CONTESTED MEANINGS OF TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

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CONTESTED MEANINGS OF TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

by

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DECLARATION

I, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, declare that the dissertation/thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR, in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

.....

11 December 2018

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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I have read many acknowledgements in the past three years as I peruse books, articles and dissertations. I agree with all of them that family must be acknowledged first. Their love, support and encouragement is an incalculable boost to one's efforts.

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ABSTRACT

Transformation is a concept that is widely used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Research indicates that transformation is a desired objective. However, there are many different uses and meanings associated with the concept, which points to much contestation regarding its interpretation.

The focus of my research was to conduct an investigation into the contested meanings of transformation with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. This work identifies and presents meanings of transformation, as utilised in various countries globally, with reference to higher education change. The study develops and utilises a theoretical framework that allows for critical analysis and interpretation of the data that was amassed during the course of the study.

A wide body of literature makes use of the concept of 'transformation' with regard to desired or actual change in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. A close study of available information indicates that transformation is a desired end for many who reflect on inadequacies inherent in the higher education sector in South Africa today. Despite the extensive use of the concept of transformation, there appears to be contestation as to its meanings and interpretation.

There seems to be a close association between use of the concept of transformation and widely held aspirations for a vastly different higher education from that which existed under apartheid law in South Africa. I utilise the 'glonacal' heuristic developed by Marginson (2004, 2016) to develop an interpretive analysis of meanings of transformation along global, national and local (glo-na-cal) dimensions. The framework allows for a comparative analysis of meanings of transformation as gleaned from a range of other countries. I also examine the contested meanings utilising the very useful lenses provided by Przeworski's (1991, 2007) socio-economic analysis of the progress of development and change in societies confronted by challenging transition and the need to build new viable democracies.

This is a qualitative study that has been enriched through active data collection by means of semi-structured interviews with policy experts, former students, university leaders and other participants. The study provided an opportunity to scrutinise several dimensions of higher

education simultaneously, thus presenting an informative and diverse synthesis of perspectives that are rarely brought together in research on higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The study also reflects on the bold policy steps adopted by democratic South Africa and some of the progress and successes that have since been achieved in higher education. The analytical framework that was utilised proved most helpful in exploring elements of the South African context that are often neglected. For example, the complexity posed by transition from severe oppression to a society seeking change is frankly explored, as are the complex factors that can often be associated with attempts to reverse the effects of odious policies.

The study presents a wide range of meanings that are conveyed with use of the concept transformation in reference to post-apartheid higher education in South Africa. It also shows that the meanings prevalent in South Africa are a global concern occupying policy and public attention in many countries across the world. Furthermore, higher education stands challenged by the complex imperatives of globalisation. These findings have implications not only for policy makers, they require higher education stakeholders to devote increased attention to the contested meanings of transformation so that higher education is supported to achieve the goals desired by society.

I believe that this research study provides a comprehensive understanding of the very challenging post-apartheid higher education sector and illuminates the concerns held by academics, students and a range of other stakeholders. Given the wide breadth of issues identified and explained in the study – especially in relation to contested meanings of transformation, the study may assist in determining fresh approaches to change in higher education and encourage researchers to pursue fuller investigation of the impact of policy that is hinted at in the study.

Keywords:

Transformation, transition, access, post-apartheid, democracy, glonacal, race, gender, historically advantaged, historically disadvantaged

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30 November 2018

To whom it may concern

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
AZASO	Azanian Students Organisation
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CHET	Centre for Higher Education Transformation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CTP	Committee of Technikon Principals
CUP	Committee of University Principals
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DOE	Department of Education
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency of European Commission
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HAI	Historically Advantaged Institution
HBU	Historically Black University
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Institution
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HWI	Historically White Institution

HWU	Historically White University
ITP	Integrated Transformation Plan
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
NACI	National Advisory Council on Innovation
NCHE	National Council of Higher Education
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NEPI	National Education Policy Initiative
nGAP	New Generation of Academics Programme
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAAAD	Southern African Association for Academic Development
SASCO	South African Students Congress
SASO	South African Students Organisation
TEFSA	Tertiary Education of South Africa
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

UDUSA	Union of Democratic University Staff Associations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Socialist Soviet Republics

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CHAPTER ONE: TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a fairly young democracy in the global community of democratic countries. It achieved full political and civil rights for all its citizens in 1994, following the conclusion of a protracted negotiations process. Prior to that historic development, the black indigenous people of South Africa had suffered colonial and racial oppression and exploitation for almost three hundred years. The most severe form of this oppression was the enactment and imposition of apartheid racist policy which was imposed following the election victory of the National Party in 1948. Apartheid policy governed and constrained black, coloured, and Indian South Africans by stipulating where they should live and study, limiting their access to basic amenities and civil rights, infringing their human rights through torture and imprisonment, and denying them access to education and development.

One of the most enduring hopes among the oppressed people of South Africa was the desire for education. This was linked to an apparent belief in education as an opportunity for real change in one's life circumstances. Some of the most infamous apartheid policies were those designed to ensure very limited and poor quality education for black people. The fortunate few who managed to secure schooling and succeed in the national school leaving examinations, (the Matriculation Examination) often set their sights on gaining entry to university. However, university choices were very limited for black people, while their fellow white citizens enjoyed opportunities to attend several well-endowed public universities. Some universities were reserved solely for black people and the higher education sector was further segmented into institutions for various ethnic categories.

This social engineering of universities and their inclusion in racist apartheid policies led to much protest and dissatisfaction within the oppressed majority in South Africa. Higher education became a sector of great conflict and tension, while continuing to enjoy the status of being a magnet for thousands who wished to improve their circumstances in society by acquiring a higher education

qualification. The simultaneous inadequate provision of school education for black people and the low number of universities they could attend resulted in an abiding and vibrant desire for university education and a constant striving for increased chances to enter university. Exclusion from higher education was firmly identified with apartheid policy, and the much-hoped-for freedom was synonymously considered by many black people to be the time when university education would be available to all.

The advent of democracy in 1994 was therefore regarded as the beginning of the realisation of this long-held desire for university education. However, although the new Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996a) confirmed the right to education, increased entry to universities and change within them did not proceed as anticipated. The view that there is inadequate responsiveness to popular interest in higher education has given rise to complaints about the absence of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa (Nkomo, 2011; Reddy, 2006; Bazana & Mokgotsi, 2017). Although the aspiration towards 'transformation' is widely used as a means of expressing a range of different commentaries about higher education, there appears to be much contestation as to its meanings.

The aim of this research study is to explore and analyse the meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. It focuses primarily on participants in the development of higher education policy and those responsible for its implementation, whilst also seeking to consider the views of external stakeholders who play a role in higher education transformation. The study introduces relevant comparative international perspectives in order to explore the contested meanings of transformation more cogently.

In succinct terms the study aimed to:

1 Identify the various meanings that stakeholders attach to the concept transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa;
2 Examine the extent to which policy makers reflected on and prepared for the impact of legislation with regard to higher education transformation;
3 Establish whether post-apartheid higher education policy is achieving the stated transformation objectives implementing responses on the basis of lessons learnt; and

4 Identify processes and mechanisms that could be put in place in order to strengthen policy making and improve the achievement of its intended objectives.

Post-apartheid South Africa's democratic government has undertaken extensive reviews of public policy in education including higher education, and has used such reviews to formulate policies for the new democracy. A range of policies now govern the higher education sector, drawing mostly on the White Paper 1 of the Department of Education (DOE, 1995), the White Paper 3 (DOE, 1997), the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997b) and the National Plan for Higher Education (DOE, 2001). All these policies contain extensive references to transformation, some of which are analysed in this study.

Transformation has also been the focus of research on higher education, as well as the subject of frequent national debates and discussions. The Council on Higher Education (CHE) – as well as leading academics such as Makgoba and Seepe (2004); Cloete (2011); Govinder, Zondo and Makgoba (2013) and many others – have published research that focuses on transformation in higher education. It is often assumed that all the different constituencies that use the concept of transformation intend to convey the same meaning. This study provides evidence that the concept and its use have been explored at different periods of change in higher education in South Africa, and indicates how these meanings have altered during the first twenty years of democracy.

The first part of this study focuses on setting the context and thus briefly reflects on the apartheid period in higher education in South Africa. I consider the education protests and demands of that period in order to establish a framework for closer investigation of the core subject, and the contested meanings of transformation subsequent to this period, that led to the development and adoption of the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997). The focus on this and subsequent periods seeks to examine whether expected progress has occurred, in what ways, and whether more needs to be done.

The South African higher education system is merely one among many globally that have been confronted by the challenge of transformation. For example, the California higher education system had to confront new mandates and change following the 1996 judicial decision on affirmative action. In Europe, changing policy demands, decreases in funding, new managerial frameworks, and a global decline in autonomy are cited by Bleiklie, Enders and Lepori (2013) as

having affected the ability of institutions to be leaders in promoting change in higher education. Thus this study also considers possible international influences on policy and practice in higher education in South Africa.

1.2 CONTEXT

1.2.1 The demand for change in higher education

This is a timely study, given South Africa's maturing democracy and the many changes that have occurred since 1994. Changes in the apartheid higher education system began to occur in the period of education activism that followed the national education protests in 1976 (Kallaway, 1984). From around 1980, higher education institutions began to actively ignore apartheid restrictions that controlled student access and other facets of institutional autonomy and academic freedom. South African universities were faced with a worldwide international academic boycott and many took a stand against apartheid to indicate their support for non-racialism and democracy (Kallaway, 1984). This support for the growing and increasingly international anti-apartheid struggle resulted in the development of various policy proposals – from within higher education, several organisations in the education sector, and the broader anti-apartheid movement – to transform the higher education sector. As Kallaway (1984, p. 5) asserts, conferences such as the Kenton Conference, activities led by the private sector, and research by NGOs began to generate proposals for a post-apartheid education system.

In contrast to many African countries, post-apartheid South Africa inherited a well-established higher education sector with 21 universities and fifteen technikons. At least four of the universities were regarded as being globally competitive, offering quality academic programmes and achieving noteworthy research outputs in a number of disciplines. Notwithstanding these positive features, the sector was believed to closely reflect the apartheid design of racially exclusive, ethnically organised institutions. Presenting its report two years after the democratic elections of South Africa, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) report (NCHE, 1996, p.3) characterised the apartheid higher education system as:

- "having reason for concern and an imperative for transformation;
- being limited in its ability to meet the moral, social and economic demands of the new South Africa;
- perpetuating an inequitable distribution of access and opportunity for students and staff along lines of gender, class and geographical discrimination; and
- characterised by untenable disparities between historically black and historically white institutions in terms of facilities and capacities".

The apartheid divide of 'historically advantaged institutions' and 'historically disadvantaged institutions' was a defining feature of higher education in South Africa that gave life to a strident culture of demand-driven protests. Academics, general staff and students in the sector played active and, for many, significant roles in the struggle for freedom.

In the period from 1981 to around 1993 many organisations, individuals and institutions articulated their views on a future framework for higher education policy and practice in a democratic South Africa. Such studies include the policy forum papers of the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (UDUSA) (Bunting, 1994) and the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) (NEPI, 1992b). After the massive 1976 protests in school level education, schools, colleges and universities, trade unions, community organisations, big business and many other constituencies initiated debates and produced documents that set out their demands, hopes and aspirations for a post-apartheid higher education system. Examples include (among others):

- Student organisations such as the South African Students Organisation (SASO), the Azanian Student Congress (AZASO), the South African Student Congress (SASCO), National Union of South African Students (NUSAS);
- Mass-based education organisations such as the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC);
- Academic formations such as the Southern African Association for Academic Development (SAAAD), the Committee of University Principals (CUP), the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (UDUSA).

The views that emerged illustrate the existence of a wide range of perspectives on the shape and character of higher education, once freed of the apartheid legacy.

The setting out of the context clearly establishes contrasting perspectives on higher education. Most impactful is the observation that while there was vigorous opposition to apartheid higher education, this did not dim the widely-held desire for access to higher education that existed, especially among population groups that were largely denied access to university education. Another observation is the inclusive, popular approach to policy development and presentation of views on what a future post-apartheid system of higher education should do for society – particularly one that had experienced the exclusion and marginalisation that literature asserts as being present under apartheid. A third perspective is that the experience of being kept out, of being denied opportunity, of fighting for every chance to get in, created a culture of demand and protest, and so established a basis for consistent resistance and challenge in post-apartheid higher education institutions.

When apartheid South Africa arrived at the point of democracy, the country was organised in a manner that did not reflect many post-conflict societies that are confronted by a difficult transition. Future policy had been formulated by liberation organisations such as the ANC and policy development had been initiated by internal structures such as the NECC. The study shows that policy formulation for a democratic South Africa had been shaped on the streets, in community halls, in community-based structures, and in underground political structures, with participation from a broad range of diverse people not usually associated with shaping policy. Evidence is provided in chapter two by investigating the work of the NECC, the formation of UDUSA, and the keen roles played by students and community leaders. These processes somewhat challenged the comfort zone of respectability sometimes occupied by universities; and perhaps a sense of discomfort was created among many traditional constituencies in higher education.

One concept that featured in many of the early statements, petitions, conferences and academic papers, was that of ‘transformation’. The policy perspective of UDUSA is reflected succinctly in a collection of papers edited by Bunting (1994). The UDUSA policy forum papers outlined the structural flaws of apartheid higher education as:

- unequal access for staff and students in relation to race and gender;

- an undemocratic system created by an illegitimate government, resulting in a wasteful system and poor planning capacity;
- an unarticulated system not providing for student mobility within sub-sectors;
- failure to produce graduates with competencies requisite for a society in transformation; and
- government funding not taking into account the needs of disadvantaged universities (Odhav, 2009).

The views of SASCO are cited by Odhav (2009) as a critique of the Green Paper on Higher Education (DOE, 1996), criticising it for "excluding principles of non-racialism and non-sexism", not having a policy on "language and curriculum", and "no vision of a societally contextualised transformation" (Odhav, 2009, p. 43).

Most of these stakeholders did not have formal policy links with the government of the time; thus their views were primarily aspirations about a future higher education sector in South Africa, and their beliefs indicated actions they expected from a future democratic government. They appeared to expect that the future democratic government would embrace their demands and respond practically by incorporating them into policy-making processes. Most organisations and individuals presenting these expected policy approaches had little or no experience of governance or of developing legislation; hence the focus was on the desired outcomes and not on whether the proposals could be acted upon by policy makers. Odhav (2009) refers to the approach of presenting policy options that was used by the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI, 1992b). He suggests that the options model reflected a cautious approach: "It suggests options and the balancing of options, but it was too careful about making policy choices and recommendations about the system" (Odhav, 2009, p. 40). The same author seems to imply that NEPI was not sufficiently bold in selecting a set of proposals, as "it called for balancing access, quality and development, and for skills redress at universities, but did not mention redress for HDIs [historically disadvantaged institutions] and students" (p. 40).

The literature studied shows that many of the views expressed referred to the need to radically transform higher education – calling for a significant departure from what existed at that time, and under apartheid. The call for change was almost universal, but it appears there were some (NEPI,

1992b; Committee of University Principals, 1996) who cautioned that change should not harm the excellence or quality that was said to be a feature of some institutions in the sector at that time. However, even if the perspectives differed on the nature of change and exactly what had to be changed, there seemed to be common agreement that change should occur (Kallaway 1984; ANC, 1994; RDP, 1994b).

In the lead-up to the political negotiations that resulted in South Africa's political settlement, anti-apartheid formations initiated a process of rather more formal consideration of future policy options. Individuals and organisations began planning for a future in which their policy aspirations would be acted upon. During this period, a significant amount of policy development activity was directed at framing new higher education policy. Notable examples among these were the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) process, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the African National Congress (ANC) Education Policy document (ANC, 1994b) and various other stakeholder initiatives (NEPI, 1992a; NEPI, 1992b; NEPI, 1992c; ANC, 1994a; ANC, 1994b; NCHE, 1996).

1.2.2 The policy development process since 1994

The period since the advent of democracy in South Africa has been characterised by the development of much legislation targeted at supporting change and transformation in a range of sectors, including higher education. In the earlier apartheid era, policy development was almost solely government-led and the majority of the people of South Africa played no role in the process, despite the often significant impact of these laws on society. In contrast, the development of policy in South Africa since 1994 has seemingly attempted to be inclusive and thus open to public participation. This stance reflects the history of popular resistance and participation that characterised the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

A noteworthy example of such participation is the development of the Freedom Charter of South Africa which was drafted during the apartheid era, following a mass campaign led by the ANC and several popular organisations. The Freedom Charter was eventually adopted at a People's Congress held in 1955 in the face of fierce repression by the apartheid state. This form of mass

participation became a feature of post-apartheid policy development by the new government. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, successive governments have used policy as a tool to advance the objectives and priorities of the democratic state. Education is a sector that has had significant policy development, for example, the Schools Act (RSA, 1996b), the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997), and the Educators' Act (RSA, 1998).

The process of policy development is supported by the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996a) (clause 59 of chapter 4), which mandates Parliament to provide for public access to, and involvement in the processes and all legislative work of Parliament. This has given rise to the public submitting views and testimonies on various legislative and other matters, which is often followed by robust public consultation. The process is finalised in Parliament and the final policy may sometimes differ markedly from the submissions and expectations of stakeholders. Further complexity and debate sometimes arise upon implementation of policy, as it can assume a form or outcome that had never been anticipated by stakeholders. Disappointment at this perceived 'failure to honour expectations' is at times interpreted as a lack of government commitment to transformation, and results in protests demanding real change and transformation. Such demands are made regularly with respect to higher education. It is this clamour that led to my intention to examine the meanings attached to the notion of transformation in reference to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem that the study addresses is that of insufficient attention being paid to probing meanings of the concept transformation, regarding policy and practice in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Even though there are repeated and general references to transformation in various higher education policy documents, such references do not provide empirically informed, cohesive and shared understanding of this concept. This problem has been exacerbated by growing public impatience and often fractious national debates on the subject of transformation. Inadequate attention to exploring meanings poses the danger of distracting higher education practitioners from pursuing the objectives elaborated in national policy such as the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) and other policies.

1.4 RATIONALE AND POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study created the opportunity for an original contribution to higher education theory and practice in developing potentially useful theoretical perspectives that will contribute to future research. It has also exposed the multiple complexities of implementing higher education policy in a context such as South Africa. Furthermore, through exploring and incorporating global dimensions, the study enables a more nuanced and informed exploration of the meanings of transformation. Even though there has been much use of the concept transformation in higher education, there is sparse evidence of studies that seek to investigate meanings of transformation in a concerted and deliberate manner. The majority of related studies (Waghid, 2002; Van Wyk, 2006; Lange, 2014) often focus on a distinct aspect of these meanings.

The study has benefitted from my being able to draw on my own personal background and experience on the subject under investigation. It has confirmed that higher education is a very important sector in education, attracting much interest from families and communities of all backgrounds. I recall dinner table discussions at my grandmother's house, often centred around the great value black people believed could be derived from higher education. Our grandmother Frieda Matthews, one of the early black female graduates of Fort Hare University, would enthral us with her stories of black pride in 'their' own university (Fort Hare), which they believed compared with any in the world.

My grandmother and her peers believed they were just as intelligent as any young person in South Africa at that time. They intended to pursue their higher education studies and succeed, in order to show those who denied them entry to the established white universities that they were just as good as them, if not better. She would talk of their pride in the achievements of academic giants such as Z K Matthews (my grandfather), Professor Jabavu and the great writer Sol Plaatjie.

It was at Fort Hare University that the early signs of disquiet emerged. For many aspiring black families, Fort Hare was an institution providing that much sought-after goal of higher education. It was almost a utopia in terms of university models of the time (the 1920s and 1930s). An international body of academic staff, independent of the later racism in South Africa, admitted

students from different parts of South Africa and other African countries, thus fully reflecting the ideals of academic freedom. Concern about the character and progress of the university of Fort Hare later led the apartheid state to impose apartheid policy on it, making it an ethnic university subject to the whims of the apartheid regime; thus a university that began as one open to all was suddenly subject to the dictates of apartheid.

This brief exposition of the story of Fort Hare University conveys the distraught dismay that visited that community when it was invaded by apartheid policy. It also provides context and background for the struggles for non-racialism and inclusion which have been reflected in many of the views on transformation expressed before 1994, and after democracy had been achieved. These sentiments – and more especially the belief in the empowering effect of higher education – have a specific communal meaning for black families, in that they are often associated with the discrimination and exclusion they experienced under Bantu education and apartheid. It is because of these and many other experiences of discrimination, that for many black people, the end of apartheid signalled the beginning of equal access to previously denied opportunities.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I set out to explore the following primary research question and the associated secondary research questions:

Primary research question

What meanings are attached to the concept transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa?

Secondary research questions

1. Have these meanings found expression in higher education policy developed and adopted in post-apartheid South Africa?
2. In what ways have the expectations of various stakeholders regarding the meanings attached to transformation been met in the adoption and implementation of policies?
3. Why does the sector continue to experience contestation on progress with transformation?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses primarily on participants in the development of policy, policy makers, and those responsible for policy implementation. Reimers and McGinn (1997) encourage such dialogue among those involved in educational policy formulation. They claim that "if an educational system is to change its ways, it needs organizational learning" (p. 28). They assert that there are two reasons for this: "the first is that implementation of policy and even policy definition involves multiple participants. The second is that ministers of education and senior staff have a tenure too short relative to the time it takes to achieve educational innovation and to influence learning conditions" (p. 28). This study identifies the wide range of participants who have shaped higher education in post-apartheid South Africa and the role that policy has played in shaping contested meanings of transformation.

Through pursuing a detailed elaboration of the meanings of transformation and related global features, the study provides policy makers, international organisations and leaders in higher education with a means of reviewing their practices and assessing the degree to which the goals set out in policies are being planned for and achieved.

The study contributes unique angles in exploring the concept transformation in higher education. The notion of contested meanings ensures a broader examination of the concept and its multi-faceted uses – such an approach is often neglected as researchers tend to present their own understanding, rather than drawing together a range of meanings.

Beyond this, the study also attempts to present examples of successful change in higher education institutions in South Africa. The study signals agreement with other research studies that suggest that greater efforts directed at transformative change will have a significant positive impact on South Africa's development priorities. Thus, I present a call to action in response to the variety of contested meanings of transformation, the evidence suggests such action will be of immense benefit to the higher education sector in South Africa.

1.7 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

The thesis consists of seven chapters which are briefly summarised in this section.

Chapter one sets out the background to the research and provides an indication of why this research was undertaken. As the extensive literature shows, there is abundant research on higher education in South Africa, particularly on the post-apartheid period. However, this is the first study by a policy maker who has played a part in shaping post-apartheid policy and participated in envisioning the future higher education system in a democratic South Africa. Important too, is the fact that I have access to the ideas and perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders who have played different roles in the struggle for freedom and in formulating the foundations for equal access to all levels of education in a free South Africa. Being a former teacher, academic and policy maker has afforded me insights that few pursuing such a study would bring. The chapter also contributes introductory insights into the apartheid context and its impact on higher education, as well as the impact of apartheid higher education policy.

Chapter two identifies a wide range of literature that provides an exposition of the meanings of the concept transformation. The literature produced by a diversity of authors draws on the period prior to the demise of apartheid and reflects the expectations held by some of the progress and change that would follow the end of apartheid. In focused attempts to indicate the thinking of many who utilise the concept transformation, various meanings of the term are identified and presented in chapter two. While apparently divergent perspectives are presented, the focus on expectations for higher education in post-apartheid South Africa creates a unified framework in order to examine various meanings of transformation.

The decision to investigate meanings linked to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, provided a basis for seeking out literature that would assist in setting out the context of higher education under apartheid, resistance to the imposition of apartheid higher education, responses to those policies, and the influence of this context on developments in the post-apartheid era. Features of contestation that were prevalent under the era of apartheid policy dominance and their relationship to contested meanings of transformation in the era of democracy are also presented.

Chapter three is the methodology chapter. It presents my decision to use a qualitative interpretive research approach in pursuit of my research findings. The chapter describes the research design, research methods, data collection and data analysis procedures as well as the strategies used to ensure the validity of the study findings.

Chapters four, five and six present the analysis of data and resulting findings. In these chapters the data collected is organised and presented in terms of emerging themes and perspectives on the meanings of transformation with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Following rigorous scrutiny of the data, the most often repeated meanings and their uses are presented and analysed using the selected theoretical framework and themes. These chapters provide detailed insights into the contested meanings of transformation, as indicated by the data gathered in the course of the study.

Chapter seven presents a synthesis of the earlier chapters and reflects on the findings in terms of the research questions; it presents conclusions based on the study findings and discusses their implications and relevance to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The chapter also proposes recommendations that could influence or assist future policy formulation and implementation.

The following chapter critically reviews and analyses existing literature on the concept transformation in higher education in South Africa and in the broader international context, in an attempt to gain insights into responses to the research questions and the subject of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The period 1990 to 1993 in South Africa witnessed a significant amount of activity directed at negotiating a peaceful transition from apartheid rule to the introduction of democracy. The widely reported negotiation process imbued South Africans and much of the international community with a sense of hope and expectation that change was to come. The millions who had been victims of the exclusionary and racist policies of apartheid held the hope that a political settlement would result in significant change in their lives. Although apartheid policy had impacted on all sectors in society, the negative influences of such race-based social engineering had been experienced most acutely in education at all levels.

In higher education, the apartheid divide of historically advantaged institutions (HAIs) for white people, and historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) for black people shaped the character of the sector as one of exclusion and denial of opportunity. The inequality and exclusion prevalent in apartheid higher education gave life to a culture of protest and demand. Student protests during this era focused largely on race and access, with demands for black entry to historically advantaged institutions. Unfortunately, this push for access seemingly neglected to focus on other features of university activity, such as curriculum reform, changing the demographic profile of teaching staff and institutional culture.

The new government that was elected in 1994 had to develop policies to address the inequality and exclusion that had been inherited from the legacy of apartheid. Literature shows (Badat, 1999; Chisholm, 2004) that much of the protest action and policy development in higher education at that time was accompanied by abundant use of the concept ‘transformation’, and demands for transformation in post-apartheid higher education. The concept continues to feature prominently today, in ongoing demands for change in higher education in democratic South Africa.

In broad terms, ‘transformation’ refers to a marked change in form, nature and appearance of a phenomenon (Govinder, Zondo & Makgoba, 2013, p. 1). In higher education it was evident that

in particular 'transformation' is used to describe such marked change, and often includes the following inter-related themes:

- National imperatives for access, equity, justice, and redress of inequality and exclusion;
- Quality of academic programs, curriculum reform, effectiveness, merit and excellence;
- Institutional autonomy, culture, identity and student centredness;
- Globalisation effects, internationalisation, competition, collaboration and local relevance; and
- Processes to build consensus.

The focus of this study is on contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The wide range of themes and extensive literature on the topic indicate that there are contested meanings attached to the concept of transformation, both internationally and in South Africa (Le Grange, 2009; Cloete, 2011). My focus on contested meanings is not intended to suggest that there should be common views on transformation in higher education. Rather, it points to the need to develop approaches to change in South African higher education that will assist the country to overcome its very significant post-apartheid socio-economic challenges. This exploration of contestation is useful, in that a country emerging from a history of conflict as is the case in South Africa requires reflection and analysis on strategies that may be considered to overcome conflict and achieve forms of collaboration that may play a role in overcoming the challenges deriving from the legacies of the past. Informed by my research question which focuses on South Africa, and using a selection of international perspectives as a backdrop, I have selected a few themes for the purpose of this review, and where appropriate, begin to highlight some of these contestations in the literature.

The purpose of a literature review is to seek to reflect and summarise scholarly work relevant to the selected research focus. There have been debates on the scope and breadth of research that should be included in a literature review. Bell (1991) describes a literature review as a process that provides the reader with a picture of the state of knowledge and of major questions in the subject area being investigated. The intention of my review is to provide an indication of the literature relevant to my study, as well as to illustrate that the focus on the contested meanings of

transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa is a research area worthy of pursuit.

Przeworski (1991) provides insights that appear to elucidate the complexities confronting governments and public institutions in the face of popular demands for change. He suggests that in emerging democracies, expectations that change (or redistribution) will be acceded to by the formerly privileged, is a view that is not confirmed by reality. Przeworski (1991) implies an initial accommodation of democratic demands, followed by a gradual assertive push to resist change by those who have previously enjoyed privilege. This resistance may take the form of imposing increased user costs in the form of higher tuition fees for example, or developing prohibitive new rules and regulations. Przeworski (1991) is therefore pointing to the fact that change is not achieved with ease. His ideas signal that societies emerging from oppressive political systems often find themselves having to address unexpected and intractable challenges.

