFall that were found at the Durban University of Technology through this research.

*Figure 3: Causes of the #FeesMustFall at the Durban University of Technology (DUT)*



#### **5.4.1.a. Student Residence Issue**

Student residence is also identified as one of the challenges student faces and one of the underlying factors that also triggered the wave of fees must fall protest. Accommodation challenges is also aggravated by student financial challenges, NSFAS non-payment of bursary and landlord issues (for student resident off campus) because when students do not receive payment from NSFAS they are forced to quit residence.

Student's lack of residence usually occurs particularly at the beginning of the year. The participants (S4 & S6) Also echoed that *'new students who needed accommodation in 2019 could not get it, although the VC (Vice Chancellor) planned and lodged some of these students in hotels for a month until they were able to sort their residence issues'*. These challenges are also alluded to issues of landlord and accommodation which affects the academic life of learners to concentrate. Participants stated that accommodation is quite challenging particularly in the month of February when first year students are registering. Considering that some of these students come as far as Newcastle to register. Furthermore, S8 mentioned that residence prices keep increasing and recounts that for *'two weeks he was going up and down before he could secure a hostel'*. S10 expressed that *'accommodation issue is high particular in the month of February when first year students are on campus for registration. Considering that some of these students come from far places such as Newcastle to register'*.

The participants emphasized that school management do not prepare adequately for student accommodation. This also indicates that food and housing are essential resources for academic success of students, but they are often overlooked and assumed to be resources that higher institutions overlook (Dominguez-Whitehead J., 2017). Study by (Dominguez-Whitehead Y. , 2017) found out housing challenges is prevalent in South African Universities. As indicated by the author that many poor students come from rural communities, which brings additional challenges. Secondly, the rising cost of living coupled with consistent fee increases makes students struggle to access necessities such as food and shelter. Thirdly the recent and ongoing #FeesMustFall movement has, among other things, signalled that large numbers of students are experiencing material hardships, and are unable or unwilling to continue to pay the high costs of attending higher education institutions. Dominguez-Whitehead (2017) stressed the importance of Living on campus residence halls because of the convenience of not having to endure a long commute and being able

to access support staff who are tasked with helping students transition in school. Secondly, adequate, and well-developed student housing can also have a powerful influence on the academic success and can contribute to a smooth transition to the university and enhanced learning. The participants also stated that for students who are lucky to get residence, *'some students on-campus accommodation (hostel) is not conducive, with no WIFI and leaking roofs'* (S8). S4 mentioned *'That we pay R 30-38,000 per year for residence, so enough work should be done for next year'*. Although the participants also identified that lack of student accommodation is also attributed to lack of student hostel because *Durban do not have land, but they have started building student residences in PMB, Westville, Edgewood'*.

The challenges of housing were initially identified by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2011) in 2010 that only about 20% of enrolled students lived in residence halls, due to shortage of on-campus housing. Dominguez-Whitehead (2017) also found out that students fortunate enough to access and retain university accommodation maybe faced with a different set of problems. Given that many residence halls have made the shift to a self-catering model to make higher education more affordable, problems such as suitable kitchen facilities, broken toilets, overflowing sewage, collapsing ceilings, exposed wires and over-crowded rooms are manifested.

#### **5.4.1.b. Student Daily Challenges**

The participants also mentioned that daily challenges particularly financial challenges because some students are self-funded. These issues also affected some students which makes them use drugs, alcohol and aggravated by socio-economic status (S2, S6). Financial challenges were also identified as the cause of the protest. *'Students used financial challenges to go on strike... a diversion used as a guise of free education...finances have long way affect others to go into drugs...trying to survive...Most student don't have funding and have family to support'* (S8).