The literature studied indicates that transformation in higher education has attracted interest and scrutiny in a wide number of countries. As the Council on Higher Education (CHE) indicates in a recent report, "In many contexts there have been policy drivers such as quotas, differential funding or deliberate campaigns to increase access to higher education from lower socio-economic groups (as in the UK), or ethnic minorities (as in the US)" (CHE, 2016, p. 12). I have chosen to include international perspectives in order to expand the probe into the contested meanings of the concept transformation. This literature review seeks to highlight the variety of meanings of the concept 'transformation' with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. It also presents key elements of the theoretical framework I have used for the purposes of this study.

2.2 TOWARDS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I have identified the 'glonacal' (glo-na-cal) concept as a useful and relevant theoretical base for my research. The glonacal theoretical framework, as elaborated by Marginson (2004), supports the argument that higher education is impacted upon by "global, national and local effects", and that these play a role in influencing and shaping higher education policy and institutional practices. The author (Marginson, 2004) argues that the effects globalisation and increasingly pressure on

national and local practices can be identified as affecting higher education change worldwide. The tools that the theoretical framework provides to examine the degree to which attention is given to imperatives such as equality of opportunity are of direct relevance to this study.

Marginson (2004) outlines the glonacal heuristic as consisting of four layers of "educational-social practices" that form a framework of analysis (pp. 181–182). The first layer is the daily educational practices of higher education institutions which include teaching and learning, research, community outreach, and responding to new demands such as increased growth in student numbers. The second layer is a "first level of system organisation' termed 'social competition for status goods" (p. 181) – this refers to student competition to enter particular institutions or disciplines due to the social reputation of institutions based on research output, academic reputation, or social status of admitted students.

The third layer is a second level of system organisation described as "a competitive economic market in status goods" (p. 181), in which finances and other factors such as institutional ranking, research contracts and consultancies confer status on institutions. Such status renders them more marketable and attractive to consumers or buyers, thus permitting them to increase fees and become more exclusive and less accessible. In terms of the proposed framework, while features of a market orientation are visible, higher education institutions have not become fully-fledged commercial markets.

At the fourth level, institutions are openly a 'commercial sector' in that capital rather than social status becomes the major influence, as Marginson (2004) argues:

> … the producer motivation is no longer teaching or caring for students, or adding to the stock of knowledge. It is as Marx argued, accumulation for accumulation's sake, capital for capital's sake. Nevertheless, status goods continue to be the main kind of good on sale. (p. 182)

The glonacal framework presents the view that marketisation, competition and the pursuit of scarce resources have influenced the purpose and character of higher education, leading to 'status competition' at global, national and local levels. The focus on 'status' in higher education systems,

and the desire for social advantage through university qualifications, have had a major influence on shaping higher education practices globally.

In this study I have augmented the glonacal framework by including a selection of political theory ideas that focus on societies in transition to democracy and the various factors that influence the choices they make. Przeworski (2011) provides a very useful theoretical framework in his research on democracy, redistribution, and equality. Earlier work by the same author on societies in transition has also proven most relevant (Przeworski, 1998).

These explanatory theories provide a very apt link to the glonacal framework that will form the core of the theoretical framework used in this research study. A constant refrain in the literature (Reddy, 2006; Waghid, 2002) is the assertion that the inability of higher education to be more responsive to demands for access is due to increasingly neo-liberal, market-related government policies – these have caused higher education to be treated as a costly commodity accessible to those with financial means, rather than as a tool for human development (Odhav, 2009). The glonacal framework provides an elaboration of the roles universities have been assigned to play in society. According to Marginson (2004, p. 176) "Globally, universities share many common features in administration, structure and purpose. They're assigned to prepare the human resources and skills required by modern nations. They are expected to enhance innovation and global competitiveness for the nation or a region. Their labour is usually a globally connected mobile labour that shares communication, knowledge and support systems".

These increasingly common demands on higher education institutions make the glonacal framework an appropriate lens through which to explore contested meanings of the concept transformation. I extended this study beyond analysing contested meanings of transformation, by seeking out and interviewing stakeholders who have played some role in shaping and influencing policy and practice in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. I interviewed former and current policy makers, as well as stakeholders within and beyond the higher education sector. The aim was to probe their understanding of the meanings of transformation at the inception of democracy, and their views on the transformation of higher education since the enactment of the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997).

Transformation of higher education has been the subject of research in many countries. The meanings of transformation reflected in the literature I have studied include references to access, institutional change, policy amendment, equity and affirmative action, culture and identity, perspectives on knowledge, redress of inequality, gender and race, finance, governance and international influence. Since it is not possible to include a focus on all these aspects in this study, I have selected just a few of them. The inclusion of a selection of international perspectives provides a useful backdrop to this research.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Literature shows (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Jansen, 2003) that higher education as a sector has an increasingly shared international character. All higher education institutions are challenged by the need to respond to new demands of an ever-changing world. These challenges exist not only in emerging economies such as Brazil and poor countries such as Ethiopia, but also in rich countries such as the United Kingdom. In all nations, increasing numbers of secondary school leavers, their families, the general public, and stakeholders from all classes and backgrounds are demanding access to higher education and expect the state to respond. Universities are required to provide entry for students from poor backgrounds, from wealthy families and schools, and from inadequate schooling; and to address all their needs (Hall, 2012; Le Grange, 2009; Gupta, 2006).

The glonacal framework (Marginson, 2004) suggests that the link between economic ability, social status and access to higher education causes governments worldwide to fail to act on the desire of the poor to access higher education. At the national level, governments fail to provide policy and resources that would ameliorate the access of the poor and the marginalised; and actions by institutions at the local level to increase competition and success, detract from responding to the needs of the same constituencies.

The need to develop appropriate responses to the advent of new technologies, to government policies that set new targets and administrative tasks, as well as to the aforementioned societal concerns about justice and equality for the marginalised and the excluded, is evident in the selection of findings presented in this review.

2.3.1 Global perspectives

National development imperatives seem to have influenced higher education change in both developed and developing countries. In addition to ensuring the production of graduates, governments have also had to respond to concerns about the need to address discrimination and inequality in society. Exclusion of poor communities, particular races or ethnic groups has increasingly been judged as unjust and in need of remediation. Schwartzman (2003) provides a useful backdrop to this observation in stating, "The introduction of Western type universities in other societies, in Asia, Africa and Latin America, was also conceived and justified in terms of the transformation it would bring, through the benefits of rationality, democratic values and modern technology" (2003, p. 2). The same author argues that these benefits have not been fully realised, given the contradictory characteristics of higher education that allow for the public good, while also promoting and securing private benefit. In most countries, higher education emerged as a cloistered set of a few elite institutions. It was not designed as a sector of education that would allow massive growth by admitting millions of students, as demanded by society today (Pearson, 2005; Gupta, 2006; Hall, 2012). This is especially true in Africa where many countries embarked on independence with one university for vast populations and had to expend scarce resources creating new institutions after the demise of colonialism (Mamdani, 2011).

Widespread modern demands for greater access have posed challenges, given the legacy of elitism and exclusive access that are characteristic of the sector. Increased marketisation and high financial costs at entry have caused the desire for access to appear particularly difficult, if not impossible for millions of people who wish to pursue a university education. It is these and other features of exclusion that have led to strident calls for transformation of higher education in many countries (Hall, 2012). Gupta (2006) confirms this need by asserting that the 21st century has brought new challenges and opportunities for higher education that are influenced by the transition from elitist to mass education. He states that "universities worldwide are under pressure to enhance access and equity, on the one hand and to maintain high standards of quality and excellence on the other" (p. 1). The next two sections focus on national imperatives for access, justice, inclusion and redress of inequality, from the perspectives of both developing and developed countries.

2.3.2 Perspectives on developing countries

For some countries such as India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico, calls for transformation arise as a result of continuing trends of discrimination and inequality that persist in spite of existing domestic policy on justice and redress. For countries in a region such as Europe , the need to act to address inequality is a consequence of social stratification, inward migration of many nationalities due to increased internationalisation, the growing presence of refugees from war-torn zones, and economic migrants fleeing low-growth regions (Hall, 2012; European Commission (EACEA/Eurydyce, 2014). For millions of people therefore, higher education has come to be regarded as a sector that offers access to critical status goods, upward mobility, relief from poverty, and the acquisition of skills that will improve the economic prospects of an individual and society. When these lofty ambitions fail to be realised in the higher education sector, increasing calls for transformation emerge, arguing for more action and signalling the failings of higher education (Schwartzman, 2003). The impression created is that these calls for transformation are made by those whose needs, demands and expectations are not met by higher education, and these tend to be those who are marginalised in society. The policies and practices adopted by governments in developing countries are directed at addressing the concerns indicated above.

Higher education transformation efforts in Ethiopia are an interesting example of a government-led, national consultative process aimed at securing national consensus on an agenda of transformation. The initiative highlighted the need for expanded and equitable access to higher education as a key priority in order to build requisite skills, as well as the building of new institutions in under-served areas (Yizengaw, 2003). The broad national consultations resulted in agreement on expansion, and reached consensus on increasing the enrolment of female students and students from poor neglected regions of Ethiopia. Interestingly, the Ethiopian experience highlights the role played by stakeholder consultation and inclusion in overcoming resistance from within the higher education sector. Open consultation apparently secured community and stakeholder support. This approach to promoting policy change and transformation mirrors some of the experience in South Africa and holds useful lessons for other countries. According to Yizengaw (2003), “undertaking sweeping reforms will succeed where there is a supportive

external environment and when an innovative institutional context is developed and nurtured" (p. 15).

2.3.2.1 Approaches and strategies on access, equity, justice and redress

Emerging economies such as Brazil, Nigeria and India have developed new policies, built new institutions of higher learning and created new programmes and mechanisms as part of their efforts to achieve change. Gupta (2006) provides insights into the complex challenges arising from affirmative action policies and interventions in India and the United States. There are several important imperatives that foster the development of strategies to achieve change in higher education, six of which are discussed below.

The first and most prevalent imperative is 'inclusion', as shown in the decision of India to adopt a policy of 'reservation' which Gupta (2006, p.1) defines as "the allocation of a certain percentage of seats to some individuals or groups on the basis of fixed criteria other than academic merit". A second imperative is to refine or extend inclusion policies to address unintended consequences of their implementation. India had previously addressed the inclusion of marginalised groups in public institutions. However, over time, private higher education grew into a private reserve of privileged social groups and appropriated key areas of knowledge such as engineering and technology studies. The courts thus turned their attention to addressing the discriminatory practices in private higher education. The Government of India adopted policies to address access and equity, while its opponents objected vehemently on grounds of quality and meritocracy.

Rizvi and Gorur (2011) argue that reservation policy and the recent expansion of private higher education in India have not been able to address the broad spectrum of challenges that continue to confront the country. Institutions seemingly pursue profit with little attention to academic quality, research activities, or an able and fully qualified teaching staff. Rizvi and Gorur (2011) claim that the proliferation of private providers enjoys government support in that it increases the number of institutions and thus access; but it also causes deep disquiet, due to concerns about quality, profit making, inadequate programme differentiation, and instances of corruption.

A third imperative in countries such as Brazil and India is a resolute stand in support of equity by the courts, parliaments and governments. In Brazil, the government introduced policies directed at addressing equity such as tax incentives for private institutions, and quotas for poor black students and those from poor schools (Schwartzman, 2004).

A fourth imperative is to reduce inequality by allowing previously excluded groups to acquire skills and employment opportunities in sectors they have not had access to. It appears that some states in India achieved success through implementing reservation, prior to its adoption as a national policy. Lal (2006) is quoted by Gupta (2006) as stating:

> In short, affirmative action did not compromise on merit, but instead empowered a wide spectrum of population to aspire for social and economic mobility. A society where the portals of merit are restricted to a privileged minority, especially when the privilege is determined at birth, is a regressive society. (p. 28)

Fifth, the case of India illustrates that constitutional imperatives can play an important role in ensuring that institutions respond to demands for equity. Gupta (2006) and others (Chanana, 1993; Singh, 2014) provide useful perspectives on this approach, by outlining the constitutional history of the access and equity conundrum in India. According to Chanana (1993), the equity intentions of India's constitution were reinforced by the 1951 First Amendment Act which amended article 15(4) of their constitution to guarantee "the Right to Equality to all its citizens" (Chanana, 1993, p. 10). A number of government interventions followed the 1951 amendment, each attempting to address equity and affirmative action for scheduled castes in India. The governing party enacted enabling legislation in 2005 that amended article 15 and allowed the government to reserve seats for designated groups in private, educational institutions. Similar legislative actions are also found in countries such as Brazil (Marcus, 2015). Furthermore, the adoption of affirmative action policies in the United States of America also serves as an example of such enabling actions (James, 2007).

Regarding the role of the courts in dealing with equity, the Supreme Court of India is mandated to be proactive and impose mandatory action in support of affirmative action. In contrast, USA courts are less keen to intervene and tend to allow higher education institutions to voluntarily decide on

appropriate action to address injustices against certain groups due to prejudice on the basis of race, caste, ethnicity, region or gender (Gupta, 2006).

Efforts to implement affirmative action for previously excluded groups in India were derailed by several factors. Behera (2015) indicates that poverty is often a barrier, with families preferring to use the physical labour of their children at home, rather than allowing them to be devoted to university study. In addition, students from poor backgrounds often do not pursue professional programmes that lead into employment, which has the effect of perpetuating inequality even when one is armed with a higher education qualification (2015, p. 70).

A sixth imperative is that inclusion must address gender inequality as well as disability if it is to be assessed as promoting equity. Chanana (1993) sets out the attempts to address gender inequality in India and points to some success, while lamenting persistent features of discrimination. These include fewer women in postgraduate studies, and low enrolments in non-traditional fields of study such as commerce, engineering and agriculture. One of the troubling features of such policies is that the benefits of access and opportunity accrue to advantaged components of the beneficiaries of affirmative action (Chanana, 1993; Rizvi & Gorur, 2011).

Addressing gender inequality in science and engineering has posed significant challenges in Mexico (Sanchez Cruz, 2012), where it appears that strategies aimed at equity failed to achieve their objective. The initiatives did not succeed in identifying deserving beneficiaries and tended to assume that 'being female' implies shared social backgrounds and contexts. Sanchez Cruz (2012) singles out the force of globalisation as playing a strong role in shaping the neglect of 'difference' and concludes that "… gender equity policies are immersed in a context that takes place locally. At the same time, as with education, gender equity is influenced by national and international forces of globalization. Globalization drives a contradictory process in terms of the economy, and international relations" (Sanchez Cruz, 2012, p. 34).

Brazil is acknowledged by several scholars as having made determined attempts to expand access for the most marginalised and excluded groups in their society (Panizzi, 2003). Action to grow the provision of higher education has resulted in a steep growth in private higher education institutions. Oliven (2012) expresses concern that despite being easier to access, private fees are very steep and tend to exclude those who cannot pay. Although public universities are free, they are difficult to

access due to very competitive and difficult entrance exams. These barriers to access have been addressed through new selection procedures for public universities that include racial or social quotas.

2.3.2.2 Barriers to achieving change and success

A conundrum hindering attempts at change in several developing countries is that many students from poor backgrounds, in terms of both schooling and social status, do not succeed in the programmes to which they are admitted at university. The reasons for this are said to lie in their poor quality schooling background and thence low scores in entrance exams; as well as dropping out due to inability to pay the high costs of private universities (Marcus, 2015). Moreover, private universities tend to offer courses that Oliven (2012) describes as 'low intensity' due to their lack of attractiveness in the job market. This has meant that even though more students from poor families are able to access university. The fact of low achievement scores in school leaving examinations results in such students continuing to face exclusion from high-income professions in their country. In Brazil, the programmes associated with high-income professions are offered in Federal public universities. These are degrees in medicine, engineering and technology – all of these are accessed through entrance exams that white and wealthy Brazilian students succeed in, thus further perpetuating inequality in income and success.

2.3.2.3 Quality, effectiveness, merit and excellence

According to James (2007), in most countries equity has become a fundamental measure of the effectiveness of a higher education system, along with quality and efficiency. These criteria are not easily pursued simultaneously, but none of them can be ignored, since governments, institutions, parents and the general public often have an interest in some or all of them.

Following a wide-ranging report on higher education in Nigeria in 2004 (Tagoe, 2012), efforts have been directed at transforming higher education in that country. Federal universities were established in each state in Nigeria, thus providing more young people with local access to

nationally funded institutions. According to Tagoe (2012), the quantitative expansion of federal and state-level universities in Nigeria resulted in 124 institutions being recorded in 2012. Ogunkunle and Adekola (2013) confirms this growth as reaching 128 universities in Nigeria by 2013 – consisting of 40 federal government universities, 38 state government-owned universities, and 50 universities owned by individuals and private organisations. The growth in the number of institutions is largely a response to growing demands for access. However, their quality has been cited as a major concern and there is debate as to the relevance of academic offerings to the human resource needs of Nigeria (Ogunkunle & Adekola, 2013).

As Ogunkunle and Adekola (2013) points out, transformation needs to extend beyond access to include the following: "ensuring continuity in university work, as there have been many disruptions due to staff and student strikes; going beyond mere academics by dwelling on students' personality development; and eliminating cultism among students thus ensuring peace on campuses" (p. 9). The same authors refer to further transformation challenges in Nigeria, namely the qualifications of academic staff, the need for increased funding, improved research performance, and greater alignment between university training and industry.

A context startlingly similar to those described in India and Brazil is reflected in Zeleza's (2015) account of changes in higher education in Africa, as a response to the demands of post-colonial independent nations. There has been increased growth in the number of institutions in order to produce more skilled persons to support a modernising Africa. However, as Zeleza (2015) indicates, demand continues to far exceed supply. A range of types of inequality characterised the sector, including inequity of access on the grounds of race, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status. As in other developing countries, one of the responses to this set of challenges has been expansion through unbridled private provision. Again, this market-based response to a complex social problem has not successfully addressed all the challenges confronting higher education.

Literature on higher education systems in sub-Saharan Africa tends to focus on a variety of transformation issues that include equity and redress, but expand to incorporate a combination of other elements, such as responding to market forces, globalisation and internationalisation; the recent economic crises; and concomitant economic implications for the financing of higher education (Okebukola, 2010; Tagoe, 2012; Zeleza, 2015). These scholars argue that Africa should

ensure that it attends to the local relevance of higher education institutions and their programmes, while also striving to achieve world class standing. In particular, scholars view access for students from poor backgrounds in Nigeria as being critical for the creation of a larger pool of young people with relevant skills to help address the country's needs (Okebukola, 2010; Tagoe, 2012; Adekola, 2013). These writers identify partnerships between industry and universities as useful instruments to mobilise financial resources for greater national transformation and innovation.

According to Wangenge-Ouma and Nafukho (2015), public universities in Kenya have responded to increased demands for access and declining state funding by creating programmes that generate revenue for the institutions. These authors suggest that universities have had to adapt in order to ensure they have resources to continue functioning. This adaptation and response to the 'market' demand for university places reflects the marketisation features of higher education as described by Marginson (2004).

The international perspectives from developing countries discussed here are startling in their resonance with the context found in South Africa. It is useful to reflect on them in that one is able to discern practice that may offer useful examples as South Africa continues to pursue socio-economic change through higher education.

2.3.3 Perspectives on developed countries

Europe has also sought to address higher education transformation (Bleiklie, Enders & Lepori, 2013) and the need for equity (Clancy & Goastellec, 2007). In Ireland various strategies have been adopted to support the access of targeted groups (Clancy & Goastellec, 2007). One of the strategies the country adopted was to expand the focus on targeted groups to include "members of the Traveller Community and ethnic minorities" (Clancy & Goastellec, 2007, p. 4). Portugal has also confronted the challenge of unequal access for students from low socio-economic backgrounds (Dias, Mariano-Araujo, Almeida & Amaral, 2011).

2.3.3.1 Institutional autonomy and governance

Among the major calls for transformation in Europe are concerns about policy changes imposed on universities –fears have arisen that the proposed institutional restructuring processes will cause universities to operate "more like business enterprises that are seen as cost effective forms of organising large-scale production processes" (Bleiklie et al., 2013, p.1). The loss of the individual autonomy traditionally characteristic of universities and the imposition of organisational autonomy are decried as policy actions that seek to control organisational choices in universities in Europe (Bleiklie et al., 2013).

2.3.3.2 Monitoring equity

Bensimon, Hao and Bustillos (2003) provide a comprehensive analysis of equity in higher education in the United States of America (USA). They assert that 40 years after President Lyndon Johnson's speech on Rights at Howard University, "On just about every indicator of educational outcome, from degrees earned to grade point average, Whites and Asians are proportionally over represented and Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans are proportionally under-represented. This is true in institutions that are highly selective and predominantly white, are open-access with a diverse student population, or are classified as Hispanic serving. But the details of this stratification remain largely invisible to the higher education community" (p.2). They argue for the development and use of an equity index to ensure institutional accountability to promote equity and educational opportunity. This is reminiscent of the proposed equity index suggested by Govinder et al. (2013) which they proposed should consist of a set of indicators that would be monitored as a means of assessing progress with equity in higher education.

2.3.3.3 Globalisation, internationalisation, competition, collaboration and local relevance

As societies and economies change, university leaders and managers have had to transform their institutions and help prepare students and academics to play a meaningful role in international

partnerships and collaboration. As a result, curricula, academic exchange, and research collaboration have all become features of the changing higher education sector. Globalisation factors also compel higher education systems to respond to labour mobility and the influence of universities in enhancing competitiveness (Marginson, 2004; Argawal, 2006; Hall, 2012). This has led to regional institutional partnerships and increasing international research collaboration at postgraduate levels (CHE, 2016). Pursuit of these emerging global factors may sometimes result in less attention being given to the challenges of transformation.

2.4 THE SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

The policy of apartheid racial exclusion in South Africa had the effect of making race, class and gender significant proxies for measuring change. A significant amount of research on change in higher education focuses on these key issues and related themes (Moja & Cloete, 1996; Makgoba, 2001; Nkondo, 2002; Badat, 1998; Fehnel, Maasen, Moja, Perold & Gibbon (2002); Ramphele, 2002, 2006; Scott, 2004; Cloete, 2011). Research includes references to changes in the race and gender composition of students (De La Rey, 2010; Potgieter, 2002), the proposed Africanisation of universities and curricula (Govinder et al., 2013); as well as the culture and ethos of institutions in creating a more inclusive, affirming culture for a diverse student body (Nkomo, 2013).

Writing on transformation, Van Wyk (2006) argues that "in the apartheid era the allocation of resources favoured Whites and disadvantaged Blacks, so a logical step of redress should therefore be to increase access for Blacks to higher education" (p. 185). Although this kind of perspective has substantial currency in a range of studies (Govinder et al., 2013), a number of authors also emphasise the need to recognise that transformation has many other relevant aspects (Nkomo, 2011; Odhav, 2009). The meaning of transformation is described as follows by the then Minister of Higher Education in South Africa:

> The term 'transformation' is sometimes used rather narrowly – almost as if it were synonymous with BEE [black economic empowerment]. It is used to refer to the process of overcoming racial division. However I believe it should be about more than eradicating the racial aspects of apartheid, but about changing society in all areas of life, to serve the

> interests of all South Africans in a democratic, equitable and prosperous society. It is about confronting deeply interrelated challenges of class, race and gender inequalities, including confronting HIV/AIDS and being an inclusive society for the disabled – addressing the interests of everybody, but especially the youth. (Nzimande, 2010, p. 1)

Inequality and exclusion of black people and women from participation in higher education resulted specifically from South Africa's history of colonialism, racist apartheid policies and centuries of inadequate schooling. These factors of exclusion were amplified and exacerbated by the apartheid policy of Bantu education which denied blacks quality schooling – thus leading to low passes in external final school examinations and the inability to meet the stringent entry requirements of higher education institutions. Following the dawn of democracy in 1994, universities that had previously denied entry to blacks, extended access to black applicants. However, this move does not address inequality according to Jonathan (2001). Related to these views on the wide-ranging nature of transformation in society, Jonathan (2001) maintains that:

> … the requirements of redress for past injustice, together with the sheer scale of social stratification, demand measures which go beyond the mere formal removal of discrimination in access and process and towards the real empowerment of the disadvantaged. (p. 44)

Wangenge-Ouma (2012) agrees that this was not enough, stating of South Africa and higher education post-1994:

> … as for equity, the higher education systems is still characterised by gross discrepancies in the participation rates of students from different population groups, with the African and coloured groups being the worst affected. (p. 65)

The new government of South Africa responded to the need for redress and empowerment by developing and adopting progressive legislation and by supporting and funding increased access for black and women students. While some success has been recorded since 1994 (Badat, 2010), it is clear that much more remains to be done to achieve the 'real empowerment' that Jonathan (2001) refers to.

2.4.1 Policy imperatives

A detailed outline of the changes that South Africa was expected to achieve following the advent of democracy in 1994, was set out in the Green Paper on Higher Education (DOE, 1996), and the subsequent White Paper on Higher Education (DOE, 1997), which led to the adoption of the Higher Education Act of 1997 (RSA, 1997).

In particular, the White Paper for Higher Education of 1997 set out the following policy objectives:

- "promote *equity of access and fair chances of success* to all who are seeking to realize their potential through higher education, while eradicating all forms of unfair *discrimination* and advancing *redress* for past inequalities;
- meet through well planned and coordinated teaching, learning and research programmes, *national development needs*, including the high skill employment needs presented by a growing economy operating in a global environment;
- support a democratic ethos and culture of *human rights* through educational practices conducive to critical discourse and creative thinking, and *cultural tolerance*;
- a commitment to a *humane, non-racist, non-sexist* social order; and
- contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, and in particular address the diverse problems and demands of the *local, national, southern African and African* contexts, and uphold rigorous standards of academic quality" (DOE, 1997, section 1.14).

In confirming the policy objectives for higher education, the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) indicated the intention

> … of restructuring and transforming programmes and institutions to respond better to the human resource, economic and development needs of South Africa, redressing past discrimination, ensuring representivity and equal access, and contributing to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, in keeping with international standards of academic quality. (p. 1)

The Act also asserted that:

> … it is desirable for higher education institutions to enjoy freedom and autonomy in their relationship with the State within the context of public accountability and the national need for advanced skills and scientific knowledge. (RSA, 1997, p. 2)

The above policy objectives and intentions set out South Africa's ambitions for higher education in a newly democratic South Africa. It is this set of statutory objectives that is often referred to as an 'agenda for transformation'.

2.4.2 The post-apartheid legacy

The apartheid legacy inherited by the new democracy included a fractured, disconnected sector that had twenty-one universities and fifteen technikons serving a small proportion of the school leaving population. These institutions were deeply impacted by apartheid social engineering, and their mandates reflected the apartheid design of a racial division of access to high-level skills and professions. There were historically white institutions (HWIs) and historically black institutions (HBIs) with various internal ethnic divisions. Even laudable attempts at creating open non-racial institutions of higher learning – such as the example of the University of Fort Hare – had been brought under the ambit of apartheid legislation. An institution such as this one, that espoused non-racial access, a curriculum that was apparently progressive and empowering, and a learning culture steeped in political and social critique, failed to withstand the powerful arm of the apartheid regime. It eventually succumbed to the racist and ethnic edict of the sarcastically named 'Extension of Universities Act' of 1959 (RSA, 1959) that legislated the University of Fort Hare as an ethnic university for the admission of Isixhosa language speakers. This imposition of racist policy resulted in acquiescence in some institutions, but resistance, boycott and protest in others. Kallaway (2002), Sehoole (2005) and Cloete (2011) all provide useful insights into the features of education under apartheid. By adopting the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997), the state promised to act on significantly changing higher education for the better of South Africa. However, some of the literature (Jansen, 2003) queries the wisdom of the ambitious agenda set out and

ascribes some of the present challenges to hasty adoption of policies that did not seem to realistically acknowledge the difficulties imposed by the legacy of apartheid.

2.4.3 Progress and inadequacies in higher education in democratic South Africa

A range of literature describes the successes, progress and inadequacies of the higher education sector in democratic South Africa. The CHE Review (CHE, 2004) provides a detailed analysis of progress in post-apartheid higher education ten years after the demise of apartheid. Badat (2010) also provides an extensive account of the successes achieved in higher education in the post-apartheid era, in a report prepared for the Southern African Development Bank. Recent statistics and indicators of the CHE – including the 2013 indicators report (CHE, 2013) – point to success in enhancing access for black students, especially African students.

According to the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET, 2012) by 2006, over 60% of all students enrolled in the university system were African (compared to 50% in 1996), and this figure had grown to 70% by 2012. While not fully reversing the exclusion of black people, these changes signal significant advances given the legacy of apartheid education. There has also been progress in addressing gender inequality. Whereas women students made up 43% (202 000 out of 473 000) of higher education enrolment in 1993, by 2008 they constituted 56.3% (450 584 out of 799 388) of the student body (Badat, 2010). This continuing progress in increasing numbers of women students is affirmed by the CHE review reports (CHE, 2013, 2016).

While acknowledging that the changes signal positive developments, deeper analysis of the numbers points to a number of troubling facts. In a collection of essays (Ngcaweni, 2017) marking twenty years of democracy, Phaswana reflects on higher education and her experience of alienation on being a black female student in a historically white, Afrikaans medium university that made few concessions to the presence of a small minority of black students. She asserts that for her, higher education is “a field where age, gender and race remain unequally represented despite government’s efforts to fast track transformation” (p. 336).

In his report on progress in higher education, Badat (2010) starkly sets out the conflicting tensions confronting government and leaders in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. He argues

that the government cannot focus solely on equity and redress, as funding and the development of skilled staff are necessary for ensuring that quality is not sacrificed in pursuit of social equity. Equally he acknowledges that a focus on only quality or economic development would diminish the imperative of responding to the legacy of inequality. Literature shows (Wangenge-Ouma, 2012; Nkomo, 2011) that there is agreement with Badat's (2010) conclusion that "the transformation agenda in higher education embodies paradoxes, in so far as government and institutions seek to pursue simultaneously a number of values and goals that are in tension with one another. The paradoxes necessarily raise social and political dilemmas, difficult choices, and the question of possible trade-offs between values, goals and strategies" (p. 7). It is this background and context of aspirations, policy ambitions, and deep legacy challenges that have probably given rise to the contested meanings of transformation that are explored in this research study.

Although there is extensive literature on the status of higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, there remain gaps that must be addressed in order to respond to the urgent transformation challenges that remain unresolved. Thus far, I have not been able to identify any existing research that explores the views of various stakeholders on the concept transformation – both at the inception of post-apartheid policy, and considering their latest reflections, given the passage of more than 20 years since the adoption of the Higher Education Act in 1997 (RSA, 1997). For some, much progress has been made while for others there is much more to do.

2.4.4 Meanings of transformation

There is a wide range of literature on the concept of transformation, which reveals a correspondingly wide variety of perspectives and contested meanings of the concept. Post-apartheid higher education has been shaped by history, context and many voices of influence. The position of esteem that higher education enjoys in many societies causes individuals and organisations to hold and express strong views about the trajectory they believe the sector should pursue. In the lead up to policy development, and in the implementation phase, many voices have shaped and influenced higher education and continue to seek to do so even today. It is these voices that reflect the contested meanings of transformation I will probe.

2.4.4.1 Voices of influence

Przeworski (2007) writes of the demand for change that often pervades countries that have adopted newly democratic governance systems. He stresses that such pressure cannot be resisted especially by those who have previously exclusively enjoyed the privileges of wealth and political rights. While not referring directly to South Africa, Przeworski's (2007) comment that "barriers protecting the rich when only they enjoy political rights are removed when other social classes gain access to such rights" (p. 15), resonates with the post-apartheid experience in South Africa. In earlier research, Przeworski (1997) explains that although states have the obligation to serve citizens, poor economic conditions often result in governments not responding effectively to the needs of their poorest citizens. Once there is universal suffrage, pressure for change intensifies, and is often brought to bear by organised formations such as unions, student organisations and professional associations.

South Africa certainly faced these pressures during the first phase of democratic governance and continues to face them today. The exuberance that foreshadowed the period leading up to the democratic elections in 1994 seems not to have allowed for tempered policy ambitions. The majority of South Africans had lived with denial of opportunity, dispossession and inequality for decades – naturally their expectation was that things would change fundamentally once a democratically elected government was in office. This sense of euphoria could not be resisted by the new democratic government – it had to proceed with governance on the basis that change was inevitable and certain. Some commentators claim that the post-apartheid government seemingly opted for neo-liberal policy options that were linked to influential foreign policies or funding institutions (Le Grange, 2009, p. 1115; Odhav, 2009). Little has been said about the extent of pressure that an impatient population can exert on a state, nor the hurdles that can be posed by competing socio-economic demands.

2.4.4.2 Voices of stakeholders

Democratic South Africa has asserted its commitment to open, participatory and accountable governance, according to the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996a). This commitment

reflects the continuation of practices that were initiated in the years prior to the negotiations that led to the demise of apartheid. The liberation organisations that led the struggle for freedom in South Africa successfully influenced the creation of allied mass-based organisations. What were known as 'Mass Democratic Movement (MDM)' organisations, such as the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC), played a leading role in initiating policy development processes for a future post-apartheid South Africa; and in so doing they introduced an innovative process of transparent and participatory policy formulation.

Post-apartheid higher education policy was strongly influenced by the policy investigations initiated by the NECC. Called the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI), this multi-stakeholder body was tasked to "research policy in the new context of an emerging democratic order" (Odhav, 2009, p. 39). The NEPI report was finalised in 1992 (NEPI, 1992a; NEPI, 1992b; NEPI, 1992c), prior to the conclusion of a negotiated end to apartheid. Over 160 papers detailing a set of proposed future education policy options were produced and handed to the NECC. Several multi-stakeholder working groups worked on different education themes – they regarded the NEPI process and report as pivotal in preparing for higher education policy formulation in a democratic South Africa. It should, however, be remembered that these research working groups did not include policy makers, government officials, or persons steeped in running a government department or government itself.

The contestation that followed the public release of the NEPI report revealed a number of concerns among stakeholders. The Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET, 2012) describes the apparent and emergent contestation at the time, as a "tug-o-war between specialised knowledge and politics, it was politics that invariably won" (p. 3). The concerns included alarm at perceived conservative compromises; and inadequate commitment to proposals that were believed to have the potential to influence fundamental change in post-apartheid higher education. Odhav (2009) comments that "NEPI ambiguity on redress and its suggestion that redress could not be part of a multi-pronged strategy for growth failed to resolve a crucial aspect of apartheid legacies" (p. 40). Stakeholders who had participated in the NEPI process also expressed concern. The South African Students Congress (SASCO) and the Union of Democratic University Staff Association (UDUSA) also criticised NEPI for not including various proposals. Not all members of these organisations had participated in the NEPI working groups; thus it is not surprising that some reacted negatively

once their organisations held detailed deliberations on the published report. NEPI had presented its report in the form of various options, rather than as expressly preferred choices. This ambivalence and leaning toward open choices may be one of the reasons for the existence today of contested meanings of transformation.

Open processes of policy formulation may give rise to the belief that all proposals will be incorporated; however, when policy makers finalise policy, considerations other than aspirations of the contributors usually influence the final outcomes. Le Grange (2009) aptly describes the dilemma confronting post-apartheid policy makers when she comments: "in a 'new' democratic dispensation two broad challenges confront higher education: how it will contribute to redressing inequities of the past, and how it will respond to the demands of an economically competitive global society" (p. 1115). These are not easily compatible challenges, but the democratic government cannot neglect either of them. This perspective reflects concerns expressed by Wolpe (1995) when he cautioned about the tension between equity and redress, and proposed that more attention should be paid to ensuring development as a key priority of higher education practice. Policy responses to these competing demands may have given rise to the view that the democratic government eventually selected policy options that were influenced by neo-liberal economic perspectives, putting market interests ahead of transformation.

South Africa's well known history of mass struggle and popular participation in political matters resulted in keen public interest in open and transparent policy making. As is shown by Sehoole (2005) the new government elected after 1994 initiated practices of stakeholder participation in higher education policy and generated much open debate on policy proposals. As suggested above, final policies were not always reflective of preferences expressed during consultation. Utilising the terms 'in consultation' and 'after-consultation' as expressed by Stumpf in an interview in 1996, Sehoole (2005) indicates that while the government did consult broadly it utilised the practice of decision making after consultation rather than in consultation. The former is explained as not requiring government or any decision maker to 'accept and reflect' the views of those consulted, while the latter would require the policy to reflect the views conveyed by those consulted. Policy makers thus have a very powerful role in determining policy even in a context as open and democratic as South Africa.

According to Badat (2010), it is possible to develop a process that could allow governments to achieve consensus, even in the face of contested views. He suggests open affirmation of the existence of competing demands and interests, as well as communication of the reasons for selected options to interested constituencies. As South Africa's democracy matures, stakeholders have developed the practice of using protest as well as the courts as a means of challenging government neglect of stakeholder perspectives, thus increased attention is being given to ensuring proper consideration of stakeholder contributions.

2.4.4.3 Concerns at policy choices

The newly-elected democratic government of South Africa inherited apartheid debt, low growth, very high inflation, and a population sorely in need of development. The wealthy private sector and those who had been privileged by apartheid did not magnanimously open their immense wealth to the new state. The government faced difficult choices, and decided to pursue a mixed economy while taking on the role of responding to poverty and inequality. Following careful analysis of the options available through existing public revenues in 1994 and evidence of a very poor economic situation, in 1996 the government adopted an economic plan that appeared to be a departure from the one elaborated in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (ANC, 1994a).

The newly adopted economic recovery plan which was called GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) introduced reductions in public expenditure and a strict fiscal policy. Although it also provided for social development interventions to support the most vulnerable and proposed the creation of a social partnership between government business and labour. The proposed belt tightening and strict fiscal policy was not welcomed. The new policy meant less money for the expected increase in funding for higher education. Hostility toward the GEAR economic policy was worsened by the fact that it did not achieve the anticipated levels of growth. The post-apartheid government has sometimes been strongly criticised for its economic policy choices – often with very little acknowledgement of the challenges inherited from the apartheid state.

The disagreements over the lack of boldness in adopted policies continued into the democratic era. In 1996 the new government published the Green Paper on Higher Education (DOE, 1996) and invited comments. SASCO (a former NEPI participant) strongly criticised the Green Paper, saying it "excluded principles of non-racialism and non-sexism, with no policy on language and curriculum and no vision of a societally contextualised transformation" (Odhav, 2009, p. 43). This study investigated the perspectives of a range of stakeholders in order to explore their views on transformation in post-apartheid higher education. It is important to mention that the views on changes that have occurred in the democratic era do not reflect solely negative criticism of government and higher education (Zeleza, 2015; Badat, 2010). There are many who acknowledge that progress that has been achieved, while responsibly pointing to the challenges that continue to confront democratic South Africa (Badat, 2010; CHET, 2012; CHE, 2016).

2.4.4.4 Voices of policy makers

How did the policy makers of the first democratic government respond to the strident demands for change, particularly in higher education? Minister Bengu, the first Minister of Education in post-apartheid South Africa, introduced the then 1997 Higher Education Bill in Parliament on 28 October 1997. He began as follows:

> It is a great honour for me to introduce this bill which has far-reaching implications for the transformation of the higher education system of our country. Furthermore, to serve our new social order, transformation of higher education must meet pressing national needs and respond to new realities and opportunities, but importantly it must also redress past inequalities. (Hansard, 1997, p. 5598)

In later administrations, the policy framework for higher education was significantly altered. In 2001 Minister Asmal steered the adoption of the National Plan for Higher Education which outlined the government's intention of "achieving diversity in terms of the mix of institutional missions and programmes that will be required to meet national and regional needs in social, cultural, and economic development" (DOE, 2001, p. 12). Policy attention to change has continued, including the Social Inclusion Policy Framework that is designed to support institutions

in developing their social policies and guidelines, as well as to support the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in monitoring institutional progress in acting on the transformation priorities set out in policy (DHET, 2014, p. 3). The seminal speech of Professor Bengu used the concept of transformation several times and cemented it as a new tool for evaluating progress. The concept has since been used to convey different – often contested – meanings, and is in many ways associated with assessments as to whether the promise and objectives cited in policy instruments have been achieved.

2.4.4.5 Transformation as identity and institutional culture

Much attention has been devoted to the theme of identity and institutional culture in the extensive research on post-apartheid higher education. Erasmus (2006) writes of his research into race attitudes and transformation in a university faculty. Among the findings revealed was "an unyielding racialisation of everyday life, consciousness and knowledge in the learning environment" (p. 51). As mentioned earlier, no higher education institution that existed under the apartheid regime escaped the negative imprint of that policy. Academics, students, staff and workers continue to express concern about institutions being alienating environments that tend to emphasize and accentuate difference, rather than emphasizing and promoting inclusion and demonstrating a commitment to creating an atmosphere in which all feel affirmed. Nkomo (2013) writes of the legacy influencing institutions today. According to him inherited and acquired notions of superiority, as well as of inferiority, have created a context in which different elements among those constituting an institution find it almost impossible to attach themselves to a common identity.

While acknowledging efforts at changing policy, concern has been expressed that the plethora of legislation cannot succeed in the absence of effective and robust evaluation and monitoring support, and a readiness to take corrective measures where necessary. Chisholm (2004) echoes Bleiklie et al. (2013), in her assertion that managerialism has become a dominant part of higher education, through requirements of financial administration, restructuring processes, contract staff, and contract and performance management. Universities seem to have become businesses rather than places of learning and knowledge creation – they make use of marketing techniques to

compete for students, research grants, and ranking positions. Given all these pressures to perform, it is no surprise that the core ethos of the academy seems to be under threat.

One of the areas in which universities in South Africa appear to have failed is that of nurturing an impactful number of young black and female academics despite acknowledged progress in this area the numbers fail to reflect the demographic composition of South Africa (Nkomo, 2013). This is not entirely due to failure by institutions, as years of declining funding have made an academic career a less attractive option for young graduates, regardless of race. Nevertheless, the absence of a visible number of black role models competent in their field and meeting all academic criteria harms the character of universities; it also creates an impression that white males are the key producers and transmitters of knowledge, while blacks and women remain at the periphery. These continue to be difficult challenges that institutions need to confront and respond to.

In a seminal study on transformation in the Health Sciences faculty at the University of Cape Town, Erasmus (2006) provides a rather different perspective on the role still played by race in a faculty that demonstrates changing demographics. Erasmus reports that "the data showed the enduring power of racial typology to organise lived reality" (p. 53). Students felt that race was a defining factor in their experience, yet academics (who were mainly white) were of the view that great advances had been made in race relations, and that race was a receding factor in their interface with students. Credit must be given to the university faculty for investigating this matter and seeking to create a changed learning context for all students in the faculty; but the notion that racism can be erased without specifically targeted strategies needs to be questioned. Evidence of continuing features of race and gender exclusion continue to bedevil higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. There is at present no institution that can boldly claim to have overcome the travails of South Africa's complex legacies.

2.4.4.6 Transformation as knowledge

Academics such as Makgoba and Seepe (2004) have attempted to introduce debates that seek to challenge the nature of the curriculum and knowledge taught, promoted and emphasized in higher education. They have done this by questioning the curriculum of specific programmes and

qualifications such as in the field of Health Sciences, and the inadequate development and support available for black academics (Makgoba & Seepe, 2004; Seepe, 2004). Some institutions have attempted to address this lack of attention to changing knowledge and curricula. Horsthemke (2009, p. 3) refers to a discussion document at the University of the Witwatersrand that states that "the transformation challenge must be implicit in what we teach, the kinds of knowledge we produce". A report by the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions (DOE, 2008), identified a range of inadequacies in addressing curricula and knowledge creation. The report made a large number of recommendations which appear not to have been fully taken up in the sector (Nkomo, 2013).

One of the most divisive debates on what is taught was occasioned by a discussion initiated by Professor Mahmoud Mamdani while teaching African Studies at the University of Cape Town. He is famously reported to have said: "the key question before us is: how to teach Africa in a post-apartheid academy" Mkhize (2015). Mamdani proposed the development of a curriculum that would include a focus on all of Africa, as well as scholarly work produced over many decades by African scholars in Africa and in the diaspora. The radically transformed African Studies curriculum proposed by Mamdani was rejected by the university administration. This led to a very public debate about transformation and the study of Africa in South Africa, and particularly in a historically white university. Following severe acrimonious public debate between Mamdani and academics at the University of Cape Town, Mamdani resigned from the university, left South Africa, and now teaches in his home country Uganda. The debate at that time reflected deep divisions among academics as to whether enough has been done to include scholarly knowledge and other forms of knowledge on Africa into the disciplines studied in universities in South Africa – such inclusions were regarded as representing practical steps towards transformation. It is often interesting to note the reaction to such debates. At times, black academics are disparaged for arguing for such change, and it is suggested that they wish to deny students access to world knowledge – often meaning existing books written in Europe and America. These issues continue to be reflected in deliberations on transformation today, and are present in many attempts to concretely set out the meaning of transformation.

2.4.4.7 Transformation frameworks and implementation challenges

The efforts directed at promoting transformation have included statutory instruments in the form of laws and regulations. One of these instruments is the Integrated Transformation Plans (ITPs) that universities are required to develop to pursue transformation objectives. ITPs were recommended by the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in South Africa's Public Higher Education Institutions (DOE, 2008). In 2012, Higher Education South Africa (the association of vice chancellors), agreed to adopt the proposed ITPs as a tool to support universities in developing an institutional social compact that would assist them in managing transformation. "It was envisaged that the ITPs would provide an overview of what drives transformation in each institution that in turn could assist management to conduct a reflective self-assessment and self-evaluation of the university's progress towards, and commitment to transformation" (DHET, 2015, p. 4). However, there have been challenges in the implementation of ITPs since they are viewed by some to be largely aspirational and compliance driven due to the absence of related legislation. Some institutions have been criticised for not developing ITPs and there have been calls for greater commitment by individuals and stakeholders including assertions that institutions should act and not act as though they only respond to legislation. (Zide, 2013; Engelbrecht & Bhengu, 2015).

2.5 CONCLUSION

Attempting to explore the contested meanings of transformation, as identified in the research question, exposed me to the continuing complex challenge of change in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, in order to reverse the odious legacy of the past. The wide diversity of views in the literature, and the implication that collaboration has not been successful as a means of helping to design responses that might work, have supported the need to pursue this important research. Moreover, the lack of research focused on seeking out early commentators on transformation and establishing their views on its progress since the adoption of the 1997 Higher Education Act makes this a research study worthy of pursuit.

The literature review has revealed the national and international contexts in which policies, strategies and meanings of higher education transformation have been, and are being pursued. There are marked differences between countries, yet it is also evident that there are notable similarities that can be attributed to common country imperatives and global influences. The review has also reflected on the debates, controversies and complexities related to policy development and implementation in higher education. These perspectives have informed my identification of the theoretical framework that I used as a basis for this research study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa began the process of creating a new democracy in 1994 by holding the very first inclusive democratic elections. The advent of democracy was accompanied by popular expectations of change and a profound belief that South Africa would become a democracy in which those who had been excluded from opportunity by virtue of race, gender or ethnicity, would experience inclusion and meaningful change in the new emerging society.

This research study is designed to explore the contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The concept of transformation enjoys much currency in policy documents and in debates on higher education, and conveys a wide range of meanings. Use of the concept and the variety of meanings linked to it indicate that transformation is regarded as significant in the context of higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. However, the contested meanings and uses of the concept have led to a lack of shared understanding.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research design and the research approach utilised in this study. The research design is a framework that will be utilised to support and execute the research project. According to Maree (2007) “a research design is used to describe the procedures for conducting a study and its purpose is to help find appropriate answers to research questions” (p. 33). This chapter consists of several sections that present the overall methodology. It includes a focus on the research paradigm, the research design, ethical considerations, validity and reliability, possible limitations of the study, and a brief section on lessons learnt.

3.3 THE STUDY

This study explored the contested meanings of transformation with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The following primary research question and secondary research questions are the issues that the theoretical framework emerging from the literature review will provide responses to:

Primary research question

What meanings are attached to the concept transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa?

Secondary research questions

1. How have these meanings found expression in higher education policies developed and adopted in post-apartheid South Africa?
2. In what ways have the perspectives of various local and international stakeholders regarding the meanings attached to transformation been met in the adoption and implementation of policies?
3. Why does the sector continue to experience contestation on progress with transformation?

The focused and detailed exploration and probing of the meanings of transformation that has been pursued in this study has been done through the use of a theoretical framework that served as a lens that allowed a balanced analysis of the use of concepts and reflection on practice in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The presentation of different elements of the chosen methodology indicates the processes followed in pursuing exploration of contested meanings of transformation as a scholarly study.

The focus of the study is higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The time period includes the 1993 negotiated settlement of South Africa, the advent of democracy as signalled by the first democratic elections in 1994, and the formulation and adoption of new policy to affirm democratisation and the period up to the present. The most significant policy development for post-apartheid higher education was the enactment of the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997).

The Act set in motion the process of changing higher education from the apartheid design, and seemingly promised a departure from past inadequacies.

Some scholars (Badat, 2010; Cloete, 2011; Lange, 2009) suggest that the period in which the South African Government developed post-apartheid policy was characterised by the ascendancy of neo-liberal policy frameworks. These ideas advocated a diminished role for the state in public affairs and an enhanced role for the market and business sector in matters of service provision for the public. The notions of global competitiveness, national responsiveness and local relevance featured strongly in public policy deliberations (NCHE, 1996; NEPI, 1992b). A wide range of literature (McGrath, 2010; Wangenge-Ouma, 2015) on education policy matters in Africa and other regions characterised by poverty points to the presence and influence of organisations such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Bank, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other multilateral organisations. Alongside these influences, many local organisations in South Africa devoted attention to higher education policy formulation and practice in the period leading up to democracy in 1994. All these organisations represent a wide range of diverse constituencies, including students, trade unions, academics, university managers, and international organisations and funders. As the literature review shows, all these stakeholders had specific views on the future character and role of higher education in a democratic South Africa.

The context of diverse local and international influences – and apparently competing ones – has led to the need to identify a theoretical framework that allows for analysis of this diversity, while also providing a backdrop for the profound changes that continue to challenge South Africa. Marginson's (2004) glonacal heuristic framework permits the carrying out of comparative educational studies that emphasize the simultaneous significance of global, national and local dimensions as forceful imperatives in policy analysis research. Globalisation has triggered new theoretical and methodological approaches to education research. Marginson (2004) argues that higher education is not only shaped by local and national boundaries, but is increasingly and simultaneously influenced by global, national and local dimensions of action.

The glonacal heuristic as articulated by Marginson (2004) was adopted as a framework for this study. I have used it to assess the influence of global, national and local factors on the meanings

attached to the concept transformation with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. This brief outline of the context of this study serves as a useful background for setting out the selected components of my chosen methodology.

3.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Sefotho (2015) asserts that a researcher must determine a chosen research paradigm early in their research studies in order to give one's research 'illuminated direction' (2015, p. 23). This research is located within an interpretive research paradigm. Sefotho (2015) describes interpretivism as having "multiple paradigms which address multiple realities as found in society; such as the feminist paradigm, disability paradigm, and indigenous paradigm among others" (p. 27). The same author describes having "traced the origins of interpretivism from the social sciences and the humanities and establishes its aims as to find new interpretations or underlying meaning from multiple realities". Given that this research is directed at exploring and analysing the contested meanings attached to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, the recognition of meanings as being socially constructed affirms interpretivism as a most appropriate research paradigm.

The literature review in chapter two reveals the varied meanings of transformation used in a wide range of contexts and in reference to higher education, thus reflecting multiple meanings and realities, and echoing the description alluded to by Sefotho as quoted by De Villiers (2005, cited by Sefoto, 2015). Cresswell (2009) writes of social constructivism and its close association with interpretivism. According to Cresswell (2009, p. 8) "social constructivists use this approach as a means of developing greater understanding of the world in which they live and work". In attempting to provide greater clarity on constructivism, Cresswell cites Crotty (1998) who provides useful illumination by identifying several assumptions undergirding constructivism:

1. "Human beings construct meanings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers tend to use open ended questions so that the participants can share their views.
2. Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives – we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture.

Thus, qualitative researchers seek to understand the context or setting of the participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. They also interpret what they find, an interpretation shaped by the researchers' own experiences and background.

3. The basic generation of meaning is always social arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field" (Crotty, 1998, cited by Cresswell, 2009, p. 9).

While these assumptions are a most useful elaboration of constructivism, they may not apply in all respects to this research study. Interviews were conducted at multiple sites and the meanings explored were not always primarily influenced by culture and background. For example, interactions between national stakeholders influenced some meanings and also indicated policy choices. These were not a consequence of cultural or background influences. Nevertheless, Crotty's assumptions, as stated above, offer a very helpful set of perspectives on constructivism, a paradigm from which interpretivism is drawn.

3.4.1 Epistemology, Ontology and Axiology and their application to this study

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy concerned with theory of knowledge both as a thing in itself and as a function of intellectual reasoning and careful study of the nature of knowledge and the activity of knowing the subject. It is about how we know things. Ontology and epistemology are both important elements of the philosophy of knowledge. Whereas epistemology is about the way we know things, ontology is about what things are. The third element in the philosophy of knowledge is axiology which is the study of the nature of the worthy conceived of as value, specifically in the ethics and aesthetics, which are valued based.

The application of these elements of the philosophy of knowledge in this study are linked to the research paradigm that was utilised. Given that this research is directed at exploring and analysing the contested meanings attached to transformation of higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, the recognition of meanings as being socially constructed affirms interpretivism as a most appropriate research paradigm. Ontologically, transformation is the subject under investigation and the use of qualitative research methodologies especially documentary analysis and semi structured with key stakeholders assisted this study in establishing what meaning is attached to

transformation. In so doing it helped to arrive at a sense of what transformation really is, or what is meant by it. The importance of transformation in higher education both during apartheid and in post-apartheid era, justifies the worth and value for the study of this phenomenon, which is its axiology.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative research approach was selected as being most suitable for this research. This means that an interpretive, qualitative approach was the mode of inquiry utilised in this study.

Qualitative research is often described (Owen, 2014; Pring, 2012; Denzin, 2016) as a means of inquiry that allows investigation of multiple meanings and perspectives held by diverse individuals or groups. Referring to other scholars, Golafshani (2003, p. 600) describes qualitative research as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 17) and instead, the kind of research that produces findings arrived at from real world settings where a phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally" (Patton, 2001, p. 39). The process of data gathering in such research involves examining a range of issues arising from the focus of the research; the researcher will usually collect data in the setting of the participants and critically examine data gathered from multiple secondary sources. As Cresswell (2009, p. 4) asserts, "those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation". The qualitative researcher seeks to pursue understanding and a clearer exposition of the issue or phenomenon being investigated.

The interpretivist worldview is most relevant to this study and appropriate for the use of a qualitative approach. It is important to indicate my awareness of cautions pointed to by the literature (Cresswell & Miller, 2000) concerning the need for researchers to give stringent attention to the important matter of validity in their research. Cresswell and Miller (2000) point out that in qualitative research a set of tools rather different from those used in quantitative research is used to establish validity. They suggest that (2009, p. 125) "qualitative researchers use a lens not based on scores, instruments or research designs but a lens established using the views of people who

conduct, participate in, or read and review a study". It seems that the possibility of one's subjective interpretation of data and perspectives gathered would have to be guarded against by the researcher, given their lead role in gathering data. In such studies, researchers often have a deep familiarity with the context of the study as well as with likely participants. This requires them to be alert to the need to ensure they maintain a level of objectivity that will allow for robust scholarly study.

Qualitative research permits the gathering of multiple perspectives that emerge from varied perceptions of the same issues or concepts; supporting such a process with interpretive theory assists the researcher in acquiring a wide breadth of useful data. This possibility is described by Maree (2007) as one that allows for the "best possible understanding" (p. 37) to be acquired.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.6.1 Validity

Researchers are often alerted to the need to ensure that they pay attention to strengthening the validity of their research (Cresswell & Miller, 2009, p. 125). The argument for seeking validity arises from the desire to ensure that the researcher produces work that can be trusted as a rigorous effort to seek out knowledge. The same authors provide a useful template listing the elements a researcher should consider when seeking to ensure validity. These include paying attention to processes that enhance validity such as "conceptualization, sampling and data collection" (Cresswell & Miller, 2009, p. 110). These observations proved a useful guide in the conduct of this study as they assisted me in ensuring rigorous attention to gathering reliable data and preserving it carefully. The selection of interviewees, the use of documentary sources and the development and implementation of all the processes relevant to this study drew on these observations.