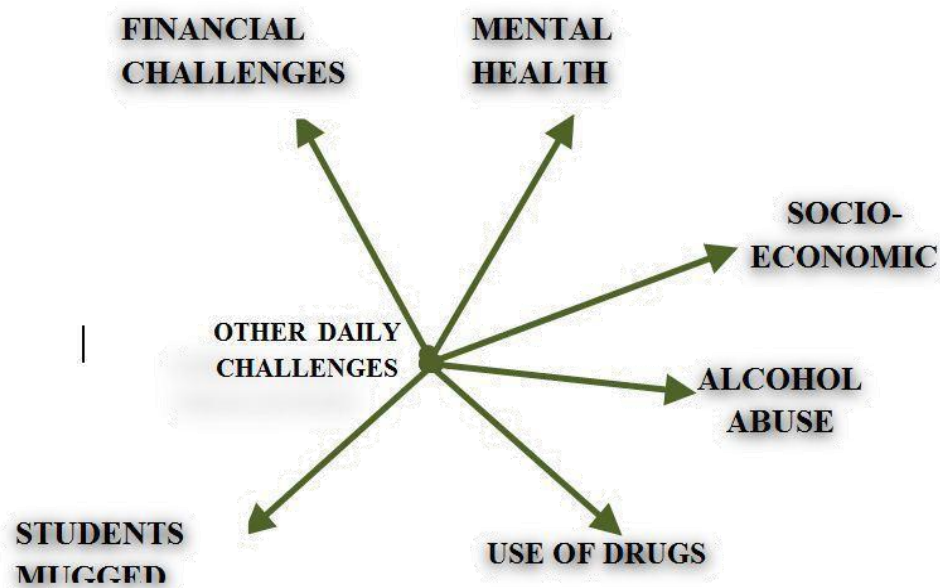
The use of drugs and alcohol is also an attempt of fighting against socio –economic status which affects the psychological thinking of students. S8 also pointed out that peer pressure affects students because there is the *'impression that if you go to notorious institution as DUT, you are from rich family so you trying to fit in so after 3-4 years...your prestige may rise'*. S8 pointed out that student support unit also assists students with challenges. *'if you are hungry.... monthly food parcel within campus, there are structures in place, but students are not aware of these....'*

As the main critical factors that are a challenge to students especially in DUT is hunger and lack of food because of insufficient funding. Student eight did not blame the university but pointed university being very helpful in various ways. Prior study by (Dickens, 2017) on the Psychosocial vulnerability of first-year students at the University of Johannesburg found out that South African students experience high levels of psychosocial vulnerability that can have a direct impact on their academic success. He adds that the surge in student action related to student fees in the latter part of 2015 and into 2016 reflects that students experience significant adversity in their families and communities when transitioning to tertiary life. Other challenges identified at DUT on campus was limited time the school clinic campus (8-2pm) and lack of doctors on-campus.

(S6). *'Doctors usually come twice a week and you must book two weeks ahead (S6).* The participants that belonged to the SRC, expressed that there were limited doctors which affected the health of students. And in cases whereby specialist doctors had to come students have to book in two weeks to see such doctors which is not good for their health'. However, in order to address this challenge, S6 mentioned that the SRC suggested to university management that to make the clinic functional, the SRC strongly proposed that the management develop a working relationship with UKZN medical school in utilizing its student doctors. Also linked to student challenges, is transportation issue, the participants mentioned that *'DUT students living off campus some are mugged and robbed on the way even though there are busses which function at certain times and other times not available'*. Therefore, to address these issues, participants who were SRC indicated that the SRC discussed with the university authority to provide transportation especially when exam starts from 6am-6pm. These are some of the issues that contributed to the #FeesMustFall. Figure 4 summarizes other daily challenges that contributed to #FMF.

*Figure 4: Other daily challenges for students at the Durban University of Technology (DUT)*





Source: Own Construct from Interview Data

### ***5.5: The Role of university management and response to the #FMF movement***

There was consensus that University has a role to play in addressing student's challenges. And more importantly how the university management responded to the demands of the #FeesMustFall movement. But a recurring theme amongst the participants was that university management was not doing enough in this aspect.