Silverman (2000, p. 234) offers sage advice to researchers using a qualitative approach, suggesting that "in writing up qualitative research, we need to recognize:

- the (contested) theoretical underpinnings of methodologies;

- the (often) contingent nature of the data chosen; and
- the (likely) non-random character of the cases studied".

Silverman (2000) suggests that these cautions signal important differences between qualitative and quantitative research that researchers need to be alert to, as they undertake their research and write up their findings and conclusions.

In determining the selection of approaches to research studies, scholars are often presented with three approaches in the literature on methodology: qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approaches. This study utilises a qualitative approach because the research design features associated with the qualitative approach have been identified as being the most relevant. Furthermore, reference to statistical data where relevant, does not render this research a mixed methods study as described in literature. This is because this study uses statistical data to elucidate an issue and not as the primary data source in the study.

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability is defined as the degree to which the researcher can be trusted with respect to undertakings made about the research process to be followed and action on commitments articulated on methods of data collection, interaction with participants and all research processes related to ethical consideration. Reliability also includes honouring confidentiality and ensuring that the results presented are a reflection of the work done. Bell (1991) provides guidelines that researchers may use to ensure and secure trustworthiness. This and other advice was taken account of as I interacted with all my respondents.

3.6.3 Triangulation

As scholars writing on triangulation (Bowen, 2009), reliability and validity (Cresswell & Miller, 2009) indicate, qualitative researchers should use these methods to increase the credibility of their studies and the scholarly worth of their research. Bowen (2009) and Bell (1999) also offer guidance on triangulation as adding to the trustworthiness of the researchers data. Triangulation is described

as using checking to confirm accuracy of data and using more than one type of data collection in order to enhance the authenticity of the data that will be presented in the study.

The qualitative research approach is often associated with vast amounts of data. The researcher has to find, select, assess, and synthesise data. The data collected may not be presented in a form that directly responds to the researcher's key questions. For this reason, the researcher needs to use other methods to expand the range of data gathered. Bowen (2009) asserts that the qualitative researcher uses document analysis in combination with other methods in order to achieve triangulation or the drawing together of complementary methodologies in exploring a specific research inquiry. The qualitative researcher secures corroboration and alignment through using different data sources and methods. In addition to documents, these methods may include interviews, and participant or non-participant observation. My intention was to seek out different data sources and to use these in exploring the contested meanings of transformation in higher education.

Scholars (Golafshani, 2003; Bowen, 2009) indicate that utilising more than one data gathering method increases credibility and addresses the important need for reliability and validity in qualitative research. My primary objective in seeking out a variety of document data and carrying out interviews was to enhance reliability and to achieve my intention of identifying inadequately explored stakeholder views on transformation in higher education and present these rare insights in my research topic.

3.7 RESEARCH METHODS

3.7.1 Testing the research design

The research design outlined here is aligned to the research aims and questions. This provided a solid foundation for the initiation of the study, whilst allowing for refinements or improvements in the future. I had planned to begin with a pilot phase of the study. My intention was to establish whether the questions I had identified and verbalised, and whether the interviewee sample selected for a pilot, would be appropriate for my intended research purpose. De Vos (2002) suggests that a

pilot can assess the impact of a researcher's questions and enable them to make modifications at an early stage, if necessary. However, given the difficulty of scheduling two appointments with very busy interviewees, and having gathered significant amounts of documentary data, I decided to proceed to interview and not to carry out pilot interviews.

3.7.2 Data collection methods

I used two methods to gather data in this study: document analysis and semi-structured interviews (Cresswell, 2009; Seidman, 2006; Hofstee, 2006). These authors offer advice on document analysis as well as guidelines on ensuring identification of a wide variety of data sources to assist the research in gathering relevant information for their study. Useful too were cautions about pitfalls that may face researchers in data collection particarly in interviews and in use of different documents.

Bowen (2009) suggests that data in the form of varied documents or recorded semi-structured interviews can support the researcher by providing very worthwhile data. I found this to be true in the process of extracting data from the transcripts of interviews. Follow up questions on replies given to the interviewees provided extremely useful data which I will present in later chapters.

The use of the glonacal heuristic provided a set of indicators for me to use in the process of analysing and coding my data. Coding is described as "the process of reading carefully through transcribed data and dividing it into analytical units" (Maree, 2007, p105). I used my interview questions as well as the research questions to develop my units of analysis or themes. I integrated the glonacal framework and its key elements into my interview questions and probed issues such as international collaboration, global, national and local influences through follow up questions. I also went over transcribed replies to the same questions and identified common themes or uniqueness in responses. The material organised through this process proved very useful in developing the two chapters (four and five) in which I presented detailed findings.

3.7.3 Document analysis

Document analysis is referred to as "systemic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents" (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). Document analysis allowed me to develop a comprehensive understanding of the many perspectives on the meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. It was also important in affirming references to contested meanings of transformation, through the presentation of the various views of the concept in a range of documents. Firstly, I identified, sought out and scrutinised a broad range of documents. These included books, journal articles, policy submissions, radio and television programme records, and petitions and submissions from various stakeholders to institutions of governance (such as parliament and the executive). I also examined other archival records encompassing the period before the advent of democracy in South Africa, and the period that followed the 1994 elections. Sourcing more recent foment sources and probing in the interviews provided me with data for responses to my secondary research questions. This provided me with an opportunity to trace the different forms and meanings attached to transformation in all these documents. I found it difficult to source some documents, especially the minutes of committees in parliament. The Hansard records of speeches helped me to identify and collect information from parliament.

I also analysed documentation from international organisations and foundations such as Ford Foundation, United Nations Educational and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO), and United States Agency for International Aid (USAID),that played a role in the process of policy formulation in post-apartheid higher education. Policy documents and government reports on post-apartheid higher education were studied to ensure an extensive exploration of diverse perspectives. The inclusion of an international perspective was important, given significant evidence in the literature (Nkomo, 2011; McGrath, 2010) that suggests many increasingly common features are evident in higher education systems across the world. Furthermore, the adoption and use of the glonacal analytical framework suggested that the inclusion of an international reflection was certainly appropriate. Marginson (2004) firmly suggests that the influences on higher education have a global character and hence a pervasive impact on universities worldwide. Thus, a comparative reflection could not be ignored.

The inclusion of other research methods in addition to document analysis allows qualitative researchers to expand their investigation by seeking out data that is not immediately available in a document – they can also seek further explanation or deeper analysis of a matter that is not fully canvassed in a document. Bowen (2009) provides useful examples of qualitative studies that have utilised document analysis as a key method, yet also added other methods as a means of further investigation.

3.7.4 Semi-structured interviews

In order to probe aspects of this study that may offer unique insights into the research questions, I conducted semi-structured interviews with key policy makers and administrators from the 1994 era of democratic governance. This included key role players in policy formulation as well as stakeholders who had the role of policy implementation, and university academics, former student leaders as well as managers of institutions selected from a sample of higher education institutions. Jamshed (2014) describes semi-structured interviews as in-depth interviews in which researchers pose pre-set open-ended questions. Annexure 5 provides the questions posed duringthe interviews for this study.

The interviews were not longer than one hour. The choice of semi-structured interviews rather than open-ended ones (without specific questions) was designed to allow exploration of my research questions in an orderly and systematic manner, thus allowing me to gather as much useful data as possible. I sought and secured the permission of interviewees to record the interviews in order to allow accurate capturing of the conversation, and also to permit me to focus on the responses and pose follow up questions where necessary. I also used the recordings to identify issues that might require additional inquiry at a later time. Cresswell (2009) recommends note taking even when recording, specifically as a backup should the recording prove to be unsuccessful. However, given that note taking might have distracted my attention from salient issues to follow up during an interview, I strove to ensure adequate preparation for successful recording of the interviews. Despite my best intentions to be prepared, I am grateful that I always carried a notebook. Some interviews were conducted in noisy places and some of the recording was not audible, so in the end, my notes proved to be a vital form of back up.

In selecting interviewees, careful attention was given to sampling techniques. A sample refers to a portion of a population or universe. As Cresswell (2009) states, the selection of participants can be based on probability sampling (in which participants are randomly selected from a pool of possible participants) or on non-probability sampling (where the selection is from a group of interest to the researcher or of relevance to the research). As indicated earlier, I interviewed stakeholders from some universities. I selected individuals from institutions that are referred to as 'previously advantaged' and from those described as 'previously disadvantaged'. I drew up a list of possible interviewees and then shortened to the list (Annexure 4) as I was aware, I would not be able to interview all on my initial long list. I made every effort to ensure a diverse sample based on different roles in higher education, gender race and age were also taken into account.

The participants selected had served and some still serve as leaders in education, higher education, policy making, student activists and leaders as well as public servants. Interviews went beyond individuals in institutions and included persons in government departments as well as individuals in organisations such as trade unions and student organisations. In order to gather comparative data, I also conducted interviews with two officials from selected international institutions and two personalities (consultants) who were involved in the policy development process in advisory and expert capacities and roles. These population elements (Cresswell, 2002) reflect the selection of participants whom I determined as being relevant to my research.

The research questions pursued through interviews sought to inquire into the contested meanings of transformation and to elicit the respondents' assessment of the manner in which transformation has been given meaning in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The interview questions were composed by focusing on the data required to provide answers to the primary and secondary research questions. They addressed the research focus in a variety of ways, and permitted detailed probing and follow up through allowing the participants to respond freely and provide their own assessment, as well as descriptive information. The glonacal heuristic framework that I had adopted as a core part of my theoretical framework suggested definitive influences that have shaped higher education in the era of globalisation some of these are presented in chapter four of this study. The questions enabled the elicitation of such information or suggested influences from the participants.

The interview process also aimed to incorporate and assess the degree to which the expectations of various constituencies have been met in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, with specific regard to transformation. I sought out the direct views of a range of stakeholders as this allowed me to gather data that may provide insights into the contested meanings of transformation, the secondary questions also helped to gather assessments by participants of progress made in addressing challenges and changes in higher education so as to compile assessments by respondents of progress made and proposed future changes in higher education. These intentions were achieved.

I ensured that the interviews were transcribed by an independent person with experience in transcription. The recordings were initially reviewed to elicit key issues or themes that appeared to emerge, and brief summary notes were made. More detailed transcription was then done to ensure that directly useful themes were accurately captured. The transcribed data was read and analysed in concert with previously obtained documentary sources in order to identify patterns, themes or specific information that could be used to synthesize responses to the research questions (Cresswell, 2009).

3.7.5 Data analysis

Scholars indicate (Cresswell, 2009; Bowen, 2009) that there are several analytical techniques that can be applied to the analysis of qualitative data, these include thematic (or content) analysis (Bryman, 2016). Thematic analysis is a technique that allows the identification and collation of patterns that emerge in a broad collection of data. It is a useful means of organising and analysing information gathered for a research project (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The literature review for this study suggested several thematic areas that are conveyed by the concept of transformation, for example, exclusion, race, gender, equity and institutional change.

I made use of detailed content analysis, which involved close examination of “preserved records” (Hofstee, 2006, p. 124). Careful scrutiny of all data collected was pursued, in an attempt to discern information that may provide unique contributions in answering the research questions. Thus, content analysis went beyond repeating or quoting the words of participants and included detailed

scrutiny of the records studied and interview transcriptions. My selection of data was informed by the strengths and relevance of these techniques in analysing the type of data I collected.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is the duty of researchers to protect their participants, build trust with them, promote the integrity of the research, and guard against any form of misconduct. Attention must be paid to ethical issues before conducting the research, at the commencement of the research, during data collection and data analysis, in sharing and storing the data, as well as in reporting the findings (Bell, 1999; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

According to Bell (1999) institutions that conduct research involving human or animal subjects now have "ethics committees which have responsibility for ensuring that any research proposals conform to approved principles and conditions" (p. 38). Researchers have to obtain clearance from an institutional ethics committee to conduct any form of research. In order to ensure that I observed this requirement, I sought and obtained ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Annexure 1).

Permission was obtained from relevant higher education institutions (Annexure 2) in the event that some of my proposed respondents were still affiliated to these institutions. Students and all other intended participants were invited to participate in an interview through a formal letter (Annexure 3), and informed consent was obtained before they took part in the research. The letter of informed consent informed participants about their right to withdraw from participating in the project at any time, should they so wish.

Given the significance of this study, particularly in shedding light on the contested meanings of the concept of transformation, participants were given the right to exercise the option of having their identity disclosed or not. I ensured that I respect and abide by the choice of participants in relation to anonymity and confidentiality. All the participants are referred as interviewees in this thesis, numbers have been appended to each of them.

The information collected for this research will be used primarily for research purposes. If I determine that the research is worthy of publication as a book, the necessary permission will be sought.

3.9 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE STUDY

Several proposed participants have retired from public life and in some cases, it was difficult to find them speedily and secure appointments. However, every effort was made to locate and invite them to participate in the study. I was not able to reach all the participants I intended to interview, one was ill and another was overseas on a long assignment. Despite these limitations, I believe the data I gathered was of sufficient quantity to assist me in responding to the research questions. Furthermore, given my position in government, some participants (especially at junior levels) may not have felt free to express their true opinions that might be critical of government or of policy. This risk was mitigated by stressing the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity.

I began this study while serving as the Minister of Science and Technology. I was aware that my senior position in government and in the governing party could be a constraint in the data gathering phase and even in the lecture hall with fellow students. I decided from year one that I was a student pursuing a PhD study and I had to tell this to several fellow students and a few young participants. My efforts to put everyone at ease and my scrupulous attention to all the lessons of research I learnt in the university served me well. I recall some of the interviewees would want to chat, I would humbly point out that I am doing research and in as firm and yet polite manner as possible, set out my tools of work and proceed with their permission – One interviewee was surprised that I had actual questions. She began to answer in some doubt and looking at me with a frown said: “I find your questions intriguing, you’re making me think” (Participant #6, 2017). That was a very rewarding moment for me as a PhD researcher. I of course also performed the formal steps referred to earlier but it was the serious attitude to my study that allowed me to pursue my research.

3.10 LESSONS LEARNT AND KNOWLEDGE GAINED

The study has been a critical opportunity for academic growth and maturity. I have learnt a great deal about rigour, hard work, planning and persistence. The decision to pursue doctoral research is not one that should be taken lightly, while it is a journey with opportunities to acquire new skills it is a somewhat lonely journey and one must be ready to stay the course.

The exposure to such extensive data allowed me to learn about policy and practice from angles I had not considered. The interviews were an amazing learning journey – at times I was struck by the rich tapestry of experiences and voices. I gathered so much data from transcribing the interviews that I needed to seek my supervisor's advice on what to do next. This has been an empowering and fulfilling learning journey for me.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE INFLUENCES SHAPING MEANINGS OF TRANSFORMATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to provide an analysis of influences shaping the meanings of transformation of higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Chapters 5 and 6 are largely devoted to presenting findings that respond to the secondary research questions. The findings presented here result from scrutiny and analysis of a wide body of documentary analysis and interviews conducted with participants. This chapter also serves as a useful backdrop to chapters 5 and 6. While the documents analysed provided very useful insights, the interviews revealed a range of unique insights and perspectives. The interviews sought answers to my research questions and a lot of invaluable information emerged from this process. The following are the research questions I set out to investigate:

The *primary research question* is: What meanings are attached to the concept transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa?

The following *secondary research questions* were also explored:

1. Have these meanings found expression in higher education policy developed and adopted in post-apartheid South Africa?
2. In what ways have the expectations of various stakeholders regarding the meanings attached to transformation been met in the adoption and implementation of policies?
3. Why does the sector continue to experience contestation on progress with transformation?

The concept transformation is widely used when various stakeholders, researchers and policy makers, refer to desired or actual change in higher education. It is a concept that is utilised to refer to a wide array of features of change in higher education, most particularly with reference to the post-apartheid era in South Africa.

The analysis of documents and the interviews drew my attention to the idea of influences shaping the meanings of transformation as a repeated reference in the research process. It was evident that

a variety of matters have shaped or influenced the meanings attached to transformation. As one participant commented when referring to influences from the international context:

> *I think, should I use the term, progressive scholars in higher education, their writings could have influenced the thinking of some of the major players in developing the policies as well as setting up the entities. I think also the fact that, globalisation of higher education was a major issue at the time.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

4.2 COMPLEXITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

In the course of interviews I observed that the issues and questions I was posing led to concentrated thought on the part of participants with much reflection and rephrasing. Their responses alerted me to the idea that in focussing on higher education and the meanings of transformation I was investigating a complex multi-faceted set of issues. The meanings of transformation have been shaped by number of factors that continue to be of significance well beyond the legal demise of apartheid. It is clear that Marginson's (2004) reference to higher education as a system that has exhibited increasingly challenging "levels of social educational practices" (p. 181) is a very relevant notion for investigating transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The detail of these levels were presented in Chapter 3.

The attempt to get greater understanding of the meanings of transformation and the aforementioned complexity was greatly assisted by the theoretical framework referred to in chapter 3 and by analysis of various documentary sources. According to the data I gathered the matter of apartheid policy and its influence on higher education could not be neglected in the research I was focussed upon. Due to the repeated references to apartheid policy I begin the presentation of findings on influences by referring briefly to this historical context.

The glonacal analysis argues that higher education systems worldwide are challenged by the irresistible forces of globalisation and commodification and that institutions and governments sometimes respond by neglecting important goals of equity and social justice. Determined pursuit of global activities that seemingly enhance the status of institutions could detract from devoting

attention to the goals of transformation as elaborated in the data presented in this study. It is important to state however, that the literature as well as the participants in the study strongly asserted the role governments play through policy and resource provision. They pointed to the reality that neglect of the objectives of achieving social justice could lead to a range of challenges to the government as well as to institutions of higher learning. This has been seen in South Africa through national protests such as #fees must fall (Reddy, 2006).

4.3 THE POLICY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

4.3.1 The apartheid education policy legacy

This section begins by providing a periodised context for the use and meanings of the concept transformation in the apartheid period and thereafter, in the post-apartheid context. It then focuses on introducing the key themes identified as most frequently referred to in the data gathering process. I found it necessary to focus on context as it became clear in the course of my research that the meanings of transformation have a relationship to the policy context shaping higher education.

One of the main influences often referred to was the impact of apartheid policy on the demographic composition of students and staff in higher education institutions. As one participant mentioned:

> *I was the only of my matriculating class that went to university, nobody else did from the whole school. Those who got degrees got it afterwards, but I went straight from school. You can't have one person from a school. So for our time access was the key issue. Opening the doors of learning.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

Another finding was that meanings of transformation are influenced by the continuing legacy of the special divide of historically black universities and historically white universities. The findings suggest that this divide causes continued disadvantage to historically black institutions which are mainly located in rural villages or very small peri-urban towns. Some participants regarded this as reflecting failure on the part of the democratic government in redressing the imbalances of the past. One indicated that redress would have been achieved faster and definitively if "the plight of

some of our historically disadvantaged universities had been given more attention to break the mantel of the past" (Interview participant #5, 2017).

The documentary analysis indicated that the apartheid legislation on universities/the Extension of University Act (RSA, 1959) has shaped and continues to influence the contested meanings of transformation in post-apartheid higher education in South Africa. The views expressed by participants appeared to confirm the assertions of Vaira (2004) when he states:

> …higher education is witnessing a process of deep institutional change that involves the deinstitutionalisation of its rooted policy and values frameworks and the parallel institutionalization of new ones. These processes entail more or less strong resistances, conflicts, tensions but also efforts to conciliate, adapt, translate, assemble the new with the old, the national features of the higher education system with the new globalising pressures, the single institutions structural and cultural features with the new imperatives and demands. (Vaira, 2004, p. 485)

These observations reflect the findings that I made and were evident in South Africa as this chapter will illustrate. The documentary analysis revealed that for some (Nkomo, 2011; Bazan & Mogotsi, 2017) institutional change involving the creation of new democratic structures of governance, as well as the development of new curricula and new measures to support students and staff were all meanings associated with the concept transformation. These and other desires that elaborate the expected character of transformed institutions reflect the challenging processes of change described by Vaira (2004). The influences presented here and the findings reported in chapters 5 and 6 resonate to a great degree with the abovementioned views.

As an academic and a public representative, I have been part of and have followed the wide-ranging deliberations on higher education in South Africa, in the period prior to the end of apartheid and during the post-apartheid era. I became aware of the consistent and at times contentious debates utilising the concept of transformation to reflect on higher education. The process of the study has allowed me to develop a greater sense of the meanings attached to transformation and the aspirations associated with the use of the concept.

The extensive body of knowledge that provides evidence of the varied yet shared global meanings of transformation points to the global interest in higher education and the high social worth that societies attach to it. In addition, concerns about systemic inequality are evident in much of the research. Hall (2012, p. 15) makes a number of relevant observations in this regard including the argument that widely different societies such as the USA, Britain, and South Africa, show "the lazy metaphor of the 'level playing field' of educational opportunity to be singularly inappropriate. Far from being a matter of the misery of 'distant strangers', relative poverty is a pressing concern in Britain and a national imperative in South Africa". Hall asserts that 'poverty traps' prevent generations from breaking out of the barrier posed by inadequate access to education at all levels. This international dimension of unequal opportunity is strongly reminiscent of the glonacal analysis which points to how, even in the face of dramatic social advances, those without the means to pay for higher education remain devoid of access to it. The findings provided responses that showed that policy intervention on access and student funding sought to respond to the inequality described by Hall (2012).

In the following sections I set out findings that show that the policy context has influenced the shape and character of higher education in apartheid South Africa, as well as its impact on post-apartheid higher education policy. I also reflect on the manner in which that context impacted the debates on and meanings of transformation in the period leading up to the democratic elections in 1994. The role played by various stakeholders in the emergent meanings of transformation is also unveiled utilising data derived from the document analysis and the interviews. Furthermore, I provide an indication of themes emerging from the primary data gathering, and excerpts from the interviews conducted as indicators of the varied contested meanings of transformation.

4.3.2 Policy as context

Extensive use of the concept transformation with regard to higher education in South Africa began prior to the demise of apartheid. It has been linked to deliberations (Odhav, 2009; Lange 2014; Govinder et al., 2013) about the future character of higher education in democratic South Africa. Interviewees in my study referred to the mid-1980s as the period in which the concept seemed to gain currency. In the literature (Carrim & Sayed, 1992; Odhav, 2009), the concept of

transformation is often associated with the emergence of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) – post-1985 – and with the so-called Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) that emerged at that time. The MDM was a network of organisations in South Africa that worked together in pursuit of the struggle for freedom. As Carrim and Sayed (1992) argue, the NECC played a leading role in an anti-apartheid coalition that challenged apartheid education policy and initiated processes to construct post-apartheid education policy.

Participants described the circumstances and the influence of these organisations in the education struggles for change as well as in the development of new policy. As one participant reflected on looking back to pre-1994:

> *Well I remember the whole NECC process and then I, remember post-1994 a lot of people who had been involved were still involved in the policy making process. I remember knowing a lot of people when they were young then for example all the UDUSA people went into policy making, Tebogo Moja was around, John went into government but many didn't go into government but were key players in the discussions and debates.* (Interview participant #8, 2017)

Research on several developed and developing countries (Agarwal, 2007; Bundy, 2006) points to efforts to change higher education policy and practice. The available evidence also points to contested views as to the degree to which change that addresses inequality has been achieved. Agarwal (2007) points to reversals in India and the need to revisit higher education policy to ensure that inequality is addressed. Lucchesi and Malanga (2010) indicate similar concerns about higher education in Brazil; they pose the challenging question as to whether universities respond to the needs of the poorest students in order to allow them a role in society. The views of Bundy (2006), referring to the United Kingdom, reiterate these varied perspectives on universities and change in society. These concerns about equity, about the role of higher education in an increasingly complex global higher education setting, about the relationship between higher education and the economy, resonate in abundant research arenas and provide a relevant framework for exploring my research questions.

Detailed pursuit of the contested meanings of transformation through a study of documentary evidence and the gathering of primary data has revealed an interlinked set of influences that have seemingly played a key role in shaping the contested meanings of transformation that I explored.

4.3.3 Post-apartheid higher education changes

While I recognised that context played a seminal role in shaping education in apartheid South Africa, it was also apparent that context had to be reflected upon as part of the research directed at exploring meanings of the concept transformation, and not as a detailed historical account for its own sake. Mathebula (2013, p. 4) asserts that people's education demands or desires cannot be understood without a clear knowledge of the historical forces that shaped them. Badat (2010) describes the results of the forces that have shaped these demands and desires in South Africa as follows:

> In South Africa, social inequalities were embedded and reflected in all spheres of social life, as a product of the systemic exclusion of blacks and women under colonialism and apartheid. The higher education system was no exception. Discrimination and inequalities of a class, race, gender, institutional and spatial nature profoundly shaped, and continue to shape South African higher education. (p. 2)

The effects of the past education policies have influenced the policies and interventions adopted by post-apartheid South Africa's democratic government. While as indicated by Badat (2010) above responses are directed at reversing the legacy, participants indicated a range of interventions that are in place in South Africa. Their contributions indicated actions since 1994 have attempted to alter higher education provision for black people from being a sector of under development and contestation into one that offers opportunity and growth to all citizens. One of the participants described action to support student success as follows:

> *I think we …. If I look at policy which acknowledged the role of academic development and student support and the need for different pathways and extended pathways we have attempted to respond to student needs and at time succeeded.* (Interview participant #5, 2017)

Another participant referred to interventions since the advent of democracy and cited student funding for the poor as a significant influence in addressing the meanings of transformation. As the CHE (2004) ten-year review showed government grants for poor students have resulted in significantly increased access for poor and black students.

The historical context that has influenced and shaped all education in democratic South Africa springs from the racist ideology of apartheid that was imposed by the National Party Government which assumed office in 1948. That government often attempted to describe apartheid policy in words that tried to present it as 'civilised'. Terms such as 'separate development', and 'respect for culture and language' were often used to depict apartheid policy as benign and harmless. However, as Kallaway (1984) and several other researchers (Badat, 1999; Nkomo, 2011) have shown, apartheid was a policy of racial segregation enforced through a system of legislated racism.

I discovered in the course of my research that apartheid policy in education achieved a range of unexpected outcomes. One of these that was touched upon by a participant was to unite young students of different races in the fight against apartheid. One participant reported that as a young white man from an Afrikaans speaking family it was at university that he discovered injustice and learnt to strive for justice with fellow students of different race groups. Research (Cutten, 1987) also indicated that academics developed measures to combat apartheid dictates by admitting black students to institutions that were supposed to deny them entry in terms of apartheid law.

Racism against and exclusion of black people in South Africa did not begin in 1948 with the National Party Government – it had existed since the beginnings of imperialism. Apartheid policy refined and reinforced existing segregation and created a system of laws and institutions that enforced a cruel yet efficient form of social engineering that is sometimes compared to the ideology of nationalism observed under the Nazi regime in Germany (Peires, 2015). Despite strong and consistent opposition to apartheid within and outside South Africa, apartheid laws remained in effect for over forty years and negatively affected every facet of society, including educational provision at all levels.

4.3.4 A new policy era

The changes in higher education since the passage of the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) have directly addressed these aspirations and concerns and while documentary data as well as information gathered in the interviews acknowledges progress that has been made (Badat, 2010; Nkomo, 2013; Jansen, 2004), the majority appear to share a concern that not enough has been done. Some admit that the areas that have not been addressed are possibly the most challenging in higher education. As one participant shared with me:

> *I think that in the context of changing the system, the structures, the governing structures and so forth we addressed transformation. I don't think we did in terms of the kind of curriculum issues that Rhodes must fall etcetera is raising, it didn't, we created the spirit in which such changes could be done.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

It is important for me to acknowledge that use of the notion of 'contested meanings' may seem to suggest two or more direct protagonists engaged in argument on the meanings of transformation. This is often not the case; thus I utilise the term 'contested' according to what the data shows, namely that there are differently held views on transformation, with at times, a direct challenge by a user of the concept to a particular set of meanings. For example, for some participants race and demographics were cited as key meanings of transformation as one participant said:

> *Black students related to me their feelings when going to the office of a white lecturer and not being immediately greeted or welcomed. They feel that they are not welcome when going to that office to ask a question and that they felt different in going to the office of a black lecturer. At times these matters occur unconsciously without malice but impact on students.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

4.3.5 Responding to new challenges

The above view is contradicted or contested by some who hold the view that not enough is being done to address black students concerns about institutional culture (Reddy, 2006).

For others, altering the content of what is taught and who teaches seems to be a priority meaning, as suggested by Van Wyk, Alexander and Moreeng (2010). Furthermore, some interviewees asserted the need to change and democratise governance of higher education. Reference to the past while reflecting on the present, illustrates that the context of apartheid, and of the education struggle against apartheid, has continued to influence and shape the meanings of transformation.

The apartheid legislation whose influence has been described was sometimes referred to in documentary sources as limiting academic freedom and autonomy, in that it determined who could be admitted, what could be taught, and who could teach in universities in South Africa (Cutten, 1987). This was an assault on the basic principles and values that are associated with higher education, such as autonomy, academic freedom to decide who teaches, what is taught, who is admitted, and which programmes are offered. As Waghid (2002, p. 458) argues, apartheid affected all aspects of education at all levels, thus transformation means "effecting changes on all of these levels. This requires no less than an overhaul of the past educational order".

The 1959 Act particularly affected the so-called 'open' universities of South Africa: University of Cape Town, Rhodes University, University of the Witwatersrand and University of Natal. While these were largely white universities, they had at times acted in defiance of the apartheid government and admitted a few black students. However, these black students were treated as a separate racial category – often they did not live in university residences, and at times were not even taught in the same lectures as other students (Cutten, 1987). Judge Thumba Pillay recalls his days as a student at the University of Natal as follows (Houston, Mati, Magidimisha, Vivier & Dipholo, 2017):

> We black students attended classes in prefabricated buildings behind Sastri College and at a warehouse in Lancers Road, Durban. Seating at graduation was segregated, although we wrote the same examinations the white students wrote. The segregated ceremony was to become an issue around which we mobilized and successfully boycotted. I, for one, holding both a BA and an LLB degree, never attended a graduation ceremony – graduating in absentia each time. (p. 40)

The student boycott of graduation ceremonies became a potent symbol of the demand for change in the apartheid era. One of the research participants in this study referred to feelings of alienation and exclusion upon pursuing a post-graduate diploma at a historically white university. As he said:

> *I sat in my first lecture totally bemused as I had not had a white teacher or lecturer and even the tone of English was foreign to me. It took me months to catch up and the white students around me seemed so relaxed and able to cope.* (Interview participant #10, 2017)

So, the 'open' universities seemingly conformed to the dictates of racial policy while also acting in opposition to it. The 1959 Act also introduced new requirements for the admission of black students, including seeking written permission to attend a white university from the responsible apartheid minister. This indicates a significant departure from global higher education practices, in that the state determined access and other policies. The effects of the 1959 Act and other apartheid legislation are vividly described by Wotshela (2016) in an evocative account of the one-hundred-year history of the University of Fort Hare. By his account, the Act was devastating in its impact on the realisation of black people's aspirations for higher education. It was not only devastating to one institution as the creation of four other institutions for black ethnic groups sowed seeds of conflict and separation among black people and bequeathed a legacy of underdevelopment in higher education that still confronts South Africa today. As one participant told me:

> *One imperative thing after 1994 and the years thereafter was looking at universities and how we deracialise then. We brought some together and thus we had deracialised universities theoretically but it would never be perfect because you couldn't bring the University of Zululand together with any other institution, it was just left rural and marginalised.* (Interview participant #10, 2017)

Reference to the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 (RSA, 1959) is important to this study for several reasons. Firstly, it provided for a new type of university institution in South Africa – 'state university colleges' (largely black and ethnic institutions) – which would exist alongside the then state-aided universities (primarily white universities). Secondly, the state-aided universities – while constrained by apartheid law – seemingly had generous public funding, plus access to funding from the private sector; and they hosted faculties that provided skilled human resources in disciplines such as medicine, engineering, science, commerce and technology. On the

other hand, the black university college that existed in 1959 did not offer most of these critical disciplines. Thirdly, the black majority thus had very limited opportunities to pursue higher education qualifications in a wide range of disciplines, and this limitation has impacted on South Africa well beyond the apartheid era. Fourthly, although black people formed a majority, very few universities were open to them, so the majority were denied opportunity and for many, university education became a site of struggle rather than a site for human development and academic learning. It is in the light of these limitations surrounding and constraining higher education, that the debates on the contested meanings of transformation – the core concern of this study – need to be understood.

Interview participants referred to these matters when speaking of the meanings of transformation. One of them indicated that, as young people who had done well in school, they sought to enter high-level skills programmes, such as pharmacy. However, because of the absence of such departments in the one ethnic university to which he was admitted, he was confined to following the route of a general science degree. This meant he had to curb his ambition and wait another four years before he was able to realise his dream overseas. Many students of African, coloured or Indian origin were denied ministerial permission to attend white universities in which they had hoped to pursue degrees in medicine, pharmacy, or engineering. This meant they were excluded from acquiring professions that were associated with success and economic opportunity.

Apartheid education policy entrenched exclusion at other educational levels as well. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 (RSA, 1953) severely impacted the quality of school education and actively denied black schoolchildren access to mathematics and science subjects in government administered schools for blacks. This resulted in only a small number of black children leaving school with passes in subjects that would allow them to study science, medicine and engineering. The 2016 report of the National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI, 2017) shows that the legacy of poor attainment in science subjects and mathematics at school level in South Africa (see Figure 1) continues today (NACI, 2016, p. 1). These facts are relevant to this study in that the data I analysed (Badat, 2010; Jansen, 2004) referred to transformation as being linked to inadequate access by black students to critical fields of study such as science, medicine and engineering. In the celebration of democracy, we often fail to acknowledge the cruel efficiency of apartheid racial policy. Sectors were targeted with cold precision and the negative intentions were achieved,

continuing to shape our society in the present. The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) report (2008–2015) shows ongoing poor achievement in mathematics and physical science in the national senior certificate examination (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: Total National Senior Certificate Passes (2008–2015)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total NSC Passes	344 794	339 114	364 513	348 117	377 829	349 779	403 874	455 825
Mathematics Passes (>40%)	89 186	85 491	81 473	67 592	80 707	97 786	79 048	84 296
% Females who Passed Mathematics at >40%	48.4	48.3	48.3	46.2	47.5	48.2	47.2	46.5
Mathematics Passes (>50%)	62 388	52 866	50 196	41 586	51 231	63 151	50 365	53 588
% Females who Passed Mathematics at >50%	47.9	47.4	47.3	44.8	46.0	46.4	45.3	44.3
Mathematics Passes (>60%)	41 667	31 786	30 543	24 577	30 355	37 782	30 762	31 811
% Females who Passed Mathematics at >60%	47.8	46.6	46.5	43.8	44.8	44.4	43.6	43.1
Physical Science Passes (>40%)	61 480	45 531	60 943	61 126	70 074	78 676	62 031	69 698
% Females who Passed Physical Science at >40%	46.5	45.9	47.8	46.3	48.1	48.9	47.7	48.2

Physical Science Passes (>50%)	32 524	22 329	37 853	37 106	43 639	47 030	37 749	42 433
% Females who Passed Physical Science at >50%	46.5	45.7	46.5	44.4	46.2	45.9	45.3	45.8
Physical Science Passes (>60%)	16 620	10 308	22 759	21 840	25 640	26 467	22 116	24 611
% Females who Passed Physical Science at >60%	47.3	45.9	45.9	43.9	44.6	43.4	43.4	43.8

(Source: Table 4.1 of the NACI Report (2016), citing HSRC study)

Figure 1 shows that while increasing numbers of young people have written the National Senior Certificate (NSC) school leaving examinations since 2008 through to 2015 insufficient numbers view young people succeed in achieving marks above 50% in these subjects. University entry requirements to studies in science, engineering and mathematics requires passes above 50% in these subjects. While these figures are of concern given the low number of passes even more troubling in terms of the meanings of transformation is the evidence that female learners achieve lower passes than their male counterpart.

It was not only in student access to higher education that the 1959 Act had an impact – it intensified racial difference and made racism a core element in higher education institutions. In addition, the policy affected academics in universities. Academic freedom was curtailed as lecturers were proscribed from using certain prohibited books and teaching material. Oddly apartheid policy prevented black academics from teaching in historically white universities, while it was seen as acceptable for white academics (particularly Afrikaans speakers) to teach in historically black universities (Kallaway, 1984).

The wide-ranging debates on transformation and the contested meanings explored herein were shaped by many factors besides the 1959 Act (RSA, 1959), namely: earlier apartheid education legislation; the myriad of laws that restricted the political and civil rights of the people of South Africa; the struggle for freedom; and legislation passed after democracy was achieved in 1994. It

is important to point out that apartheid education policy was not received with mild acquiescence by academics, university heads and the broader community in South Africa. The policy activism which influenced the development of the perspectives of the NECC, UDUSA and other organisations on higher education policy indicate that there was not passive acceptance of apartheid policy. Progressive organisations such as the NECC initiated the establishment of the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI, 1992a; NEPI, 1992b; NEPI, 1992c) this was one of the most inclusive and detailed processes of preparing education policy for a post-apartheid South Africa.

The 1959 Act was introduced a year before the banning of all black political organisations such as the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in the 1960s. While these developments resulted in an apparent lull in active political protest, there is evidence of robust political activism at that time, particularly leading into the period of countrywide protests that dominated South Africa from 1980 to 1990.

Apartheid policy sometimes gave rise to unintended consequences. For example, it aimed to separate white and black people and deny them any attempts at action through unity. This was defeated in many social sectors, including higher education. Progressive academics of all races came together in many organised formations to resist the intrusion of apartheid policy and its dictates. These included student organisations such as AZASO, SASCO, NUSAS and others, academics associations, trade unions and education associations, all of which formed links that created a unified anti-apartheid struggle, particularly in education. Cloete (2011) points to the role played by academics and asserts that since they were not adept at policy formulation, they tended to be overly activist as they attempted to play a role in helping to shape policy. Thus the apartheid higher education policies served as a tinderbox that lit a furore of protest in education that only began to quiet as the dawn of democracy approached, and the promise of change was anticipated.

4.3.6 Shaping new practices

Change was a recurring refrain in the data studied and analysed. For some change related to the fact that black students were now able to enter any university of their choice. For others seeing

increased numbers of young women graduating with post graduate degrees was a sign of significant change. According to participants I interviewed these signs of change signalled the fact that South Africa had began to transform higher education and for her the influence was democracy. As the participant said:

> *You see young black students the guys who have just finished university in their twenties and they are confident. Much more confident than the current generation that we see in the positions of power and management in South Africa. Interestingly enough, I think one sees it more amongst black women, a much greater self-confidence.* (Interview participant #7, 2017)

The ability to fully administer and oversee the implementation of apartheid policy was also difficult for the apartheid state. Fort Hare University records indicate that while it was designated as a university for the Xhosa ethnic group, many students of Sotho, Tswana and Zulu origin continued to defy apartheid law and attend the university well into the 1980s (Wotshela, 2016, p. 45). This meant the intention to influence division resulted in an expected unity. Furthermore, another unexpected influence was the emergence of activism. Some of the participants I interviewed indicated that their political activism was awakened and nurtured at university by their lecturers and university leaders. As one indicated:

> *We attended reading groups where our lecturers introduced us to politics and discussed developments in South Africa with us. Lecturers like Alec Erwin, Ashwin Desai, and Fatima Meer and others began our political awakening.* (Interview participant #8, 2017)

By 1980, education at all levels had become a focus of student and general community protests throughout South Africa (Kallaway, 1984). The sustained period of protests resulted in various formations coming together in the mid-1980s to address concerns about the disruptions in education and to propose steps to return calm to the sector in order to allow learning and teaching to resume. In the course of my interviews, one of the participants suggested that the meanings of transformation have been influenced by a culture of protest that developed in that 1980s – 1990s period and that this culture continues to influence demands for change even today. As he stated:

> *...a demands driven approach to policy and practice became dominant. Policy was couched in the political language of you know, in the past we didn't have this and therefore now we have the opportunity to have that.* (Interview participant #10, 2017)

Leaders such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Vusi Khanyile, James Maseko, Mary Metcalfe and many others played a role in establishing the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC). The NECC became the premier national community organisation leading education struggles and national structures in reconstructing education after the disruptions that had characterised black education at all levels for nearly a decade. The NECC initiated a participatory process of developing education policy for the much anticipated post-apartheid era.

The national education policy options that were proposed for the emerging context of a new democratic order were the subject of much debate among education stakeholders in South African in the period 1992 to 1994 (Odhav, 2009, p. 39). NEPI submitted its reports on all levels of education to the NECC in 1993. By this time the release of political prisoners such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and the unbanning of banned political organisations had occurred. The NEPI report on higher education (NEPI, 1992b) generated a great deal of debate and contestation about future policy. Organisations such as UDUSA (a union for academics) and various student organisations articulated their views and concerns about the NEPI proposals and expressed and suggested that the proposal were not sufficiently responsive to the legacy of apartheid. They tabled proposals emerging from their own deliberations, despite the fact that they had participated in the NEPI working groups. This could be termed the period in which contested meanings of transformation began to emerge influenced by different organisational views. Further policy proposals were developed by the African National Congress (ANC), which published its Policy Framework for Education and Training in 1994 (ANC, 1994b). Some of the participants in this study reported that they first came across the concept of transformation during the NEPI working group deliberations. As one participant stated:

> *My first encounter with the notion of transformation was prior to 1994 in the forms of NEPI, NECC and UDUSA. Many of us cut our teeth in those processes. I have wondered why we used the term 'transformation' and not the widely used term 'reform'. I suppose*

> *we were saying we did not want tinkering with apartheid education we wanted a system to meet with the needs of the new democracy*. (Interview participant #4, 2017)

This bold desire for fundamental change is reflected upon in various research studies (Odhav, 2009). Cloete (2012) criticises academics involved in what could be termed 'formative policy making' in the early 90s. He posits that such academics joined protests as social theorists in order to critique the state as part of public protest, rather than as informed policy advisors. Academics worked primarily with activist social formations and Cloete (2012) claims that a major result of this form of relationship was that progressive academics failed to acquire the ability to theorise about reconstruction or about policy. This is reminiscent of the analyses of Przeworski (2011) which point to failures in transitions caused by inadequate governance and policy development experience.

The period from 1992 to 1994 included a broader national consultative process of drafting a wide ranging post-apartheid vision document: the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (ANC, 1994a). The RDP was a document formulated following a national consultative process initiated by the ANC and other progressive formations including NGOs and community based organisations. The objective of the research that was initiated and the consultative workshops and national conferences was to develop a document that would guide the policy development processes of the ANC. Many hours of work and commitment went into these planning processes for a democratic dispensation – including the ANC drafting of education policy documents – which created an atmosphere of promises that freedom was expected to honour. There were some who believed (Odhav, 2009) that sufficient policy frameworks had been prepared for the expected democratic government, and that all it needed to do therefore, was to convert the policy work into formal government policy. However, the lessons of policy making and implementation in the past twenty-three years of democracy have confirmed that there isn't a seamless transmission of proposed policy into implementation. Policy making is a far more complex undertaking than was assumed in the period prior to 1994.

The new government elected in 1994 and led by the ANC began a formal process of policy formulation from that year. While President Mandela affirmed the RDP (ANC, 1994a) as the core vision and programme for democratic South Africa, the government set in motion various activities

directed at supporting the government in developing new policy. Thus, rather than adopt the NEPI report on higher education (NEPI, 1992b), the Mandela government established a National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) that was tasked with investigating higher education and developing a White Paper (DOE, 1996) for the new government.

Some of the activists and academics who had played a role in the earlier NEPI policy workshops and seminars were appointed to the NCHE. But for some of them, the appointment of a commission caused concern as they had apparently thought the policy development work had been done and that the ANC government should use the outcome of these efforts for developing new policy (Odhav, 2009).

I have come across such expectations many times, as both a committee member of the Education Portfolio Committee in parliament and as a minister in cabinet. Policy making is almost seen as the tabling of demands and is seldom perceived as being constrained by the country's Constitution, the availability of finances, or capacity regarding institutions and human resources. At times, as policy makers we do not point out the limitations and hazards to stakeholders – rather in response to their vocal demands we try to develop policy even when we suspect we may not be able to implement it immediately. This is an influence and dilemma that probably confronts many policy makers, especially in new democracies. The inadequacy of action by government may lead to calls for change that government implement or act upon.

This section has presented an outline of the context in which the meanings of transformation were initially developed and articulated. As is shown in the presentation of findings from the data gathering and analysis process (sections 4.3.3 to 4.3.6), the context of apartheid policy in higher education, and the policy development efforts of those opposed to apartheid created a set of complex and challenging issues. These demanded the attention of an incoming democratic government, chapters 5 and 6 will indicate how the demands and expectations of millions in the newly democratic South Africa were responded to.

4.3.7 Stakeholder influences

Any research that focuses on change in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa would be incomplete if it does not include reflections on the role of stakeholders. This section provides findings on the role of stakeholders.

The struggle for change in South Africa was carried out in many sectors of social action, and in many different institutions, schools, universities, courts, workplaces and sports organisations. Stakeholder action in response to apartheid law attracted a wide variety of stakeholders who were not only committed to participating in the struggle for freedom, but also keen to shape future policy and action for a post-apartheid South Africa. This meant that workers, freedom fighters, teachers, religious leaders, students, parents, community members, academics, and business people, all held the view that they could play a role and had solutions to offer. An influential part of this mix was the international community. A significant role was played by community based organisations and worker formations.

Organisations such as Education Africa played a very important role in providing educational opportunities within higher education for young people. In addition to defining future education policy through academics organisations such as UDUSA and policy options such as those developed by NEPI (1992b) not for profit organisations working with communities such as Joint Education Trust (JET) played a vital role in supporting the development of new education practices in higher education. JET was established in 1992 as a partnership between corporate leaders from the private sector, South Africa's political parties, the trade union movement and representative organisations of black business (JET, 2017). Through its ability to draw together stakeholders from different sectors in education, business and politics JET played a key role in defining post-apartheid practices in higher education. A critical role in influencing transformation has been played by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) a body established through the Higher Education Act of 1997 (RSA, 1997). The role of the CHE in monitoring and assessing progress in higher education and in providing independent advice to government has made it an important stakeholder in advancing and informing higher education change. Added to these stakeholders is the role of global and national influences in higher education.

The following section provides insights into global and national influences on transformation.

4.3.8 Global and national influences

Reimers and McGinn (1997, p. 26) argue that policy development processes benefit from "explicit attempts to involve those outside government". They call for involving "what some might call civil society or the public in the process of research and in the policy dialogue surrounding research organisations and individuals" (p. 26). These arguments resonate with practice in South Africa in higher education and in fact in all policy development. It has become standard practice for broad consultations to be initiated in South Africa in the processes of policy development and research. The same authors are correct in claiming that "this will produce tensions which will generate a wider range of options for change. The involvement of outside organisations will stimulate processes that will nourish the demand for change and sustain reform efforts" (p. 26). Again this has been the practice in South Africa, the analysis of influences on transformation presented in this chapter indicate that broader involvement than government has led to the meanings of transformation as well as to change in South Africa.

Those who are familiar with apartheid policy and practice can be forgiven for believing that South Africans developed ideas about a future post-apartheid higher education sector in total isolation from the global academic community, from international organisations and global development institutions. The evidence of fairly extensive global, national and local (institution based) links and influences prove this notion of total isolation false. The longest serving president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo (1967–1991) (Callinicos, 2004), and former President Nelson Mandela (1991–1997) (Mandela, 2013) provide riveting accounts of the time and effort the broad liberation movement devoted to building the international anti-apartheid movement to support and complement the political struggle for freedom in South Africa.

The networks established internationally worked closely with institutions and individuals in South Africa and offered critical support to liberation efforts at home and abroad. They also assisted stakeholders and policy makers in the democratic period. As one participant indicated:

> *We would do ourselves a disservice if we suggested we simply imported policies but to have formulated polices without regard of what is happening in the rest of the world would have been short sighted, so yes, off course other examples were looked at and utilised. I recall looking as Sweden and Norway, countries that were seen as socially more progressive.* (Interview participant #8, 2017)

One of the contentious elements of these links was the use of boycotts and different forms of sanctions to support the struggle. They were contentious because not everyone agreed on the necessity for sanctions as part of the anti-apartheid armour. The academic boycott which began in the 1960s and intensified in the mid-1980s was a feature of international anti-apartheid protest that is relevant to this study. Its relevance in terms of influences on transformation relates to the fact that academics from historically black institutions reportedly observed the academic boycott and had limited contact with institutions of high learning outside South Africa. Unlike them their colleagues in historically white institutions established active links with institutions outside South Africa. This was true of academics in Afrikaans speaking institutions as well. Some of the participants reported on the research partnerships they established with colleagues in the international community, they also confirmed that this was less easy for poorer rural institutions and it intended to isolate and disadvantaged academics within them.

The formal declaration against apartheid and its violations of academic freedom signed by 496 UK academics in 1965 is a well-known example of this aspect of the anti-apartheid struggle (Spotlight on South Africa, 1965). This was in protest against the banning of Professor Jack Simon and Professor Eddie Roux who were prohibited from lecturing in higher education due to their political beliefs. The United Nations adopted a resolution on boycotts in 1980. Despite these resolutions, links between some academics and institutions continued, or were formed during this period of sanctions. This meant that as freedom beckoned, the higher education sector in South Africa already had long-standing associations with international scholars, which added to the broad mix of influences that played a role in shaping post-apartheid higher education.

Fehnel, Maasen, Moja, Perold and Gibbon (2002) provide a very detailed set of accounts on the role played by international organisations, global foundations and sectoral associations in supporting and influencing policy development and implementation in South Africa. Such links

were established in the period prior to the end of formal apartheid and they continued into the post-apartheid period.

South Africa is not alone in experiencing the influence of international organisations and global higher education links. Various accounts of the development of higher education in Africa (Zeleza, 2015) and of individual South African institutions (Cloete, Bunting & Bailey, 2017) confirm that globalisation has wielded pervasive influences on the continent. These influences appear to begin with firm African leadership and control during the early post-independence era (Zeleza, 2015). As a fledgling university sector grows, matures and differentiates, increasingly common global features become apparent. The expansion of private, market-based institutions is one of the most frequently mentioned characteristics in research on higher education in Africa (Ogunkunle & Adekola, 2013; Zeleza, 2015). As Zeleza (2015, p. 3) indicates, in Africa, the rate of growth of private higher education outstripped public sector institutions in the 1990s. This growth is regarded as a consequence of the failure of governments to generate levels of economic growth that can support expansion of the publicly-funded university sector. The growth in private higher education is funded by universities of countries outside Africa and by private sector organisations that have invested in higher education institutions. These institutions influence the skills African countries develop and can play a role in supporting change or detracting from it.

Furthermore, as Marginson (2004) argues, the social status value of a university education has become a global phenomenon affecting both developed and developing countries; and thus increased student demands for access open space for the entry for private providers. Beyond this local demand for places, institutions in America and other developed markets were seeking external markets in Africa as well as other developing regions of the world. This expansion of higher education is reported as reinforcing inequity, in developing countries such as Brazil and India (Marcus, 2015; Gupta, 2006), in that the poor did not enjoy access due to cost and poor outcomes in the school system.

A perverse effect of internationalisation was the ‘brain drain’ suffered by Africa in the 1980s and subsequently. Many academics and professionals trained in African institutions leave the continent to work and teach in Europe and elsewhere. As indicated in chapter 6 of this study meanings of transformation is sometimes used to refer to inadequate progress in employing black academics to

teach at senior level in universities in South Africa. Cloete et al. (2017) provide an indication of the manner in which South Africa has benefitted from opening up its higher education sector to students and academics from the rest of the African continent, but as Zeleza (2015) concludes, for much of Africa, inadequate policy and the inability to secure funding have resulted in "ideal conditions for mediocre higher education" despite Africa's connection to the global higher education community (p. 8).

Marginson (2004) also reflects on this tension that may be a feature of global links. "Cross fertilisation" (p. 179) as Marginson terms these global influences, encourages the adoption of common practices that may not be appropriate for very different contexts. For example, the increased use of fees in the West in the 1980s influenced fee charging in universities in poor countries with a very small university sector and many citizens who could not afford to pay the costs of higher education.

The glonacal heuristic (Marginson, 2004) sets out the various ways in which the value and benefit of higher education are rendered a commodity. Policies and practices developed and promoted by global – or indeed African organisations, add further complexity to a sector that is often under intense public scrutiny and facing incessant demands and pressures. The glonacal analysis argues that the distinctions and practices introduced through global, national and local influences tend to increase the 'status good' value and character of institutions, but do not always provide effective responses to the national development needs of nations. This implies that governments need to give greater attention to pursuit of the objectives of skills development linked to national goals in their countries, thus transformation requires far more careful planning and steering than is suggested through current practices.

Earlier in this chapter, I drew a distinction between universities in South Africa, in the sense of historically black universities (HBUs) and historically white universities (HWUs). The HBUs were universities designated for and attended by black students, while HWUs were institutions designated for the white population of South Africa. They could be broken down into two categories (Odhav, 2009) – the older, liberal in tradition, English-medium universities, and the newer, apartheid-created Afrikaans-medium universities. In some of the literature (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017; Reddy, 2006), black universities are described as 'historically disadvantaged',

while white universities are called 'historically advantaged' due to their location (mainly in urban settings), their ability to secure resources from the previous government, to secure resources from their wealthy alumni, and to benefit from well-established international networks. Black universities designed in the mould set by the 1959 Act (RSA, 1997) had no such advantages.

The links described above between advantage, capital and access to international university networks resulted in unexpected outcomes once global links intensified in the post-apartheid period. Initial beneficiaries of the opportunities presented by global links tended to be historically white institutions (HWIs) and not the historically black universities (HBUs) which were the primary victims of apartheid education policy. Initial support for post-graduate bursaries and institutional capacity building from international foundations such as the Mellon Foundation and the Ford Foundation began with HWUs and only later benefited the HBUs (Ilora, 2006). Our glonacal analysis points to the neglect of equity that can result from a focus on economic or efficiency returns, rather than on the pursuit of social justice and equity.

The glonacal heuristic describe the inequity that has developed in higher education systems worldwide. Marginson (2004) argues that higher education has become a sector in which financial ability of families and individuals and market forces are dominant. These developments have resulted in the poor being increasingly excluded from higher education or being rendered vulnerable through the inability of governments to provide measures of support that would allow them to benefit from higher education. These developments perpetuate inequality and worsen the position of individuals who lack the means to afford higher education. The consequence of these development is that while higher education has become an influential presence in countries worldwide it is not able to play a role in advancing social justice (Marginson, 2004).

It is important to acknowledge that international stakeholders such as the Ford Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided support to organisations such as the National Education Crisis Committee as they initiated policy development processes such as NEPI (in 1993) and other education development programmes. These links continued into the national context – that is. the democratic government's research and policy formulation processes.

The NCHE process "…saw widescale participation by many role players in higher education, and debates about the NCHE, including resistance to the final report and recommendations of the commission" (Odhav, 2009 p. 33). I recall being part of an NCHE working group on equity. We were funded by the Ford Foundation to attend seminars, talks and meetings with various groups and a conference on diversity in the United States of America. While the various meetings and discussions were very helpful, we could not fully identify the options we were looking for – particularly policy in pursuit of equity, or strategies that would fit our context most appropriately. However, hearing of, and seeing the continuing challenges of inequality in America did alert us to the challenges that would confront us – but we did not find a set of responses that would resolve our difficult and complex context.

The international contacts established by the NCHE included overseas academic colleagues and organisations in the United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden and Norway. Some of the participants in this study referred to global and local influences in the course of the interviews. They indicated that while South Africans worked at developing South African policy on higher education they did investigate international options and drew on some international examples they identified as relevant for South Africa. As one said,

> *West Germany seemed appropriate because of the tri-partite nature of arrangements between state, labour and capital at the time.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

According to another participant, they were as persons working in policy development were interested in:

> *…countries that were seen as socially more progressive: New Zealand, Australia, Sweden, Norway and Cuba.* (Interview participant #7, 2017)

A vast body of research on higher education in post-apartheid South Africa includes reflections on stakeholder influences and perspectives (Odhav, 2009; Cloete, 2011; Le Grange, 2009). In this section I have provided insights into the various stakeholder influences that shaped debates and policy in the apartheid period and in the post-apartheid democratic era. In the course of my research, I noted that several participants were adamant that post-apartheid policy in higher

education was largely a South African-led process, and that while international partnerships and consultations were pursued, the choices were determined by South Africa. As one participant said:

> *Yes, we drew on examples elsewhere but we decided what should be done.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

4.3.9 Transformation expectations in the context of struggle and freedom

In a firm and moving address at the launch conference of the NECC in 1986, Zwelakhe Sisulu spoke on behalf of millions of South Africans when he indicated "… this conference once again asserts that the entire oppressed and democratic community is concerned with education, that we all see the necessity of ending gutter education and we all see that this is a political question affecting each and every one of us" (Sisulu, 1986, p. 86). The impact of apartheid on education made education a concern of many and gave rise to varied perspectives on a future system of education.