S5 made mention of the role DUT management is playing its role in terms of bridging the gap between government and student youth. This was also echoed by participants on the need for university to address students' needs because most of these protests are sparked by lack of communication. There should be two-way communication two-way internal communication, including a newsletter because, although there is internal mail, it is not sufficient to address issues faced by students. However, some of the participants pointed out that there are university structures and support in place in addressing challenges, but students are unaware of them. Respondent 5 who is a staff member at DUT further stated that,

*'The university is or should be at the centre of the conversation of the issues affecting students, but honestly the attitude of management towards students' challenges is not the right attitude. It is an attitude that seems to not be accommodating but more hostile, and if you think about it, it is not helping the university business purposes and smooth running of the university. This also should*

*not suggest that it is not only the university that is in the wrong, but student leaders also have their problem’.*

Naidoo P., (2019) The Department of Higher Education suggests that students who have qualified for NSFAS funding should sign acknowledgements of debt before being allowed to register at their respective universities. This occurred after campuses in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng were shut down with protesters calling for the scrapping of historical debt. This resulted to students barred from registering because of outstanding fees which were not paid by NSFAS. Although S5, reiterated that DUT is assisting students in mitigating financial hardship by giving once off bursaries to students. This is based on criteria that such students have applied for NSFAS and still awaiting funding. Secondly, other students who are supported by management are students who failed to meet the minimum academic school requirements. S3 stated also that student organizations and student support unit are there to assist students who encounter challenges. ‘if you have no food, you get food parcel. Students counselling is also assisting in terms of mitigating these challenges. S11 reiterated that university management and the attitude of the executive suggests that they do not have the interest of black students at heart. S11 puts it well that,

*‘...the university has money, but they behave as if without students school fees or money, they cannot function... We know there are donors and government inject money into school (DUT) but when you meet them, they are proud... but within five years there will be free education...’*

S6 expressed that 8% is granted by government grants if parents earn a certain amount of income... student register... the 8% is phased out but the Acknowledgement of Debt (AOD) was introduced which is taking one step forward, 1 step back...(S11). Acknowledgement of Debt was one of the requirements for financial clearance in 2019 at DUT. In response to the fees must fall movement which has been making waves since 2016 till when this research project was conducted (2019), DUT put some measures in place to address AOD amongst others in 2019. These concessions were not available to any student who is employed on a full-time basis. Firstly, there were two requirements that must be complied with to obtain financial clearance in 2019. Payment of the required 2019 registration fees, and Payment of outstanding debt from previous academic years. The 2019 registration fees were as follows: Local students registering for tuition only were required to pay registration fees of R3,750 in advance of registration. Local students registering for both tuition and residence were required to pay registration fees of R6,500 in advance of registration. While the following categories of students were not required to pay 2019 registration fees: (i) All

students who received the DHET gap funding / missing middle grant for the 2018 academic year.

(ii) All students whose studies were funded by NSFAS for the 2019 academic year.

The following concessions were available to enable students with outstanding debt from previous years to obtain financial clearance in 2019 without fully settling their debt. Students with outstanding debt up to R10 000 were provided with financial clearance in 2019 upon: Payment of the required registration fees; and payment of at least 50% of amounts committed to in previous repayment plans. As well as completion of the DUT acknowledgement of debt (AoD), and a repayment plan that reduces the remaining historic debt by at least 50% by well 30 November 2019. Similarly, students who had confirmed NSFAS funding for 2019 were provided with financial clearance in 2019 upon provision of written confirmation of NSFAS funding; and completion of the DHET acknowledgement of debt (AoD) form. Students who are previous NSFAS beneficiaries were provided with financial clearance in 2019 upon: payment of the required registration fees; and completion of the DHET acknowledgement of debt (AoD) form. Students with a combined gross family income up to R350 000 per annum were provided with financial clearance in 2019 upon: Payment of the required registration fees; and Payment of at least 50% of amounts committed to in previous repayment plans; and Completion of the DUT acknowledgement of debt (AOD), and a repayment plan that reduces the remaining historic debt by at least 50% by 30 November 2019.