One of the participants in this study, a senior researcher, asserted that early notions of transformation were shaped by apartheid policy in higher education. He argued,

> *… our focus was access, but even this notion became diluted by our apartheid experience. We tended to see access as access to former white institutions that was how access, the battles about access were actually fought.* (Interview participant #1, 2017)

Jansen (2004, p. 303) provides interesting perspectives on the vanguard role played by students and student organisations in the period leading into the democratic era. According to him, the bold role adopted against injustice and inequality earned students considerable respect and influence within progressive forces in the struggle against apartheid. This led to legitimate expectations by students that their transformation expectations would be addressed. These expectations included access to higher education for the excluded black majority, and state support for such students to ensure that they did not experience hardship. It seems, however, that democracy in 1994 did not result in the expected transformation. Jansen (2004) states "For example, the focus of student organisation, especially in historically black institutions, shifted from protest against an

illegitimate government to demands for unrestricted access to higher education, expanded financial aid to needy students and relief from personal debts to the institutions" (pp. 303–304). These demands continue to exist as shown by the 'fees must fall' and the 'Rhodes must fall' protests of the period 2015 to 2016 more than two decades since the advent of democracy. According to Cloete (2015) "this was the biggest, and the most effective student campaign in post 1994 South Africa" (p. 1).

It is useful to return to descriptions of apartheid higher education and its problems as a beginning in exploring the meanings of transformation. Odhav (2009, p. 34) quotes Cloete (2011) describing the structural flaws of apartheid higher education as:

> Unequal access for staff and students in relation to race and gender; an undemocratic system instantiated by an illegitimate government, resulting in a wasteful system and poor planning capacity; an unarticulated system not providing for student mobility within sub-sectors; a lack of relevance of various curricula in the system; failure to produce graduates with competencies requisite for a society in transformation; and government funding not taking into account the needs of disadvantaged universities (Odhav, 2009, p. 34).

A more recent perspective on transformation was presented by the South African Students Congress (SASCO) at a summit on higher education. According to SASCO:

> …transformation must be understood as a double process; a process of the dissolution of an existing set of social relations and social, economic, political, ideological and cultural institutions, policies and practices; and a process of the recreation and consolidation of an alternate set of social relations and social, economic, political, ideological and cultural institutions policies and practices. (Maimela, 2016, p. 1)

Further views as to the meanings of transformation are presented by Du Preez, Simmonds and Verhoef (2016) – they indicate that Waghid (2002, p. 455) argues that the goal of transformation is to improve and create a more just and more equitable society. Van Wyk (2005) has warned of "the likely sham that could result if 'structural transformation' is reduced to its narrow sense (e.g. performativity or efficiency). He argues for 'deep transformation' which takes into account

African notions of *ubuntu* and community, such as forgiveness, recognition, humanness, respect and politeness (Van Wyk, 2005, p. 17).

4.4 SUMMARY

Varied demands for transformation continue to exist more than two decades since the advent of democracy. In the period preceding democratic change in South Africa, many organisations, individuals and communities expressed their views and expectations about the future character of education in post-apartheid South Africa. It is clear from the perspectives drawn from data that many complex meanings are associated with the concept of transformation. These perspectives derive from context, from the role higher education is expected to play in society and from aspirations of individuals, communities and organisations with regard to educational opportunity. It is thus useful to utilise the above background to explore the response of the government and institutions of democratic South Africa to this variety of meanings. This is done in the following chapters 5 and 6.

CHAPTER FIVE: HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided an analysis of the manner in which context and policy shaped higher education in apartheid South Africa. It also reflected the practical experience of higher education as revealed by various research participants interviewed in the course of gathering data.

In this chapter I provide responses to the secondary questions posed for this research. The previous chapters have set out the context, as well as details of the very influential role played by apartheid policy in higher education. That basis allows us to now examine how the new democratic government (established in 1994) responded to the strident demands for fundamental change in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa.

Apartheid policy has been widely described as a set of measures that accentuated race as a basis for exclusion from opportunity, and imposed oppression through institutions and laws created for such a purpose (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). As shown previously, apartheid policy targeted black persons who were disadvantaged by race, class, negative spatial location, and poverty. In the higher education sector, these disadvantages were evident in the fact that black students had to attend universities designated for blacks; these institutions were largely located in distant rural areas; and black students attending these institutions – as well as the few who secured permits to attend historically white institutions – were largely from poor and working class backgrounds.

A very clear picture of the tasks that policy makers had to address is set out in the following statement by Universities South Africa (2015):

> At the time of transition to democratic rule in 1994, South Africa's centuries' long, oppressive and divisive colonial and apartheid history left a higher education system deeply marked by its discriminatory and authoritarian legacies. This included inter alia, a system structured along highly stratified racial, gender, class, cultural and spatial lines; skewed in its structural development; unequally financed; disarticulated from the most pressing economic and social needs of the majority; and internationally isolated and focused on the

> industrialised North with very few linkages with the developing world and the wider African Continent. In short, the core logics of this system were almost diametrically opposed to the central tenets of the new Constitution (RSA, 1996) that sought to create a non-racial, non-sexist, more equal and socially just economic and social order for South Africa. (p. 1)

The above statement is an incisive description of apartheid effects inherited by the new democracy. Cloete et al. (2017) add to this description, stating that "even by 1986, only 5% of Africans in the 20- to 24-year old age group were in higher education, compared to more than 60% of whites" (p. 4).

In describing the mammoth task facing the new government, Nkomo (2013) asserts that:

> In short, the colonial and apartheid educational projects wrought enduring socio-economic damage, the repair of which will require a Herculean effort from every level of society; from politicians and professional policy makers, down to teachers, learners and parents. (p. 8)

This particular extract refers to all levels of education and therefore provides important insights into challenges in the post-apartheid school and higher education sectors. These are some of the legacies and realities that the new government had to confront, and they are often the focus of the contested meanings of transformation

5.2 LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE

The struggle for freedom in South Africa was a mass-based popular struggle that involved millions of people in protests, underground work, activism in NGOs and community based organisations, churches, schools and a wide range of other formations. Very few people were untouched by apartheid, thus millions held the view that they had a real stake in the expected positive benefits of freedom. Freedom mattered because it was understood to mean change.

Reflections on the process of introducing democracy in South Africa tend to neglect to mention that the post-1994 government came into existence as the outcome of a protracted and often

difficult period of negotiations between the apartheid government and the various liberation organisations that had waged the struggle for freedom. The apartheid state continued to serve as government during the negotiations process from 1991 to late 1993; and the liberation organisations such as the ANC, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and others negotiated as representatives of the oppressed in South Africa. Further complications came into play during the course of negotiations as new political formations emerged. These were largely black-led parties with strong ties to former Bantustan governments. Conservative white-led political formations also emerged, that were strongly opposed to the negotiations and to black participation in governance.

Notwithstanding these complex mixes of negotiating participants, there are people in South Africa who appear to believe that the apartheid state was defeated by the liberation movements and came to the negotiating table as a supplicant – this is far from reality. Some researchers strongly criticise the ANC for failing to advance a 'progressive political agenda' and suggest it seamlessly appropriated a 'neo-liberal agenda' which betrayed the revolutionary promises elaborated in the course of the struggle (Bond, 2000). Such conclusions appear to neglect consideration of the difficult conditions in which negotiators from liberation movements had to assert their demands. They also fail to appreciate the challenges of transition which the government faced when it came into power after 1994. Some of these conditions have been characterised as a 'triple transition'. The triple transition is described as a process of change in post conflict societies that involves the state, political organisations and civil society (Seo, 2008). Furthermore, critics tend to fail to refer to the significant social advances that have been achieved in the first two decades of democracy in post-apartheid South Africa.

The negotiations were a protracted process in which the apartheid state and its proxies sought to secure maximum advantage while conceding some political and civil rights – including education – rather grudgingly. For example, the apartheid government retained control of the security forces during negotiations and reportedly continued to use the police and security forces to fuel violence and harass ordinary citizens (Mandela, 2013). A final negotiated settlement was concluded with the adoption of the Interim Constitution in 1993 (RSA, 1993).

The Interim Constitution included agreement that a final Constitution would be drafted by a parliament elected by all the people of South Africa in a democratic election. Elections were set for 1994. The elected parliament would then establish a Constitutional Assembly that would draft the final Constitution of South Africa and adopt it by an agreed deadline of two years after the 1994 elections.

Added to the above directives of the Interim Constitution, was a schedule of thirty-three Constitutional Principles to serve as the guide and template for drafting the final Constitution. These Constitutional Principles are sometimes described (Reddy, 2006) as providing insights into the concessions the liberation movement organisations had to make in order to secure peace and democracy. Concessions were also evident in the revelation of an 'eleventh hour' set of agreements that were referred to as 'sunset clauses' – they were adopted at a point of seeming deadlock in the negotiations and were apparently intended to be of a transitional nature, and thus time bound (McGrath, 2010; Cross, Mungani & Rouhani, 2002).

At least two of these sunset clause concessions probably have importance for this chapter. The first was the agreement that all parties that gained 10 per cent or more in the 1994 elections would form part of a government of national unity (RSA, 1993). The second was that existing apartheid state senior civil servants would not be dismissed from their jobs for at least the first five years of a post-1994 election administration. These particular concessions meant that while the party winning the 1994 elections may win a majority, it would be confronted by possible limitations on its ability to fully exercise power – both politically and administratively.

The above is a rather truncated overview of the outcomes of the negotiated transition to democracy in South Africa. Nonetheless, it provides insight into the difficult challenges that would face the new government that was said to have agreed to a compromise settlement. The obvious dilemma set in motion by these outcomes appears to affirm the notion of complexity introduced in chapter 4 and discussed further below. Many elements of this contextual complexity are relevant to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa today.

The first aspect of complexity relates to 'who governs'. In a context of conflict, in which there is an oppressor and an oppressed, one could safely assume that a just outcome of such conflict would be for the former oppressed to enjoy untrammelled influence in governance if they secure victory

in an open, democratic election. The complexity evident in the South African reality is that the former oppressor ensured they would continue to wield significant influence and seek a role in governance and policy making.

The second aspect of complexity is the socio-economic reality that confronted the newly formed government. This is linked to the fact that under apartheid, South Africa had presented itself to the world as a wealthy, highly sophisticated, European-led country, with strong viable institutions, including universities. The economic reality that confronted the newly-elected ANC government was that of massive apartheid debt that had to be settled (National Treasury, 1997; Calitz, du Plessis & Siebrits, 2011). Thus the new democracy was constrained by the lack of sufficient resources to ensure that the inadequacies of the past would be firmly and speedily addressed.

Research on the struggle for freedom (South African Democracy Trust, 2010) indicates that the ANC had relied heavily on the possibility of continued external support and that any loss in this regard would be a blow to the new democracy. However, once the ANC had won the national elections in 1994, its close allies in the international anti-apartheid struggle assumed that the ANC would have access to immense state resources, and announced that limited financial aid would be provided to assist the new government (Reddy, 2006). Furthermore, the international community and global politics underwent significant change during this period. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) (which had been a major funder and supporter of the liberation movements) collapsed into many small states and had to focus on their own challenges posed by those changes. In addition, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 further diminished international allies of the ANC and other liberation movements. East Germany had provided refuge bursaries and other support to the ANC and stopped doing so after the changes in 1989. This meant that the ANC lost key backers at a critical moment in the pursuit of democracy.

Thirdly, the struggle for freedom had been boosted over many decades by well-organised non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as education, welfare and community organisations. Many of these relied on external aid to support neglected communities in South Africa and advance the anti-apartheid struggle. Once the dream of freedom drew near, international funders of local NGOs reduced funding and appeared to expect the new government to assume responsibility

(Bond, 2001). The ability of such bodies to lend support to the democratic state disintegrated, and the loss of these resources and important bonds of solidarity proved to be a significant blow.

It is evident from these aspects of the process of change in South Africa that an analytical framework such as the glonacal heuristic holds relevance for this research. Before 1994, global partners supported the national struggle against apartheid in significant ways and brought their influence to bear on a range of local organisations and initiatives. The withdrawal of established support added immense resource pressure and institutional challenges for those who would come into elected office. Given these important observations, it is clear that a discussion about the meanings of transformation as well as assessment of the progress made in terms of transformation needs to include consideration of the factors highlighted above and defined in this chapter as 'complexity'. Such an assessment is begun in chapter 4 and is elaborated in chapter 6.

5.3 THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF THE NEW DEMOCRACY

The first universal election that included all eligible adults in South Africa was held on April 27, 1994. The ANC won the majority (62.9%), with the National Party (the former apartheid government) winning 22% and the Inkatha Freedom Party 10%. These three top parties formed a government of national unity, as agreed under the Interim Constitution. Thus, the ANC (the erstwhile liberation movement) became the leading party in government, being required to serve with its former foes the apartheid National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party.

This was the context of state power and resource inadequacy in which the process of policy change was initiated by the democratic government. As indicated earlier, the founding policy document for the new state (the Interim Constitution) set out the framework within which the new parliament would conduct policy making. Many of the newly-elected parliamentarians had emerged from the mass democratic movement, being former freedom fighters, political prisoners and anti-apartheid activists. They had not served in a parliament before 1994, had not ever been allowed into parliament in South Africa, and had no experience of developing legislation or regulations. Serving with them were former apartheid politicians – their former oppressors. Oppressors and new parties

alike were required to collaborate on opening up a democratic political space. This mix established grounds for intensive contestation on the content and form of post-apartheid policy.

It is important to add that universities remained intact in terms of existing leadership and governance structures, inherited from the apartheid era. Thus the new government had to begin the process of change with the same vice chancellors, academics, management staff and curricula in place in the higher education sector. Once more, the reference to the glonacal heuristic is relevant to this discussion. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) refers to the manner in which the simple social good of university education has been transformed into a costly, complex, and inaccessible commodified status good, prized by the most wealthy. Thus democracy in the post-apartheid era in South Africa – a simple goal for which many had sacrificed dearly – assumed complex dimensions that would be impacted upon differently by local, national and global influences.

Additional factors that influenced the complex mix that was characteristic of South Africa's political transition emanated from its long-established ties with the international community. The international character of the anti-apartheid struggle had imbued the liberation movements with access to international institutions, global organisations and education opportunities outside South Africa. This rich experience would be brought into play as policy formulation got underway.

The desire for social status – often sought through access to higher education – sometimes means that the sector cannot be easily steered to support the achievement of national goals such as social justice. Some literature (Wolpe, 1995; McGrath, 2010) suggests that this is due to the contradiction inherent in the simultaneous pursuit of enhanced social status through higher education, and the pursuit of social equity. Keppel (1991) warns about the dilemmas and complexity of the higher education public policy domain. He argues that in higher education development:

> … the goals of quality, diversity and budgetary efficiency are often linked and pursued and yet there is an uneasiness and tension between these goals. (p. 1)

The impact of global influences adds to the challenging policy environment. As Marginson (2004) indicates, globalisation has resulted in the creation of large, well-endowed international organisations such as USAID, UNESCO and the OECD that have a global footprint, as well as extensive financial and human resources. These organisations wield their policy power by

promoting and resourcing policy perspectives developed in wealthy systems, in countries that may not have the capacity to effectively implement such global frameworks. These observations are true for post-apartheid South Africa, as illustrated in the course of this chapter.

Recent research on global influences and the role of supra-national organisations utilises the concepts of 'soft power' and 'hard power' to describe emerging multi-lateral relations. Nye (2005) developed the concept of 'soft power', using it to describe the influence America wields as a world power, and he describes it as "getting the outcomes one wants by attracting others rather than manipulating their material incentives" (2005, p. 29). This influence is often exercised in education, cultural exchanges and diplomacy. Essentially, unlike the 'gunboat diplomacy' of the past era of colonialism in which military would be utilised, soft power uses resource provision and diplomatic engagement as a means of encouraging change, or the adoption of a favoured model. While it is possible to distinguish soft power from the likely hard power of military intervention or influence, the force of soft power should not be underestimated as being benign, since it can lead to countries such as the United States of America (USA) wielding enormous influence on higher education systems through scholarships, wealthy research organisations, development organisations and very mobile experts. These are described by Cloete and Muller (1998) as consultants that have the resources and connections to travel to different parts of the world, execute projects which eventually influence policy in developing countries. As with many developing countries, South Africa has experience of these soft power influences in post-apartheid higher education. According to Jansen (2003) policy makers in South Africa sometimes utilised the advice of international consultants who are funded by powerful foundations or organisations and who supported the development of policy with little or no understanding of the South African context.

The findings reported in this chapter and the extensive data collected for this study gleaned from a range of sources confirm that the newly democratic South Africa began the phase of freedom by developing policies that would honour the nation's expectations and hopes. This is clearly evident from the higher education policies developed since 1994 (DOE, 1997, 2001) and the overt inclusion of clearly stipulated objectives to ensure greater opportunities for entry to higher education for those previously denied such opportunity. The state thus undertook to confound the

apartheid legacy by pursuing meaningful change in entry to higher education, by ensuring that all universities are accessible to black people.

According to the reported findings and analysis, that will be presented in later sections (section 5.4) it was in pursuing these undertakings that the concept of transformation began to assume significant status as a concept that refers to multiple features within the higher education arena. This chapter (section 5.4) presents concerns about the ability of poor nations to achieve mass participation in higher education. While not arguing for reducing opportunity, the chapter acknowledges and sets out the manifest complexities associated with adopting policies of wider access to higher education.

Nevertheless, none of these looming impediments could dampen the spirit of optimistic anticipation that ushered in the new ANC-led government as it assumed office. The new multi-party parliament was also imbued with that sense of hope and expectation. It adopted new rules and procedures, including a commitment to parliamentary practices that would be equal to those of mature, established democracies. The Interim Constitution asserted the creation of a parliament that would be accessible, consultative and responsive (RSA, 1993). Unlike the apartheid parliament, this one confirmed that it would hold open committee meetings and create opportunities for all stakeholders, including the public, to participate in law making. This was an important and historic approach to policy making, given the apartheid history of excluding the majority of the population from decision making and policy development. As a result of this new approach, the promise of inclusion was clearly evident at the start of the process of developing new policy for higher education.

I have previously indicated the energetic contribution of many stakeholders – at global, national and local levels – in articulating and shaping proposals for new post-apartheid higher education policy. Proposals had been made in the streets during protests, in local community education workshops, in dedicated national processes such as NEPI, and in international deliberations led by various international institutions (Fehnel et.al, 2002). The aspirations expressed by these stakeholders formed part of the material that the new government and the new parliament would consider.

In his first State of the Nation address to parliament after the 1994 elections (ANC speeches, 1994), the first ever democratically elected President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, confirmed that his government would be open and people focused, utilising participatory processes for policy development and implementation. The process that eventually led to the adoption of the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) reflected that promise of broad consultation. The government of President Mandela did not begin with a process of synthesising all the proposals developed during the anti-apartheid struggle – rather they created a new body to initiate post-apartheid higher education policy development: the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE). The hope that the perspectives of the erstwhile anti-apartheid forces would be embraced had been reinforced by the new government when it adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (ANC, 1994a) as its policy document. This was a post-democracy policy blueprint developed by the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), which enjoyed wide support within the organisations supporting the ANC. Its adoption was preceded by nationwide workshops and conferences. Following the appointment of the new cabinet, an RDP department was created within the presidency, and it was anticipated by all that the RDP would be converted into new laws.

The new perspectives on an inclusive democracy that would consider popular views caused the people of South Africa to believe that their views and desires would hold sway within policy formulation. Przeworski (1998a) reflects on such beliefs regarding the influence of popular power upon early democratic victory. He suggests that the achievement of early policy success for the broader populace and the formerly excluded may occur due to powerful mass power, but he also warns that the formerly privileged sometimes regroup and regain old privileges. Thus there develops a push-and-pull of initial democratic success, followed by a retreat or reversal secured by the formerly privileged.

In 1994, new members of parliament steered processes leading to proposed new policy perspectives. They included former heads of education NGOs, leaders of community-based organisations, academics, student leaders, as well as labour leaders. Many of them became members of the very important Education Portfolio Committee in the National Assembly. This committee began its work fully alert to the keen interest held by millions in change in education, particularly higher education. This committee was evidently very interested in the work of the newly-appointed NCHE, which itself had much to consider. As one of the participants said:

> *The education portfolio committee played an important role in policy issues. Members would convene meetings on the NCHE report and present their perspectives which often challenges what had been presented by the Department.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

5.4 POST-APARTHEID HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT

There is a wide body of research (Zide, 2013; Le Grange, 2014; Van Wyk, 2006) that seems to argue that policy alone is not the key determinant for successful social action. Researchers suggest that the barriers and impediments to policy formulation and implementation are much more complex than originally thought. For example, Engelbrecht and Bhengu (2015) provide a useful analysis of policy tools in the democratic South Africa. They present an incisive outline of the manner in which the goals of equity and redress can fail to have impact due to internal institutional dynamics that prevent the embrace of mechanisms designed to promote equity and redress. These researchers draw on the CHE report of the student cohort entering university in 2006 (those who had had 12 years of schooling under democracy). That report indicates the troubling failure and dropout rates in many institutions – notwithstanding government policy efforts directed at enhancing the access and success of the formerly oppressed. Engelbrecht and Bhengu (2015) argue that policy on its own cannot support change, and that resources in the form of financial aid, increased staff capacity, and student support programmes must be part of the interventions designed to promote change. A likely failing of policy makers is the apparent assumption of a problem-free transition from policy to practice – yet policy on its own is certainly not sufficient to achieve desired outcomes.

The process of developing post-apartheid higher education policy in South Africa was filled with indications of the difficulties inherent in policy making. As reported in earlier chapters, the anti-apartheid organisations started to develop policy perspectives for an expected democratic era in the early 1990s. Limited access to resources caused these organisations to rely on international funding and international experts in their policy research projects. Several projects had been undertaken as the democratic era approached – NEPI, the RDP, the human resource proposals of the Five Freedoms Forum (in 1990), as well as sector studies commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Some studies reflect rather harshly on the efficacy of the outcomes of these initiatives (Jansen, 2003). Researchers (Odhav, 2009) suggest that studies such as the NEPI framework reports (NEPI, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c) tended to be broad perspectives on the sector, and offered policy options rather than actual policy proposals. The preference for options has been interpreted differently – for some it is seen as reflecting a lack of capacity in civil society organisations to develop policy due to their exclusion under apartheid and lack of government experience; for others (Cloete & Muller, 1998; Reddy, 2006) it is described as indicating a hiatus within civil society organisations on being explicit about their policy positions or proposals, in case the negotiations went awry and they had disclosed their policy plans to their antagonists.

In 1994 we confronted these challenges as novice parliamentarians. We believed that what we planned would be implemented seamlessly. We were thus rather confounded at the significant power wielded by public servants in office, and by the realisation that they were the ones who converted our aspirations into formal policy. The new public servants who came from the liberation movements and former progressive organisations such as the NECC also reportedly faced many challenges (see below). They were new in the bureaucracy and had to rely on the former apartheid government civil servants for advice on legislative matters.

There is informative research that provides perspectives on the challenges faced by public servants in the early years of democracy. McGrath (2010) reflects on some of the experiences and challenges faced by new government officials in the newly created Department of Education. Focusing primarily on the development of policy for further education and training colleges, McGrath (2010) expresses the view that new public servants found themselves in the difficult position of having to execute the policy instructions of the new minister, while faced by hostile, yet experienced civil servants from the former apartheid government. He argues that the old bureaucracy tended to "stress technocratic rationality over the more critical and participatory 'struggle' approaches that had dominated the democratic movement for decades" (2010, p. 529). In a similar vein, Sehoole (2005) reflects on these experiences. Some of the participants in this study referred to their experience in the new public service:

> *... we did not have the experience of administration but we had a mandate and knew what we wanted to achieve politically. We eventually found ways of working with each other but it was difficult in the beginning.* (Interview, participant #10, 2017)

The tension between established bureaucracy and the pursuit of democratic goals and ideals is evident in these excerpts and reveals challenges that the new democracy had to overcome. Van Wyk (2006) refers to what would have been expected to change in higher education. He refers to the need to "abandon old ways of knowing and doing and [adopt] a new and broader definition of reality" (p. 183).

One unexpected reality was that converting our policy aspirations and proposals into legislation and statutes turned out be a most challenging and frustrating process in which many factors required consideration. A useful illustration of this was the process of drafting the new Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996a), particularly the clause on the right to education. The expectation of many was that it would be easy to include this as a clause in the Constitution. To our surprise, this became one of the most contested clauses of the Bill of Rights chapter of the Constitution, as the previously privileged minority sought to retain elements that would sanction continued privilege in formerly whites-only schools. According to McGrath (2010) the new South African public service faced difficulties at its inception in 1994 due to the need to appoint new officials and merge these with the old apartheid departments. It is suggested that the new officials wanted a strong focus on development and new ideas while the old former apartheid public service tended to focus on administration. The experience of the old officials, however, allowed them to yield a great deal of influence which often led to tensions in the department (McGrath, 2010).

Debates on higher education also arose when the clause on freedom of expression was considered. Members of parliament received submissions from universities vigorously supporting the inclusion of a clause on academic freedom and saying nothing about redress and equity in higher education. The new public servants and members of parliament probably faced many such moments of resistance and subtle sabotage. The accounts of Chisholm (2004) and McGrath (2020) provide useful insights into the tensions that existed in the education department. Part of the challenge related to the difficulty of making selections and decisions in the face of many

suggestions and proposed solutions. Those providing advice included a wide spectrum of voices – academics, students, business organisations, as well as international partners.

The conclusions of various researchers are that the advice offered was not always well thought through in terms of implications for resources, administrative capacity, and relevance to context. Some researchers (McGrath, 2010) suggest that policy makers were neglectful of advice that stressed the need for capacity and competent human resources to execute the policies. In a stringent analysis of post-apartheid policy processes, Jansen (2003) severely criticises policy makers for inadequate attention to research knowledge that should precede policy formulation. These difficult gaps and inadequacies appear to affirm the notion of complexity discussed in this chapter. Despite the aforementioned criticisms and shortcomings, the democratic government adopted the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) which set in motion significant processes of change in post-apartheid higher education.

Reflections on historically black institutions are also a prominent feature of deliberations in the early post-apartheid period. Chikombah (1995) points to the inadequate research capacity in historically black universities, as well as to concerns about poor institutional funding in HDIs, a weak research culture, and low levels of support for women researchers despite their contribution to research production in historically black institutions.

The perspectives of the ANC as a liberation movement (when they were preparing for governance) included concrete reflections on what needed to change. The ANC policy framework referred to the need to create a higher education system that would be:

> … in contrast to the fragmented system that existed prior to 1994, that was characterised by a racial and ethnic divide between institutions; by quality being identified with the larger liberal institutions due to their international recognition at the time; and mobility, flexibility and effective education being truncated due to problems across the system. (ANC, 1994b, p. 1)

In a reflective lecture delivered as the Solomon Mahlangu Memorial lecture in 2007, Badat (2007) reminded the audience of the various calls that have been directed at post-apartheid higher education and the democratic government. He succinctly set out the myriad expectations of 1994.

As he reminded the gathering, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (ANC, 1994a) referred to the need for higher education to "meet the basic needs of people; develop our human resources; build the economy and democratize the state and society" (Badat, 2007, p. 6). Badat further recalled that the Education White Paper 3 (DOE, 1997) refers to higher education as "needing to support South Africa in achieving political democratisation, economic reconstruction and development, and redistributive social policies aimed at equity" (Badat, 2007, p. 6).

These aspirations – which were sometimes presented as directives to the emerging post-apartheid government – give rise to at least two critical observations about the policy expectations of what would follow the advent of democracy. Firstly, it had not been anticipated that "the apartheid policy had vast (after) effects, for practice, structures and institutions" (Odhav, 2009, p. 35). Secondly, achieving the degree of fundamental change suggested by researchers, institutional leaders and social activists could be derailed by a range of factors such as resource inadequacy, poor institutional capacity, and outright rejection by some stakeholders.

Concerns of a very similar nature are found in higher education research in countries such as India. Practical experience of the policy intention to pursue inclusion and equality in higher education in India has shown that even when economic means and growth seem sufficient to pursue just goals, evidence does not always point to dedicated pursuit or achievement of the expected outcomes (Rizvi & Gorur, 2011).