Students whose studies were fully funded for 2019 were provided with financial clearance in 2019 upon verification of the written confirmation of funding; and payment of the required registration fees; and Payment of at least 50% of amounts committed to in previous repayment plans; and Completion of the DUT acknowledgement of debt (AoD), and a repayment plan that reduces the remaining historic debt by at least 50% by 30 November 2019. Students who do not fall into any of the above categories will be provided with financial clearance in 2019 upon: Payment of 50% of the outstanding debt limited to a maximum amount of R32 000 if registering for tuition only and R64 000 if registering for tuition and residence; and payment of the required registration fees; and Completion of the DUT acknowledgement of debt (AoD), and a repayment plan that reduces the remaining historic debt by at least 50% by 30 November 2019.

Similarly, S6 and S7 noted that University's lack of communication resulted in the protest. *'There should be two-way communication, newsletter, although there is mail but those do not sufficiently address these issues.* University management need to declare their position and defend students'

interests. S2 stated that they try to engage with university, but university does not respond but they will say it is beyond them. As a result, the matter was also pursued with government. S2 cited how *‘former VC of Witwatersrand Prof. Adam Habib and former VC of UKZN, Dr. Albert Van Jaarsveld made derogatory comments about the FMF campaign whenever they talk about fee increment, they would declare that ‘university measures are not enough because if you look at protest generally that when protest occurs, university brings in police on site and rubber bullets...rubber bullet does not resolve the problem but rather aggravates it...rather water cannon is okay...university needs to look at risk strategy and communication strategy... look at changing the attitude, Look at changing attitude, university attitude and management comprise also the SRC and SRC is part of leadership, need for proper communication therefore university needs to look at the triggers that could spark up the protest. When students say free fees for the poor, free fees for the middle need to understand what they are saying, free fees and how to address this issue...it is not on the highest agenda ...the attitude has not changed...if protest is on, management should not let it escalate...they should take the 1976 declaration and see what can be done.*

S7 also suggests that university staff and lecturers need to view students as adults and not children. The rationale for this is because students are usually put down.’ They are 18 years and older so they should be treated as adults... people are listening but not acting’. As emphasized by S6, *‘university does not address issues until there is a strike...they do not plan ahead like the issue of accommodation...you know students are coming next year...why not plan ahead...’*

Participants also pointed out that rather than discussing issues, management is aggressive rather than addressing issues through debate (S5). According to S9, the role of university management in addressing challenges is challenging. They said that,

*‘...I feel like the principle of state capture applies to University as University under white...if not corruption....whites will never understand the struggle of a black child ,, so how will they address it...in February fees increased but students were informed the year it was increased through SMS, why not tell them by October so to prepare ahead you know you will increase... University acts like capitalist but they do not care for the struggle of black students...’.*

On the other hand, staff member from the management had these reflections about the role of the university, separating state, government role and the role of universities. He stated the following:

*'The kinds of demands by students are not of the nature that Vice Chancellors can respond in totally, some of the demands the university can certainly respond to and reach a mutual agreement and understanding with the students. The state therefore in most of the demands the student leaders have made are directly and can only be addressed by the state. And we must agree the demands are legitimate and the question of the legitimacy of our universities and their orientation, let me even go further to say embedded in this protest is the question of the legitimacy of the ruling party. According to my assessment the student has every right to be angry if the system of education, lack of economic growth, lack of redistribution, and lack of progress around social and economic right does not centre the student'.*

Higher education has always held a position that they are autonomous and independent of the government even before many social movements that have been significant in student activism. And the rationale around the position mentioned above stems from the fact that it is not the university position to formulate and implement policies, it is government's responsibility. Habib et al. (2008) argues that state intervention and the control it seeks undermines academic liberty. Moreover, participants indicate the sympathy the university shares for the student struggles and its challenges. When the participant was further probed, he emphasized the university position and its solidarity with the struggle of the students as follows,

*'The goal and the aim of a decolonized free education is not something the university can deliver on, because the universities are also funded. What the university was and has been committed to is becoming part of the campaign to make this goal and aim a possibility overtime'.*

The staff member believes that the challenges facing higher education are mostly inherited from the apartheid system that remains untransformed. For example, according to the participant,

*'There are few basics we can all agree to that the ruling party inherited a particular education system that has not changed sufficiently to better accommodate many students that populate many campuses today. Because you must understand that the universities (historically white universities) were not created for the diverse population or blacks, and the question of transformation has not been aggressive and brutal as it should be'.*

The measures that the university implemented in response to the #FMF movements were not enough, bringing police on campus does not always yield good and expected results but inflame and cause more problems rather than mitigating the problems.