So this was the scenario that the ANC government had to respond to as it began to develop policy. It had to do so in a context in which the popular belief was that elected governments that win large majorities secure a licence to pursue their policies free of resistance and other barriers, and are able to shape policies as they wish. Once more, research on that early 1994 period hints at such beliefs and indicates strong disapproval of an apparent lack of resolute attention to early promises by the ANC government (Reddy, 2006). One of the most telling effects on policy development is the availability of financial resources, and conversely, a lack of resources diminishes and constrains choices. Some researchers (Reddy, 2006; Bond, 2000; Odhav, 2009) have criticised the new government for not adopting an expansive budget policy in order to fund higher education. They ascribe this reluctance to the democratic government's adoption of a new finance policy framework – the Growth Employment and Redistribution policy or GEAR as it was famously

called. The policy was developed to reduce government debt and thus imposed limits on government expenditure at a time when many in the mass democratic movement expected more expansive spending policies. As a policy change, it remained unpopular in the post-apartheid era and is seen as being responsible for some of the inadequate progress in development priorities.

Some of the research on post-apartheid higher education development ignores or inadequately attends to the multi-dimensional and severely complex context of post-apartheid governance. For example, Bond (2000) argues that policy choices that were made constituted a shift away from established positions of the 'progressive Left', or were appropriations of neo-liberal policy approaches that seemingly detract from the pursuit of post-apartheid change. Reddy (2006) asserts that the post-1994 government adopted neo-liberal macro-economic policies that departed from their stated ambition of achieving inclusion of those who had been marginalised under apartheid. I did find some acknowledgement of the fact that there has been some success in the transformation of higher education in South Africa (Reddy, 2006; Badat, 2010; Cloete, Maassen, Bunting, Bailey, Wangenge-Ouma & Van Schalkwyk, 2015). However, such acknowledgements do not sufficiently convey the deeply challenging and complex environment of post-apartheid reconstruction and development.

The government of President Mandela began the process of developing policy that would introduce fundamental change in higher education, by establishing the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), which honoured that early promise of open, participatory policy making. The NCHE is described as a massive endeavour that "initiated a discussion on higher education by providing a common starting point, and establishing an admirable example of transparency, consultation and democratic participation" (Reddy, 2006, p. 7). Further evidence of this open, inclusive approach is provided by Jairum Reddy (1998) who was the chairperson of the Commission. He refers to the extensive consultations that were hosted by the Commission locally and globally – over one hundred submissions were received and many stakeholders were invited to present and discuss their submissions.

The NCHE report (NCHE, 1996) documents what is possibly one of the most consultative policy processes ever undertaken for higher education policy in South Africa. It provides full details of all the submissions and feedback that was provided, and indicates that the submissions were

recorded and retained on a higher education policy database. Furthermore, the Commission initiated research through technical committees, used international consultants, and undertook international study tours. The report records all technical committees of the Commission, several of which included international experts. For example, the American Council on Education served on several committees, as did international institutions and individuals located overseas. There are comments in some articles that imply that international influences sometimes overpowered local participants (Cloete, 2011).

The final report (NCHE, 1996) sets out the Commission's views on what a transformed higher education system should reflect, including the following features (pp. 76–80):

- Offer access and possibility of success to all talented individuals irrespective of race, colour, creed, age or class;
- Through its teaching and learning programmes, provide for all the skills, vocational and employment needs of a growing economy in the context of globalisation;
- Support the culture of critical discourse, human rights and inter-cultural communication; and
- Contribute to the advancement of knowledge and scholarship in keeping with international standards while being sensitive to the African context.

In addition to these goals, the Commission also adopted a set of fundamental principles which would guide and direct the process of transformation (NCHE, 1996, p. 2):

- Equity – provision of resources and opportunities in higher education should be based on equity while historic inequalities should be addressed;
- Democratisation – governance of the system as well as institutions should be democratic, representative and participatory;
- Development – higher education should aspire to the balanced development of material and human resources;
- Quality – the services and products of higher education should pursue and maintain the highest attainable levels of quality;

- Academic freedom and institutional autonomy – clearly defined and appropriate tenets of academic freedom and institutional autonomy should be established and observed; and
- Effectiveness and efficiency – increased efficiency and productivity of higher education.

These principles were the centrepiece of the Commission's report and were maintained as the test of choices to which the new government should pay attention.

The final report of the NCHE was handed to government in 1996 and subsequently published for comment (NCHE, 1996). As Minister Bengu, the then Minister of Education, later wrote in White Paper 3 (DOE, 1997), conferences, seminars and various meetings were held to allow for as broad a response to the report as possible. After consideration of the comments provided, the government drafted a Green Paper which was released for public consideration in December 1996. The Green Paper (DOE, 1996) affirmed the need for transformation in higher education and was perhaps the clearest signal of the initial policy choices that were under consideration. It contained many of the perspectives on redress and equity that had been in some of the submissions to the NCHE. In introducing the Green Paper on Higher Education (DOE, 1996) in parliament, the then Minister of Education, Professor Bengu (1996), said the following:

> The Green Paper signals the policy intentions of my department in regard to the reconstruction and development of higher education in South Africa. I agree with the NCHE's point of departure: that while our higher education system has considerable capacity and internationally acknowledged areas of excellence, it is also fundamentally flawed by inequalities, imbalances and distortions from the apartheid history and present structure. (p. 1)

He added that:

> ...the system of higher education must be both expanded and transformed, within the reality of available resources. In order for such expansion and transformation to be effective, and to deliver the required results, redress is a further imperative. Redress must operate partly in terms of access. It must ensure that no one with the capacities to succeed in higher education is barred from doing so. (p. 2)

The emphasis on redress and the link to access resonated with the policy priorities that had been developed and debated in the periods of struggle against apartheid. Access was mentioned as the first of the key features identified by the NCHE as imperatives for higher education, and was also referred to by participants in this study as one of the key meanings of transformation. Thus the Green Paper enjoyed wide support, especially among ANC supporting structures and organisations. As one of the participants who was a former deputy rector of a university said:

> *In our time transformation meant access. It was all about access.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

The Green Paper was followed by the release of the Draft White Paper on Higher Education in April 1997. In July 1997 the Education White Paper 3 (DOE, 1997) was published, containing the proposals government planned to enshrine as policy, while retaining the key vision and goals in the 1996 NCHE report. This clear indication of the selected policy choices of the ANC-led government was encapsulated in the Higher Education Bill that served in parliament in 1997. The resulting Higher Education Act of 1997 (RSA, 1997) is sometimes referred to as legislation that signalled a decisive break from the apartheid past of higher education (Cloete & Muller, 1998; Reddy, 2006). It enshrined the concept of transformation in a statute and indicated the intention of the democratic government to utilise higher education to advance its socio-economic development priorities.

It is clear that there was very active policy development in the period 1996 to 1997. This period of intense policy debate is described by Jonathan Jansen (2003, p. 86) who quotes Samoff (1997) as saying:

> South Africans were confronted with a flurry of White Papers, Green Papers, Discussion Documents and 'Frameworks' all projecting a very public discourse of 'transformation'. These actions suggested sincerity of government with respect to open public participation in policy development. They resulted in the adoption of the Higher Education Act. (Jansen, 2003, p.86)

There were different reactions to the stream of policy documents that emanated from government processing of the NCHE report, signalling perhaps the early beginning of contested views as to the

content of policy and implementation. Some disquiet arose after the publication of White Paper 3, as various organisations felt that significant perspectives on redress and equity had been watered down and that inadequate attention was being paid to these imperatives (Odhav, 2009).

Even though the development of the Act had been preceded by consultations, research and stakeholder deliberations, some researchers (Odhav, 2009) believe that the government neglected to incorporate many of the views and submissions. For example, organisations such as SASCO and UDUSA that had contributed to policy proposals, indicated that the government had not incorporated their progressive proposals on redress. Some even suggest that the government was confronted by exceedingly difficult demands and that at times, it chose policy options that pleased constituencies rather than realistically responding to the complex challenges (Jansen, 2003). For others, while the policies seemed far reaching, they were not sufficiently responsive to the prevalent race, class and gender divisions inherited from apartheid. I sought out the views of the research participants on the process of policy formulation and implementation.

The issues of complexity set out above indicate that policy making in post-apartheid South Africa was far more difficult than a simple conversion of progressive policy into statute.

5.5 PERSPECTIVES OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

The various policy documents, as well as the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997), elicited a variety of responses from local stakeholders. The Committee of University Principals (CUP) – an organisation of university vice chancellors in historically advantaged institutions HAIs – published a detailed paper commenting on the NCHE report (CUP, 1996). The heads of historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) had their own separate forum (HBU forum) in which they reflected on key policy and sector issues. The report of the NCHE (NCHE, 1996) indicates that vice-chancellors of HDIs had decided to submit a separate response from that submitted by the CUP and the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP). The CUP's commentary on the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) pointed to emerging differences between principals of HAIs and HDIs. One of their major concerns appeared to be that insufficient attention had been given to capacity and to concretely shaping implementation plans. According to more recent views, the policy

documents contained all the progressive concepts, but "the meanings of these terms were open to conflicting interpretations and at times practical implementation that remained contested at ... institutions" (Reddy, 2006, p. 8).

Participants whom I interviewed referred to the various views and contributions of local stakeholders. It is clear from these interview findings that access was often a key concern among stakeholders. As one said of student organisations:

> *So how did SASCO influence policy? It influenced policy by pressing the issue of access and so because of that The Tertiary Education Forum of South Africa (TEFSA) was converted into NSFAS and we begin to lay the basis for today's national student financial aid scheme.* (Interview participant #2, 2017)

Reference was also made to the influence of academics through UDUSA. A participant recalled UDUSA's insistence on the need for policy to provide for democratic governance structures, as follows:

> *UDUSA would pitch up and present its views to the portfolio committee on power and power relations in universities. They stopped at demanding the creation of broad institutional forums and did not fully address reducing the power of councils.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

Some of the participants referred to areas of innovation that were introduced by stakeholders, such as the labour movement. A significant change in the new legislation was the introduction of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and a Quality Assurance framework for learning programmes. Some participants attributed these changes to the influence of the Workers Federation and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), as one asserted:

> *... the proposals on prior learning came from worker organisations – they really came from those education organisations that served workers, they extended their theories because they were working in programmes of alternative education for workers, uh… for COSATU.* (Interview participant #10, 2017)

Parliament itself had very contrasting views among policy makers and wished to clearly distinguish itself from the executive branch. Some of the participants in this study recalled how the Portfolio Committee insisted on hosting its own consultations "parallel to the work of the commission":

> *SASCO would come to each of the regional hearings of the portfolio committee and articulate its position and be backed up by the NECC*. (Interview participant #5, 2017)

A repeated observation by more than one participant was that the end of the formal process of developing policy papers was rushed at times, and did not allow for full local reflection on ideas developed externally. A participant commented as follows to my probing:

> *The process of developing the White Paper was short circuited because the then minister decided he did not want to take the bill to Parliament without a white paper. So what became the draft white paper – which created all the problems I think – was like done in two weeks. So I think what happened was though there no problems politically with the Green Paper okay, and the draft White Paper comes out then suddenly all hell broke loose.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

Despite the very open consultative process, the wide range of contributors and experts, some stakeholders were not entirely satisfied with the White Paper and the final legislation. One participant reminded me of a meeting in which I had raised a series of critical comments about the Green Paper (DOE, 1996). She reminded me that:

> *I recall your questions to us when we came to present to the portfolio committee. You asked difficult questions.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

Notwithstanding the concerns about the emerging policy proposals there seemed to be broad agreement that the new government formulated a set of policies that signalled a determined intention to address the racial history of higher education and restructure the sector to pursue new national goals.

My attempts to probe the reasons for some of the views that suggested dissatisfaction (Cloete & Muller, 1998; Odhav, 2009) with the finally agreed legislation led to reflections on the influence

of external role players as well as the reactions of local policy makers and researchers. The glonacal framework (Marginson, 2004) points strongly to the pervasive influence of globalisation and the manner in which national and local concerns can sometimes be sacrificed for global affirmation.

5.6 INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS AND CONTESTED CONTRIBUTIONS

Various books and articles (McGrath, 2010; Jansen, 2004) confirm the fact that international experts and organisations played an influential role in the South African policy-making process post-1994. Reddy (1998) confirms this, when referring to international participants in the NCHE workshops and discussions. Some of the participants I interviewed also referred to international experts. One recalled:

> *I can see where some of the outside things came in because at the time, the first chapter of the White Paper – where values and visions etc. were – I think was drafted by the guy from the World Bank or he was involved in it. But you know, from where I was sitting we were very much in control.* (Interview, participant #4, 2017)

Another participant referred to the role of individual experts:

> *We didn't consider what was happening in Latin America or Asia or Africa. Many of us in policy had studied in the UK or USA and so forth and tended to work with experts from those countries.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

Academics who participated in the work of the NCHE have published their views on what occurred (Cloete & Muller, 1998). They report that the development of modern and fast communication technologies eased the international exchange of ideas and allowed the commission "to get a short position paper from a net-linked expert in Holland or Hungary rather than from a South Africa academic who more often than not did not have e-mail" (p. 7). Such experiences and influences mirror the arguments of the glonacal heuristic which suggests that the ease of communication allows for the global exchange of ideas, but that at times, this can lead to inadequate attention to context or national needs.

This comment refers to the apparent haste in drafting a White Paper due to the minister requiring action. Various researchers (Odhav, 2009; Reddy, 2006) suggested that a number of ideas contained in the Green Paper were omitted, resulting in significant anger from stakeholders. Further contention is commented upon by Cloete and Muller (1998), who refer to at times strident disagreements among international experts about proposed South African policy. They confirm, however, that the final choices were most often made by the local commissioners and government.

These reflections on the focused policy development process provide insights into a very complex undertaking by the democratic government. It is reminiscent of the views of Finifter, Baldwin and Thelin (1991) on the complex relationship between public policy and education practice: "public policy making is a highly skilled craft that requires the best efforts of both educational and government leaders" (1991, p. 34). The views of participants in this study point to such complexity and suggest that there was probably inadequate appreciation of the possibility that aspirations might not always become reality.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In the cover letter to President Mandela on submission of their report (NCHE, 1996), the Commission expressed the view that the envisioned transformed higher education system would make a significant contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and the transformation objectives set out in the report. A key focal area of the report and subsequent Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) was the intention to achieve transformation through access. Access became a predominant feature of popular demands and was enshrined in legislation as one of the major objectives of democratic South Africa. It appeared that access for the previously excluded would signal substantive achievement of the intentions of freedom.

The extensive data gleaned from the document analysis (Annexure 6) and the findings reported on in this chapter confirm that the newly democratic South Africa began the phase of freedom by initiating actions that would honour the nation's expectations and hopes. This is clearly evident from the higher education reports, papers and policies developed, particularly the overt inclusion

of clearly stipulated objectives to ensure greater opportunities for entry to higher education for those previously denied such opportunity. The state thus undertook to confound the apartheid legacy by pursuing meaningful change regarding entry to higher education and ensuring that all universities in South Africa are accessible to all races.

This chapter could potentially serve as guide to policy makers in that it suggests the need for them to be wary of assuming that the formulation of policy is easily followed by the achievement of intended objectives. Policy makers should be alert to the obstacles that beset implementation, which include the capacity of new staff in existing bureaucracies, the availability of public resources, and (as shown here) simple resistance to the policies from beneficiaries of former systems such as apartheid.

This chapter reveals the tangled web of post-apartheid higher education that new policy makers had to grapple with. Further complexity is posed by the contributions and expectations of local and international stakeholders, sometimes exacerbating the many difficulties and problems. Nevertheless, even as challenges are indicated in this chapter, real progress since 1994 is also reflected upon. While confronting such challenges, scrutiny by stakeholders of the higher education sector has resulted in the extensive data that provides assessments of progress with transformation.

The newly-democratic South Africa pursued the dream of democracy, believing that the reversal of apartheid would be addressed with vigour and with the support of progressive new policies that would integrate lessons drawn from international experience and partners. The difficult learning point for the new government, however, was the reality that governance is impacted upon by many complex realities that render implementation of desired policy extremely unpredictable. The consensus seeking approach to early policy development possibly gave rise to the unrealistic belief that implementation would follow a smooth path. As indicated in detail in the following chapter, the reality of implementing the newly-agreed national aspirations produced some successes among the many unexpected difficulties.

The discussion in this chapter briefly sets out the policy context that shaped responses to higher education policy formation after 1994. The contested meanings of transformation have been developed and articulated against the backdrop of these policies and resulting contentions. As

shown in the presentation of the findings (chapter 6) from the data gathering and analysis process, there has been progress in meeting many of the stated objectives, but the complex and challenging set of legacies inherited from apartheid continued to loom as an inhibitor to the anticipated levels of fundamental change in many areas. The context of apartheid policy in higher education and the policy development efforts of forces opposed to apartheid set in place a difficult and rather bold set of issues that had to be attended to by the new state.

CHAPTER SIX: THE MEANINGS OF TRANSFORMATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The earlier chapters of this study have focused on setting out the basis for the data that will be presented in this chapter. The early focus has been on context, apartheid legacy, and the deep abiding desire for opportunity and access that research has shown to be present within the formerly oppressed majority in South Africa. This chapter begins to take us into the present and to a great degree sets out the meanings of transformation in reference to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. It also reports on findings that indicate whether higher education policies incorporated the various meanings of transformation. Indications of the contestations that are associated with the meanings of this concept are also presented through the lens of access.

The theoretical use of the glonacal heuristic has enriched this research in that the analytical framework has manifold aspects that assist in explaining and analysing contested meanings of transformation (Marginson, 2004). In more recent research, Marginson (2016) expands the focus of the early glonacal framework by directly addressing the difficult challenges that confront higher education when the sector is expected to support socio-economic transformation. The recent research argues that quantitative participation "is not enough to build greater social inclusion" (p. 430).

One of the secondary research questions is directed at identifying responses to how the new democratic South Africa acted in response to stakeholder expectations of change in higher education. The expectations with respect to higher education, were identified as closely linked to the aspirations of many South Africans that they will be provided with the opportunity to benefit from higher education and that this will be acted upon by the new government. The documentary analysis and the interviews I conducted clearly pointed to what these expectations were and what was done to address them.

The matter of quantitative increases in higher education (or increased access) has been an important refrain in the data gathering process for this research. A wide range of literature and several participants repeated the view that access is a key criterion in articulating the meanings of

transformation. For many, ‘change’ was access. However, as is shown in this chapter, there are multiple meanings associated with the term ‘access’. Several of the meanings identified from documentary analysis and the interview data point to concerns that expectations are not being met.

Probing of the expectations of stakeholders and the development of policy in response yielded findings that clearly showed that people and organisations in South Africa expected a lot of change as a result of democracy. With respect to higher education the expectation as shared by a participant who had lived and studied under apartheid and become a leading researcher was that:

> *Well, I expected all universities to be open to all of us, no one would turn us away from 1994.* (Interview participant #7, 2017)

This expectation that all would have opportunity was a feature in the interviews and was also found in the document analyses. The expectation of opportunity for the previously excluded was referred to as redress by some and it recurred in many sources (Reddy, 2006; Badat, 2010). It is these meanings these expectations and the policy reactions that will be detailed in this chapter.

The analysis of the ideas of Przewoski (1998a) of the dissonance that may occur between the popular demands of people long denied opportunity, and the ability of the state to act on these demands and expectations seem very relevant for this chapter. As Nkomo (2011) and Le Grange (2009) indicate it is not always possible for the state to immediately act on expectations. A range of reasons may be responsible for that.

The glonacal analysis discusses the higher education sector as one that is prized for the potential it holds for improving social status, and advancing the social status of individuals who are in less affluent social categories or societies confronted by socio-economic challenges. This is certainly true for South Africa as it emerged from apartheid. However, this perhaps simple desire is rendered complicated by the introduction of market forces that determine acquisition of the opportunities for advancement offered by this sector of education. Analysis of these ideas shows that several elements add to the social distance that eventually comes to exist between those who desire higher education, and their access to it. These elements range from high tuition fees, entry requirements that may exclude those from poor schooling backgrounds, and more recently, the impact and

influence of global networks on national and local higher education systems. These networks may encourage attention toward goals that do not align with the pursuit of social justice or equality.

These features of modern higher education exist in all countries that have universities, and the lack of regard for socio-economic goals that are the desired objective of poor and developing countries result in challenges that are difficult for those countries to respond to. These stated characteristics of universities do not distinguish between poor countries or rich, and universities seemingly exhibit these features of exclusion globally. In South Africa, the stated policy goals of reversing the impact of apartheid higher education policy have been affected by phenomena very similar to those identified by Marginson (2004). It is in such contexts that expectations are shaped.

6.2 EXPECTATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION CHANGE

In chapter 4 (section 4.3.1) the varied negative impacts of apartheid education policy were presented. Some of the participants I interviewed referred to their expectations in the pre-1994 period as being largely focused on reversing the exclusion of black people from historically white universities. One of the participants a former school principal related his dismay at not being able to attend a historically white university to study engineering despite having achieved very good exam results:

> *I became a teacher of science because I could not become an engineer as I didn't get a ministerial permit to attend a university of my choice which was a white university.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

This keen interest in pursuing higher education and the difficult challenges the participants and their families had to overcome contributed to their expectations and those of the broader society. The new government responded by acting on these expectations as is shown by policy and practises adopted since 1994.

One of the main goals of post-apartheid higher education was 'access' as elaborated in the five key goals of White Paper 3 (RSA, 1997). The White Paper 3 presented the goal of access as follows:

> To promote equity of access and fair chances for success to all who are seeking to realise their potential through higher education, while eradicating all forms of unfair discrimination and advancing redress for past inequalities. (DOE, 1997, pp. 1–14)

The policies adopted by the government from 1997 and the investments in higher education since then, have confirmed the apparent belief of the public and policy makers, that higher education can make a significant contribution to life-altering, socio-economic development goals. The access goal as quoted above sets a difficult, yet worthy agenda for post-apartheid higher education. While this study is not intended to evaluate progress in achieving the objectives articulated in 1997, it has offered reflections on progress as is demanded by the research questions pursued in the course of this research. It is patently evident that much faith was attached to the intentions set out in policy.

The policy expectations were that government would decisively address the pernicious effects of a higher education sector that is characterised by inequality. These effects were described by Nkomo (2013) when he aptly referred to the tasks of transforming higher education in post-apartheid South Africa as requiring "a Herculean effort" (2013, p. 8).

The expectations of the people of South Africa corresponded very closely to the social aspirations for changed status described by Marginson (2004). In the documents prepared by organisations such as the NECC (Odhav, 2009), entry to higher education for black people, altering curricula and ensuring young people succeed were all reflected as future expectations.

The ebullient expectation of change in new democracies is aptly described by Przeworski (2011) when he refers to an encounter with a trade union leader in a recently democratised Brazil led by a left-leaning party. He recalls asking the union leader what his economic policy expectations were. The union leader replies that there would be ‘redistribution’. The researcher attempted to probe the meaning of ‘redistribution’, but received a repeat reference to the concept in reply. Przeworski (2011) expresses concern that these sometimes inadequately defined – or even undefined – expectations, which are held by powerful social groups can result in conflict between stakeholders who should work together to advance change in emerging democracies.

Abundant evidence of similar expectations was presented in chapter 5 (sections 5.2 and 5.5). In South Africa the thrust of these perspectives centered on redress of the imbalances of race, gender, institutional, and discipline related distortions that were the legacies of apartheid. The ANC education and training policy document (ANC, 1994b) expressly refers to the redress of system inequalities between historically black and white institutions. Writing twelve years later, Reddy (2006) refers to the "continuing patterns of inequality between historically white institutions (HWIs) and historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs)" (p.10) – this clearly indicates that while the stated expectations indicated great hope for change, the real outcomes fell below expectations. Some of the participants expressed views that did not support the perspective argued by Reddy (2006). A university principal stressed:

> *I don't agree with people who say not much has been done. Whenever I hear people say there is no change I remind them of where we were in1994 and that remarkable progress in black student access has been achieved.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

Attempts to provide insights and explanations as to the reasons for aspirations not being reflected in reality abound in the literature on post-apartheid higher education. Reddy (2006) and Jansen (2004) suggest that the inadequacy of capacity in policy making and in running a civil service led to targets being missed and also that the new government did not prioritise funding for higher education and so while the expectation of increased access might have been met in sufficient support was given to achieving intended outcomes. These views reinforce the perspectives of Przewoski (1998a) referred to earlier. Stating a policy expectation does not signal its achievement. It is important to point out however, and to show that while deeply complex and challenging, ambitious aspirations can give rise to significant advances. This chapter provides some evidence of this.

The Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) contained several provisions that confirmed commitment to redressing past discrimination and promoting equity in higher education. One of the participants confirmed this when reflecting on whether expectations were met. He asserted that actions by the government to fund poor students was a very important policy indicator of response to expectations:

> *the student organisations like SASCO wanted funding for poor students they insisted at education committee meetings . They would stand up arguing for support. That is how the National Student Financial Aid Scheme came to be created. The students insisted that funding for the poor had to be there.* (Interview participant #8, 2017)

The evidence gathered indicates that much more than these expectations had to be addressed and this is shown in later sections of this chapter. The reality was that as institutions admit increased numbers of students and expand access they face challenges of quality and the expectation of society that graduates will find jobs and be absorbed into the economy due to the prestige associated with a degree. Also confronting South Africa as shown by Bazana and Mokgotsi (2017) was the difficult problem of adapting to new and negative institutional culture in some institutions. The expectation of black student access was met, funding for the poor was provided, however, within institutions black students would face new daunting problems. One of these was high dropout rates at first year thus reversing initial realisation of the stated expectations. Another was that for many years few black students gained entry to study in fields such as engineering, science and medicine. Thus the expectation that access would lead to changes in the skills profile of South Africa were not met. Several of these inadequacies are evident in the findings and will be presented in this chapter.

6.3 THE MEANINGS OF TRANSFORMATION

I posed a question about the meanings of transformation to the participants. All of them referred to ‘access’ as their first comment. On probing for meanings a diversity of responses emerged, one replied:

> *It's in the everyday institutional culture and that's very difficult because that's where all of South Africa's ideologies intersect. You know the person who has been working there for thirty years, the student who comes in with a different set of expectations, now they interact. It's in that interaction where tensions arise and where the challenges rise.* (Interview participant #7, 2017)

In seeking answers on policy support for transformation in the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997), in other words how expectations were responded to, one participant indicated that the Act was much better at changing systems and structures, and less able to effect change to complex issues such as:

> *… curriculum, institutional autonomy, institutional culture, values, languages of teaching and learning and staff representivity.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

The data gathered provides important insights into the research questions. It shows that the aspirations contained in policy documents crafted prior to the demise of apartheid were considered and incorporated (in part) in new legislation and practice. Analysis of documentary sources as well as the interviews conducted, point strongly to the impression that access and its many dimensions formed the key concerns in deliberations, research and policy development on higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Access seems to be a 'hook' that unifies the varied ways in which commentary on post-apartheid higher education is expressed.

The findings from my data confirm a strong expectation of significant change and a belief that higher education would respond positively to the demands and needs of the new society. The following sections present an overview of my findings and refer to a number of areas that emerged during the data gathering and analysis process. I have given detailed attention to three dominant issues that were most often repeated as meanings of transformation. They are the following:

- access (section 6.4) ;
- knowledge creation and skills development (section 6.5); and
- decolonising the academy (section 6.6).

I turn now to reporting my findings which encompass an extensive review of written documents, related research, parliamentary speeches and analysis of wide-ranging interviews with a range of participants (policy makers, researchers, university leaders and students).

6.4 TRANSFORMATION AND THE MANY DIMENSIONS OF ACCESS

The NCHE report (NCHE, 1996) dealt substantively with the matter of access or participation. The report stated that "participation deals with the problem of increasing access to higher education and changing from an elitist to a 'mass' system" (Reddy, 2006, p. 6). This aspiration is repeated in a wide body of research and policy documents including the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997). It is not surprising that access held such high importance in post-apartheid policy discourse, given the levels of exclusion reported in earlier chapters. The surprise, however, lies in what may have been neglected in articulating these aspirations. The seeming impression that access would translate into genuine redress is a matter that will be examined in the course of this chapter.

6.4.1 Access and demographics

The responses from participants form a very valuable and rich resource of data. It was startling to discover that the concepts and themes anticipated in the literature review featured in the accounts narrated by my interviewees. Several of them pointed to the critical imperative of expanding access when questioned about the meanings of transformation, several of them pointed to the critical imperative of expanding access. They also referred to the pursuit of non-racialism as a Constitutional obligation for South Africa.