*'We need a management that is safe and has the political will that equally understands the greater objective of the institution...'*

Student leaders have through and during the study made sense of the movement of the #FEM on student politics at DUT. There was consensus among participants that the challenges facing higher education was not only current but could be traced from pre-democratic society. Participants discussed not only what the #FEM movement is, free education and the causes of the national shutdown mainly been the socio- economic contract designed in the South African society. Moreover, students have acknowledged several challenges when dealing with the university management in understanding student activism.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the contribution of students in the South African politics and its collective unique history in higher education shows how persistent students are determined to be part of a solution. The debates and arguments around the feasibility of free education is one that is crucial, mainly because when the ANC ascended into power promised free education after decades of oppression and apartheid. Additionally, it seems students will continue to use their identity as blacks to fight injustices of the past, because race and economics have a deep history in the South African community. The next chapter will conclude the research findings and provide recommendations based on the research findings.

## **6. Summary and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Summary**

The focus of this study was on influence of the #FeesMustFall movement on student politics at DUT. The movement of the #FeesMustFall and the politics around the movement is a rich history in understanding student politics. The purpose of the study was therefore to investigate the influence of #FeesMustFall movement on student politics in understanding the causes, challenges and what the FMF movement is. Thus, it sought to probe the challenges students face particularly at DUT in connection with the FMF movement. It further investigated how the management responded to the demands of students and deal with the movement of the #FeesMustFall. The literature review which focused on African universities, global scene of higher education, funding and the higher education before 1991 and after 1991. The literature review has clearly articulated the history of student activism in the South African history of student politics. Moreover, the literature indicated how important student activism has been for South African free society, and how student`s movement defined their mandate not only within student community but broadly for the society around them and beyond the borders of South Africa. It is evident from the literature that student`s leaders have continuously utilized politics as one of the major factors in fighting the apartheid regime in South Africa for a democratic society.

The study used a well-known theory of social justice as a framework to clearly explain on issues of justice and fairness of the study in relation to the literature review presented, the literature collected, and the examinations directed towards the findings of the research. The theoretical method utilized in the study has proven to be very important especially because of the nature of the study. This has been a foundation in laying clearly how a democratic and fair society should be seen and perceived. The theoretical framework highlights amongst other things justice, fairness, liberal and conservative understanding of justice and programs to be adopted to promote social justice practices. All the issues mentioned above are of great importance considering the findings of the research, in explaining issues of higher education and transformation. The qualitative approach in the research study has proven to be helpful and useful when collecting data in the field.

Sampling methods chosen for identifying the population of study was handful as well and all procedures were followed.

The preparations of interviews and participants for the study reacted positively. As clearly set out from the beginning of the goals and objective of the study, this has positively reached the objectives of the study. This as a result have been relevant to the study considering the aims investigated. Among the constant thought that kept occurring during the interaction with participants was that students vehemently wanted the state to declare a free decolonized free education as was promised by the government since 1994. Thousands of many black students dropping-off and experiencing financial exclusion because of affordability proves this cause legitimate. Student leaders acknowledge the #FeesMustFall movement as one of the significant movements in student activism not only at DUT but across all universities in the country after the Soweto Uprising of 1976. Even though the movement of #FMF was drastic and caused the university more damage and disrupted teaching and learning, students view demonstrations, boycott to reaching their objectives. This has resulted to DUT students and university management clashing during the shut-down of the university in demand for free education.

From the data collected, findings show that there are number of things positively the #FMF movements accomplished. All political parties (SASCO, EFFSC, DA and BLF) found their voices uniting under the national call for free decolonized education, and this unity among students' leaders and various social groupings revived and encouraged youth to engage more in student politics. It was clear from the results of the study that unity was a key for the movement to achieve its objectives, which saw the then President Jacob Zuma announcing 0% increment free for all university students across South Africa. Moreover, this (unity) has proven to be a success factor for any challenges that students face in their experiences when dealing with the university management.

As mentioned above the aim of the study was to investigate the influence of the #FMF movement in student politics and how the management responded to the demands of the students. Higher education in South Africa have shaped student activism with the social-economic state of the country since pre- apartheid and post-apartheid period. And as the emergence of the 2015-16 movement of #FMF with challenging the *status quo*. Student life for black South Africans in the DUT campus is one that is comprised of difficulties with most students coming from poor and middle-class families. Because of lack of funding for many students across universities student struggle not only with tuition fees, but daily struggle with hunger, necessities especially for women



such as sanitary pads. Those with no funding, a great number of students poor do not have even the basic of needs accommodation.

The universities lack of facilities and structures in place to accommodate many of its students are a contributing factor to the problem.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

### **6.2.1. Improve communication between students, management and the SRC**

Participants have highlighted unhealthy relationship between the student's bodies, students, and the university which as many pointed to poor communication. University management needs to revisit its communication channels and platforms of communications with student leaders and students in improving its relations. It is these relations (relations with student leaders, students, and University management) that if improved will reduce conflict.

### **6.2.2. Increased investment and friendlier policies in funding marginalized students**

Government needs to yield and act more deliberately by investigating the university student funding policies in consideration of social-economic imbalances of many populations of black South African student in campuses. And develop policies that are friendlier and more sympathetic to the individual and focus on the whole being rather than economic and administrative.

### **6.2.3. FastTrack transformation agenda**

Education is needful for the nature of student activism, politics, and culture in universities to seek more and less disruptive but robust, engaging, and effective means of dealing with universities. It is of great importance for the university to be deliberate in practice and adopt a progressive attitude and commit to the agenda of transforming the institution to be relevant to the current population.

The university should be able to identify within the institution old practices (whether in policy or its language in a democratic society) and attitude that are colonial to eradicate for a healthier learning environment for student.

#### **6.2.4. Create a sympathetic and stable learning environment**

Social movement in most cases are disruptive and resort to measures that affect and disturb the *status quo*, in the context of university would be lectures. It is important therefore, for universities to suspend lectures whenever there is a protest to reduces tensions in the learning spaces. And as soon as the university have found common ground with issues that are of a concern at the time. University, government, social bodies, and student leaders should engage and seek to find suitable solutions and measures for the challenges in higher education. It was notable of the #FMF movement with the causes of it and commonalities with previous protest the link with its causes. Therefore, the university management should seek measures that are directly in addressing recurring issues that causes protests with the aim of promoting a more stable learning environment.

### 6.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research study is one of the reference points for the movement of the #FeesMustFall and its influence on student politics in the DUT Steve Biko Campus, which can be extended to other universities in South Africa. The study sought to look into the relationship between student politics and the movement of the #FeesMustFall it influences on a broader scale and how the university management responded to the demands by student bodies and social movement. The results of the study have given a good perspective and experiences of students and how they can be influential, social and in solidarity. This has put emphasis on the real life to the day-to-day experiences of students struggles in light of the free decolonized education. Moreover, the study has contributed to the argument and discussion around issues relating to higher education and how the #FMF have influenced student politics. Additionally, the causes of the #FMF movement and the experiences of students in the DUT Steve Biko campus were briefly discussed.

During the study, positive lessons have been learnt. The process of data collection, transcribing, interpreting, and analysing and deeply reflecting on the views that participants shared, social justice seemed to be a sense of mood with reference to injustices of apartheid in South Africa. It is evident in the results as studied that free decolonized education is feasible and university, government and other stakeholders need to political will for solutions around funding higher education.

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## ANNEXURE A: Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 04/06/2019

Dear Participant

My name is (Kabelo Mokua) from (UKZN, Political Science/Social Sciences. Cell no: 0768735967 and email [atlegangletlotlo@gmail.com](mailto:atlegangletlotlo@gmail.com)).

—

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research (that seek to understand the experiences of students with the #FMF movement protest). The aim and purpose of this research is to (understand challenges students faces and how the #FMF gave platform to address the issues). It will involve the following procedures (a series of interview with the chosen participants 40 minutes interviews each). The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be (40 minutes interview). This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Research Ethics. In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher (cell no:0768735967) or the UKZN Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

### **HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research

Office,

Westville

Campus Govan

Mbeki Building

Private

Bag

X

540

Durban 4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Participation in this research is voluntary. Participants may withdraw participation at any point, and that in the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation the participants will not incur penalty or loss of treatment.

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### **CONSENT by participant**

I (Name) have been informed about the study entitled (provide details) by (provide name of researcher/fieldworker).

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

86

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to. I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study  
I understand that I may contact the researcher at (provide details).

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville

Campus Govan Mbeki Building Private Bag X 540

Durban 4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609 Email:

[HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Additional consent, where applicable I Hereby Provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO Use

of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

**Signature of Participant**

**Date**

**Signature of Witness**

**Date (Where applicable)**

**Signature of Translator**

**Date (Where applicable)**

87

**ANNEXURE B: Interview Questionnaire**

Title .....

Name .....

Gender .....

Race .....

Organization/Sub-unit/Directorate: .....

**The schedule below was used to gather information from staff members of the University**

**1.) What was the influence of the #FeesMustFall movement on student politics?**

- How long have you actively been involved in student politics?

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- What political party or alliance do you belong to? If so do you hold any position of influence e.g. exec member etc.

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- What is your understanding of the #feesmustfall movement? (What is it, what is it about and why the #feesmustfall movement?)

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- What are the challenges that students are facing here on campus in relation to the #FMF movement quest?

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- Do you personally think that these challenges have a role/impact in student politics and life? If so, please elaborate further what you mean by yes/no.

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- What was the main cause of the rise of this movement (#FMF) according to your assessment?

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- What impact do you think the #FMF movement has had in student politics?

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- What role do you think the university management can play in response to the challenges that students face?

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- Do you think that the SRC has a role to play in also aiding in addressing students' challenges? If so, what is their role elaborate?

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1.10) What is the importance of student's politics in the life of campus students?

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**The schedule below was used to gather information from students (SRC, activist etc.)**

**2.) How did the university management respond to the #FeesMustFall protest movement at DUT Steve Biko Campus?**

- What is the position that you hold in this administration?

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- How long have you been serving in this capacity (exec member etc.)?

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- What political party or alliance do you belong to? If so, do you hold any position of influence e.g. exec member etc.

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- What is your understanding of the #feesmustfall movement? (what is it, what is it about and why the #feesmustfall movement?)

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- What are the challenges that students are facing here on campus in relation to the #FMF movement quest?

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- Do you personally think that these challenges have a role/impact in student politics and life? If so, please elaborate further what you mean by yes/no.

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- What was the main cause of the rise of this movement (#FMF) according to your assessment?

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- What impact do you think the #FMF movement has had in student politics?

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- Were there measures taken by the university in response to the #FMF movement? If so what those measures?

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- What role do you think the university management can play in response to the challenges that students face?

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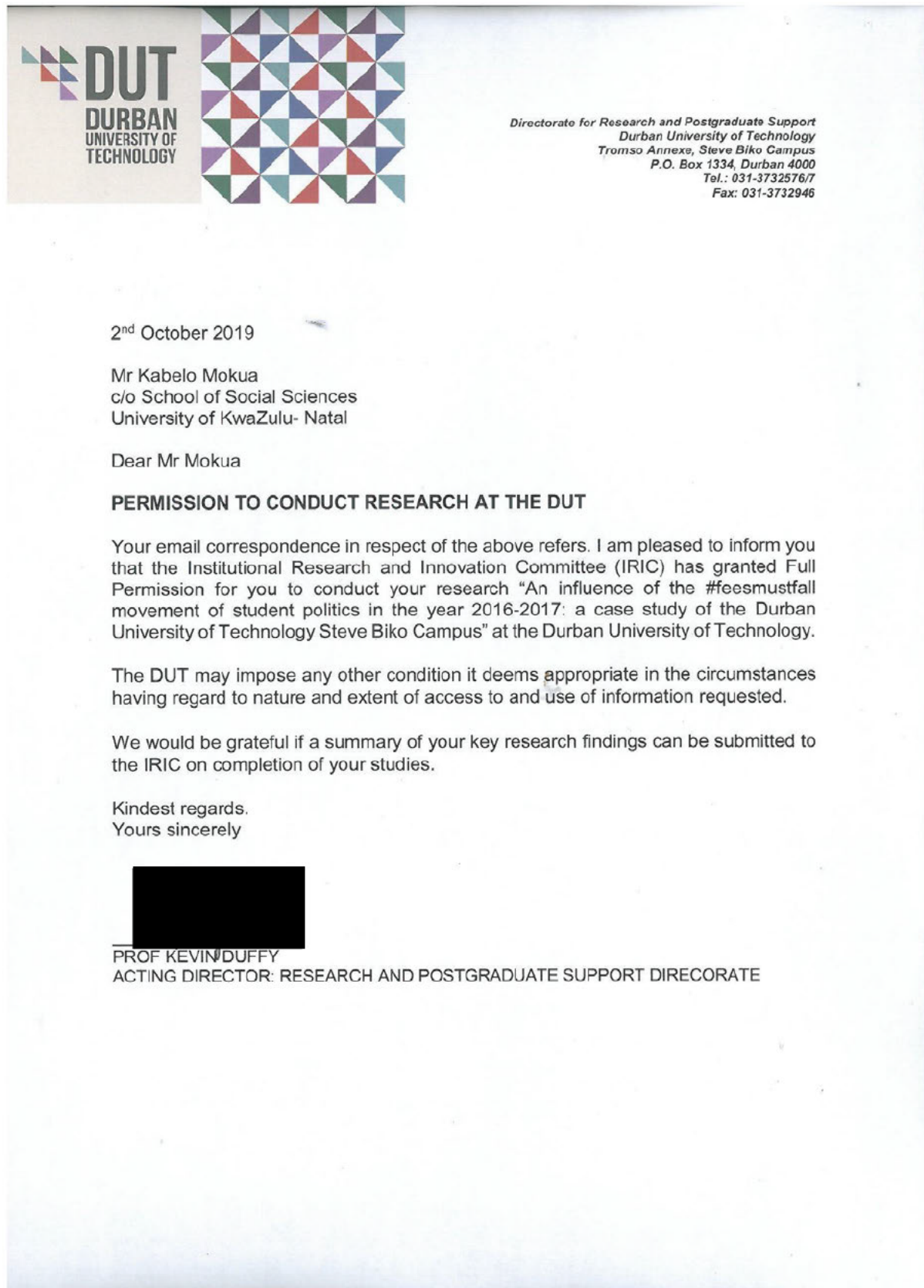
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- Do you think that the university management has a role to play in also aiding in addressing students challenges? If so what is their role elaborate?

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The end: Thank you very much for your valuable contribution.

## ANNEXURE C: Gate Keeper Letter from DUT



## ANNEXURE D: Professional Language Editing Letter

PETER MUTUKU

27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2020

+27 71940 7313

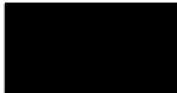
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Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Dissertation Review

I am hereby writing to confirm that I, Peter Mutuku, currently pursuing M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering at UKZN, have read and edited the Masters Dissertation of Kabelo Mokuu (217080873) themed, "An Influence of the #FeesMustFall Movement on Student Politics: A case study of the Durban University of Technology 2016-17 Steve Biko Campus."

Regards,



Peter Mutuku.

## **ANNEXURE E: Turnitin originality report**

## #FeesMustFall

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