The participants stressed that race and a focus on addressing the representivity of the black people of South Africa remains a very necessary part of the tasks that South Africa still needs to address through higher education. This intention has been consistently reflected in post-apartheid policy and emphasised in legislation that followed the 1997 Act. For example, the National Plan on Higher Education (DOE, 2001, p.12) refers to the intention to "create demographic realities of staff and student bodies that reflect the whole population".

The demographic challenges have persisted to the present day. A recent statistical report of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) confirms that "equity is still a critical issue

for the system. The data shows that Indian and White students outperform their counterparts in all types of qualifications, 3 year diplomas, 3 year degrees and 4 year (or more) degrees" (DHET 2018b, p. 138). These statistics refer to success in the form of completion of studies.

Earlier sections (section 2.3) of this study have reflected on experiences in higher education change in several developing and developed countries. The focus on changing demographics as a concrete indicator of change has been evident in systems as diverse as Mexico, the United Kingdom, Brazil and India. As shown by Chanana (1993), in India the interventions did not fully achieve the levels of social change desired by policy makers and anticipated by under-served social groups. The findings I report on in this chapter confirm similar efforts in South Africa to reverse the legacy of exclusion.

The research on India starkly illustrates the many dimensions of disadvantage and indicates as Marginson (2004) does, that allowing demographic change does not eradicate inherited or imposed social disadvantage. In an article that appears to affirm earlier research, Parul (2014) asserts that even though there have been attempts to raise disadvantaged groups in India to higher levels of education, their level of educational achievement remains significantly below the average for the nation of India. The research on India starkly illustrates the many dimensions of disadvantage and indicates as Marginson (2004) does, that enabling demographic change does not eradicate inherited or imposed social disadvantage. Similar findings are indicated for Brazil by McCowan (2007) and by Hall (2012) when reflecting on the much older system in the United Kingdom.

In a similar vein, several studies report on South Africa's progress in achieving its key goals and objectives in higher education. Some focus on demographics. For example in an extensive report on higher education change, Badat (2010) states the following:

> There has been increased and broadened participation within higher education to advance social equity and meet economic and social development needs, a crucial goal given the legacy of disadvantage of black and women South Africans, especially those of working class and rural poor origins. (p. 7)

He adds that student enrolments have grown significantly since the advent of democracy and that the growth in the numbers of black and African students from other African countries, has been noteworthy.

These experiences once again suggest that the tasks confronting new democracies that need to find a means of correcting past and enduring injustice involve much more than the increased access of excluded sectors of a society. They serve as a reminder of Marginson's (2016) assertion that:

> In low and middle-income countries it is not enough to build greater social inclusion by growing quantitative participation and focussing on the relative opportunities of women and ethnic populations that have been under-represented or excluded. The more difficult issue is the relationship between educational inequality and socio-economic inequality. (p. 430)

The views of persistent inequality expressed above reflect the evidence presented in earlier chapters concerning the experience of many countries where young people from disadvantaged backgrounds benefit from policies designed to support their entry into higher education, yet find that a degree in an arts discipline, for example, may not assist them to find employment or start an enterprise. The experiences of students from poor backgrounds in Brazil (Schwartzman, 2004) as well as India (Rizvi & Gorur, 2011) confirm this difficulty of a higher education qualification not always translating into socio-economic opportunity.

Reflections on post-apartheid higher education change (Engelbrecht & Bhengu, 2015) often appear to direct attention to the contested meanings of transformation that are the focus of this research. While there is research that acknowledges that there has been progress, some researchers assert the need for awareness of inadequacy in many aspects; for example Nkomo (2013) argues that:

> … despite significant advances in the enrolment numbers of black and female students since the mid-90s, there continue to exist negative institutional cultures that make life for the swelling numbers of new entrants, again mostly black and female, far from pleasant and therefore undermine their optimal academic performance. (p. 9)

These views on changing demographics in higher education appear to confirm the views of Przeworski (2011) who argues that inequality is a prominent dilemma in societies seeking social

change. This appears to echo Marginson (2004) who cogently shows that the 'marketisation' of higher education signals important issues of inequality that must be responded to. In South Africa expectations of the reversal of unequal access to higher education formed a significant part of the demands that had to be responded to by the new government. The policies adopted from 1994 confirmed a commitment to address these namely the pursuit of equality of access to opportunity, and simultaneously ensuring equality of the opportunities themselves. In arguing that access can itself be steeply stratified, he compels deeper reflection on views that demographic change or alterations in demographic composition indicate enduring reversal of inequality.

Nonetheless, as Badat (2010) and Cloete (2016) indicate, there has been positive change in South Africa, in reaction to the demands for access. The following sections attempt to show that access is a multi-dimensional concept associated with many different features that are often the focus of vigorous debates on the concept transformation. It is evident that more black students have entered higher education, as have more persons living with disabilities, more women, and more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The irony of these changes is that much of the movement of black students has seemingly advantaged historically white institutions, as they have attracted the top performing students, while the historically black institutions now receive students from the poorest schools and for many, primarily black students only. So, the demographic changes that were such a firm imperative for change have worsened the state of disadvantage of these institutions and not provided the redress anticipated in the NCHE report (NCHE, 1996 and in the aspirations of the mass democratic movement (Odhav, 2009).

6.4.2 Access as race and numbers

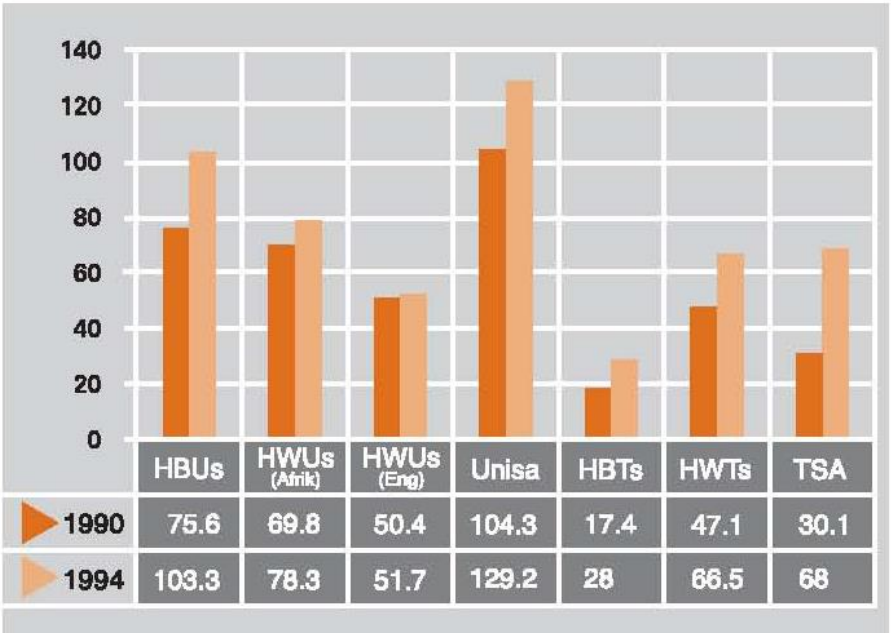
The data presented above clearly indicates that changing race and other demographics of students and staff has become a critical element of any elaboration of the meanings of transformation. One dominant meaning of access that was mentioned in every interview was 'race', and more specifically, the expanded entry of black people (that is African, Coloured and Indian people) to higher education in South Africa. Participants stressed that the anticipated meanings of transformation, when used prior to the advent of democracy in 1994, was that larger numbers of black people would enjoy entry to higher education.

As one participant responded:

> *I think the fact was that it was an important thing to have emphasis on, access and a differentiated but unitary higher education system.* (Interview participant #10, 2017)

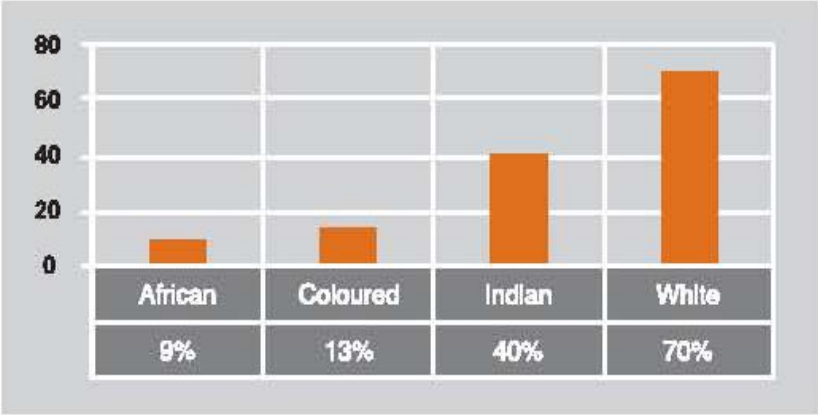
A range of reports as well as statistics of the Department of Higher Education indicate that access Figure 2 shows headcount enrolments by type of institutions between 1990 and 1994, and Figure 3 indicates the 1993 gross participation by race in the public higher education system. Added to these useful insertions are the more recent statistics of the CHE (2015) reflecting the current position and clearly illustrating the changes that have occurred since 1993. As can be seen, some of the desired expectations have been met. Access to university has increased and black student participation in higher education has grown significantly from the position in 1994.

FIGURE 2: Head count enrolments by type of higher education institution (1990 and 1994)



Source: Castells (2001)

FIGURE 3: Gross participation by race (1993)



Source: Castells (2001)

FIGURE 4: Progress in enrolments in higher education access (2010–2015)

	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed	Pop	H.Ed*	Pop**
	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
African	595 963	40 346	640 442	40 979	662 123	41 625	689 503	42 284	679 800	43 376	696 320	44 228
Coloured	58 219	4 613	59 312	4 665	58 692	4 716	61 034	4 766	60 716	4 783	62 186	4 833
Indian	54 537	1 276	54 698	1 294	52 296	1 311	53 787	1 329	53 611	1 344	53 378	1 362
White	178 346	4 661	177 365	4 642	172 654	4 622	171 927	4 602	166 172	4 556	161 739	4 534

Source: CHE (2017)

*Higher education
**Population numbers are in thousands

In 2015 Universities South Africa reported that:

> … gross enrolment data since 1995 show a dramatic expansion of South Africa's higher education system, marked by almost consistent increases in overall and particularly, black enrolment patterns, in sharp contrast to the period before the onset of democratic rule. Between 1995 and 2014, the sector grew from 480 000 to 980 000. From 2007 to 2012, black African and coloured student headcount numbers increased from 476 768 to 662 123 and from 49 069 to 56 692 respectively; whilst Indian and white student headcount numbers fell from 52 596 to 52 296 and from 180 463 to 172 654 respectively for the same period. (Universities South Africa, 2015, p. 9)

The statistics above indicate that the popular demand for increased black access to higher education was achieved in the post-apartheid era. The increase is most directly linked to the emergence of democracy and the end of apartheid laws in education. Black students gained entry to institutions that were previously forbidden to them previously and hence their increased numbers. The initial focus of allowing more black students in revealed very serious inadequacies in the university sector. Research that has focused on students' experiences in this changing context critically reflects on those developments and suggests that insufficient attention was given to what students may need in order to succeed (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012).

This meaning of access as an increased number of black students entering higher education was articulated by several other participants. As one asserted very firmly in reference to the meanings of transformation prior to the end of apartheid:

> *Well when I was a student it was all about access.* (Interview participant #1, 2017)

The concern with race was traced to apartheid by most participants. They pointed to the intention of apartheid policy which was to limit entry to higher education for black people and to inhibit their entry to institutions that were designated for white people. They also referred to the exclusion of black students from studying in fields such as science, engineering and mathematics. These views seem to confirm the belief I identified in much research that suggests that racism is not overcome merely by increasing numbers of black students; and it has not yet been successfully

overcome in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. According to Bazana and Mogotsi (2017):

> … racial segregation at universities is concerning as it hints at a lack of real integration and possible social identity challenges for black students who are becoming a majority in these universities in terms of numbers. (p. 1)

Other troubling features of change (as being linked to access) were also highlighted by participants in this study. Some participants pointed to CHE reports which indicate inadequate success rates for black students. As the CHE has reported, of the 2006 cohort of first-time black entrants, one in four contact students dropped out before their second year of study, and only 52% of contact students graduated within the regulation time, resulting in an attrition rate of 40% (Engelbrecht & Bhengu, 2015, p. 3). Of concern in this set of statistics is the fact that the "completion rate of white contact students is nonetheless 50% higher than that of black African contact students" (Engelbrecht & Bhengu, 2015, p. 3).

It is important to acknowledge that there has been change, including changes in access of black students access to scarce skills disciplines such as science, engineering and technology. However when the statistics are scrutinised more closely, it is obvious that the numbers entering these fields are low in total population terms, and the success rates tend to be of greatest concern in these critical disciplines. According to enrolment reports of Statistics South Africa (2011), net increases in enrolment rates between 1996 and 2011 are associated with white students relative to other population groups. Furthermore enrolments by persons born outside South Africa are higher in engineering as well as natural and mathematical sciences while for black Africans and coloureds (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

It is important for research to pursue explanation beyond merely tabling statistics. This study has sought to do that and the documentary analysis and interviews have pointed to the need for use of more nuanced approaches to examining data. In the interviews I noted this nuance to contribution from some of the participants because they would refer to how and expectation such as the access of women has been addressed but then point out that one should go beyond the numbers and examine access to what programmes and professions as one said:

> *There has been growth in black access but to what fields and why are we not seeing the numbers at undergraduate level reflected at PhD level?* (Interview participant #1, 2017)

The inadequate performance of black students in contrast to white students should not be a surprise in post-apartheid South Africa. Under apartheid significant state and private sector effort was directed at ensuring privileged advantage and success for white people. The education of white children enjoyed very favoured support from the apartheid government (Chisholm, 2004; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Education facilities were of high quality, qualified teachers taught in schools designated for white children, classes had small numbers, and white schoolchildren enjoyed a wide range of opportunities in sport, creative arts and academic subjects. These privileges were the heart of the apartheid government policy of affirmative action – largely for white Afrikaners, but also for the smaller population of English-speaking white people. Recognition of these contributing factors is important for a complete analysis of post-apartheid higher education. Inherited privilege and publicly funded privileged schooling for white people placed that community in a position of advantage that has lasted well into the second decade of democracy. An irony of democratic South Africa is that middle class black parents are now able to pay for their children to attend formerly white schools and to proceed from there to historically advantaged universities. Conversely, the inherited disadvantage of working class black youth remains a debilitating feature of their education experience, as they are not able to access privilege by attending the wealthier institutions. The factor of money so stressed by Marginson (2004) continues to contribute to this negative function of exclusion.

The above mentioned pro-white policies resulted from the findings of research that was a commissioned by the South African government in 1929 into the social condition of white people following the South African War between South Africa and Great Britain (1899 - 1902). The well-known Carnegie Report (1932) concluded that the war had had a debilitating effect on the white, Afrikaans-speaking community – it was left poor without economic means, and lacking the resources to command the highest ranks of business ownership. The government in office at the time when the report was first released in 1932, mandated that various support measures should be directed at improving the status of white people; hence the provision of better schools, bursaries, reserved employment opportunities, free housing and other interventions. This was perhaps the beginning of the intensification of racial privilege and racial segregation.

The assent of the National Party to power in 1948 was followed by even more forceful 'corrective action' in favour of white people. Education in the Afrikaans language was firmly supported by the government, and Afrikaner culture and symbols became a dominant presence in South Africa. The affirmation of white people – and the extensive and privileged support available to them – stretched into every sphere of social action and placed the white community at a level of advantage that would be difficult for the post-apartheid government to copy or match. Some of the literature (Nkomo, 2013) reflecting on progress in the post-apartheid era seems to suggest that the democratic government should have adopted somewhat similar redress measures to those implemented by the apartheid state; however, none indicate how this could have been done, given the inadequacy of public resources and the inclusive principles of the new Constitution.

Alongside the privileges detailed above, white people also had the advantage of institutions designed for them and them only. Blacks could not access these institutions or similar businesses – certainly not as beneficiary users, although possibly as workers in the lowest ranks. This cushion of privileges resulted in a very visible appropriation of a culture of superiority among white people – a belief that the privilege was well earned and well deserved, and a transmission of this superiority from one generation to another. When all institutions became accessible in 1994, black students found this culture well entrenched in universities. All elements of historically advantaged institutions were then able to access the entrenched privileges of apartheid. Universities admitted black students to racialised institutions and not strictly to places of learning.

These new entrants entered lacking the full 'package' of cultural capital necessary for success at university. Those that came from poor working class families and were in the main first generation entrants to university found it difficult to succeed. They were also often confronted by a very hostile environment and inadequate support from their universities. It is these inadequacies that made it so difficult for the larger pool of black university students to succeed at historically white universities. Universities designed for those who schooled in privilege and not for those who were schooled in squalor. In these legacies that provide some explanation for the dilemma of low black student success rates that we see today.

South Africa is not alone in facing such difficulties. A focus on access is evident in many different countries that have sought to promote change in higher education practices. In India, the focus was

on the marginalised backward classes (Gupta, 2006), and in Brazil where the indigenous black people of that country (as well as the poor) were the focus of government attempts to increase access (Luchessi & Malanga, 2010). The framework provided by the glonacal heuristic points to the global character of the complex challenges confronting higher education; it also suggests that national systems adopt very similar responses to these difficult challenges. These responses are often deemed appropriate, yet due to the complex nature of the social problems to be addressed and the varied socio-economic contexts, the initial responses do not successfully address the entirety of the challenges.

As has been argued by Marginson (2016) and Tinto (2012), meeting expectations for those who desire access to higher education requires policy and resources to be directed at ensuring success for these new beneficiaries. Tinto (2012) explains that such strategies should include changed classroom practices, curricula and learning support. These perspectives affirm earlier indications that higher education is much more than a prized social good that is easily attained through access opportunities.

The interviewed participants revealed this complexity and appeared to confirm the inadequacy of early responses to the imperatives of higher education change and inclusion in a number of emerging democracies. In several responses, participants asserted that the meanings of transformation include race and numbers, but that much more is necessary to enhance achievement, in addition to increased access.

Policy developed subsequent to the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) such as the National Plan on Higher Education (DOE, 2001) has, to a great degree, been an acknowledgement of the need to respond to the various gaps associated with the meanings of transformation detailed above. While not seeking to evaluate the adequacy of policy frameworks, it is probably true to acknowledge that in order to meet the expectations referred to in this chapter. There have been practical and regulatory interventions that indicate government and university intentions to address various failings. As the CHE ten-year review (CHE, 2004) report indicated, interventions such as funding for foundation programmes to improve student success responded to concerns about inadequate success. The more recent CHE report (CHE, 2018b) on progress in pursuit of the National Plan on Higher Education (DOE, 2001) also points to unanticipated challenges and successful outcomes

and unanticipated challenges. For example, it states that the target participation rate set out in the plan has been reached, but that due to growth in population, the proportion of young people in higher education still falls below expected targets.

There were revelations of further challenges in responses which focus on students from all racial groups, and not just on the entry of black students. One of the participants referred to assumptions he made as a young black academic with his belief that white students were very well prepared for university studies, given their apparently more quality oriented schooling. He reports startled realisation upon discovering that the students were spoon fed, did not want to use the library, and preferred notes to lectures. Furthermore, students demonstrated poor academic writing skills and tended to repeat the lecturers' class teaching. As he said:

> *I began to realise that there is a big gap between school and university and students from all backgrounds are very poorly prepared for university study. I think we have not given enough attention to learning in policy development.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

Recent reports on statistics in higher education published by the Council for Higher Education highlight that while throughput differs by race – with Africans having the lowest throughput after three years – the statistics show that there is a broader systemic challenge of success among all race groups in higher education (CHE, 2018b, p. 7). One of the participants indicated that as one of the few black students at a formerly white institution, he felt he had to work ten times as hard as his very relaxed and rather casual white fellow students. He commented as follows:

> *I felt I was working much harder than my fellow white students, they were white, understood the lecturer and engaged with him very comfortably*. (Interview participant #10, 2017)

There are some researchers (Morrow, 2009; Bozalek et al, 2012) who suggest that the form and content of universities in South Africa today is geared toward a particular class of students. They come from privileged schools, are taught largely by white teachers who are trained in the same universities they wish to attend, and then at university they are taught by academics who are mainly white and male (Van Wyk, 2006; CHE, 2012) – thus very reflective of their school experience. For black students the university – and more particularly a historically advantaged university, in

an urban setting with majority white staff and students using a language they are not familiar with is an extremely forbidding environment, one in which success is very difficult to pursue. They find themselves in an urban setting, with a majority of white staff and students using a language they are not familiar with. As has been cogently stated by Bozalek and Boughey (2012):

> The effect of the disparity in the social system puts certain privileged schools and universities out of the reach of the majority. Since the effects of apartheid are still geographical (Bozalek et al., 2010) and schools operate from a geographical constituency, those who were excluded from quality education in the apartheid era remain excluded. (p. 11)

These are matters that are enjoying increased attention from researchers, Waghid (2002) asserts that successful academic education will occur when lecturers in universities grasp these complexities and develop the ability to convey this type of social learning to students. Faced with students from different classes, races and school backgrounds, and emerging from the apartheid higher education system; this complex mix presents a very difficult, if not impossible, set of challenges. It is therefore not surprising that white students perform somewhat better – institutions are familiar, the language of teaching is familiar, they have abundant, competent role models who nurture them and offer support. For black students the opposite of these is probably true. The Soudien Report (Soudien, 2008), which is sometimes referred to as a definitive insight into transformation since the advent of democracy, refers to these matters that may be considered institutional failure to address the needs of a vastly changed student body. There is a belief among some researchers that institutions offer inadequate support as an indicator of resistance to change (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2011).

6.4.3 Access to fields of study and race

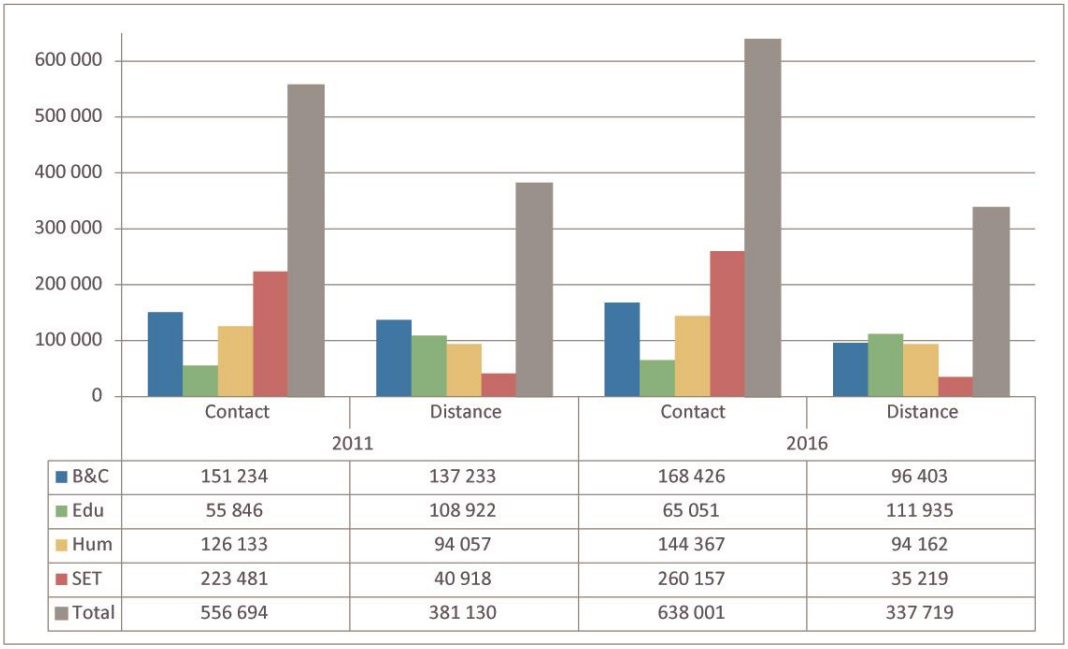
For some, transformation referred to changing patterns of access by increasing the entry of black students to previously denied disciplines such as science, engineering and technology (Reddy, 2006; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Concern was been expressed in the interviews that while the numbers of black students have increased, particularly in historically white universities, the

majority of black students are located in the humanities and social sciences. As one participant, a former senior lecturer said:

> *There is still a need to ensure that more black students graduate in the engineering and sciences, numbers are just too small for the needs of South Africa.* (Interview participant #1, 2017)

According to Moodley (2013) and some of the participants, many black students who enter the 'non-traditional' disciplines of science, medicine and engineering do not succeed; thus further suggesting that the anticipated meanings of transformation are not being realised. One participant referred to observing graduation ceremonies at his university and being dismayed at noting the low graduation rates of black South African students in engineering and accounting. The changed situation over time and the continuing difficulties are illustrated in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5: Changes in student numbers in different disciplines (2011 and 2016)



	2011 Contact	2011 Distance	2016 Contact	2016 Distance
B&C	151 234	137 233	168 426	96 403
Edu	55 846	108 922	65 051	111 935
Hum	126 133	94 057	144 367	94 162
SET	223 481	40 918	260 157	35 219
Total	556 694	381 130	638 001	337 719

Source: CHE Vital Statistics Report (2016)

Figure 5 shows that despite there being agreement on the National Plan for Higher Education (DOE, 2001) targets to increase student numbers in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET),

performance has not been satisfactory with achievement falling below target in the designated disciplines. One of the reasons suggested for inadequate progress suggested by the National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI, 2016) is that the numbers of learners completing school with quality mathematics passes falls well below the needs of South Africa. Learners attending schools in disadvantaged communities, that is primarily black schools, perform very poorly in this subject thus contributing to these inadequate numbers. Once again it must be acknowledged that these are legacies from the deleterious Bantu Education system during the apartheid era, which had policy objectives that ensured extremely poor outcomes in mathematics achievement.

The obvious sense of concern at the failure to achieve transformation as conveyed in the meanings attached to the concept mirrors evidence I identified in the international literature. Research on Brazil (Oliven, 2012) indicates attempts to redress past discrimination through state-funded programmes to support students from poor backgrounds, including through providing government subsidies for access to private higher education institutions. However, the research on Brazil as well as on other countries in Africa (Zeleza, 2015) points to continuing discrimination in that increased private provision does not include an increase in the number of poor students into disciplines such as technology, science and engineering. Furthermore, poor students do not gain entry to the well-funded public research universities in Brazil (Oliven, 2012).

These forms of exclusion – despite attempts at inclusion – are judged as perpetuating inequality in the document analysis (Reddy, 2006; Bozalek et al, 2012) rather than providing meaningful change. The interview participants I spoke to provided direct responses to my questions on the meanings of transformation. They went beyond these replies and provided perspectives on how expectations of change have been responded to and identified activities that were intended to achieve transformation. Several acknowledged progress have been made, then stressed that many challenges remain. Their comment included the following:

> *Yes, the faces are changing correctly so and scaling up on some places not fast enough right, in other places at a reasonable pace but this needs to be escalated that it can't be enough because the other layers, inner layers of transformation remain untroubled, unengaged, distant from reality.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

Another said on learning:

> *Universities have changed from past practices many more have become accountable. They used to produce hardly any research, uh, very low numbers of postgraduates and very old fashioned delivery methods. All of that has changed in the past 20 years.* (Interview participant #4, 2017)

According to a third:

> *In UK, Brazil and India they are still talking about access issues in different ways and similarly I don't think we come to a point where we say we have achieved it, but I would say we have made significant progress. There is a lot of work to do and I think when we started linking access and success we began to achieve more.* (Interview participant #5, 2017)

Marginson (2004) elaborates the glonacal heuristic as a social change phenomenon that can assist in understanding the complexities of policy development and implementation. He typifies change in higher education as a system that has changed into higher levels of complexity and thus becomes increasingly exclusive into higher levels of complexity that become increasingly exclusive and inaccessible for persons who do not have the means to pay for entry to higher education. The framework suggests that as universities mature, even more complexity develops. Institutions are stratified according to scarce skills disciplines and in terms of high academic achievements required to access them. Thus, the higher the school pass grades you need to enter a programme, the greater its status, and thus the greater the lack of access for the poor. The Council for Higher Education appears to confirm this in a recent report which indicates that professional degrees such as engineering and medicine usually have high entry requirements and thus admit tend to admit students from wealthy families and well-off schools (CHE, 2018b, p. 7).

Some researchers who express the view that these inadequate indicators of change can be traced to the policy limitations that derive from the 1996 NCHE report (Odhav, 2009). The assertions argue that post-apartheid policy makers neglected to incorporate proposals that sought to respond directly to these challenges. These proposals are said to have included the provision of substantial funding toward the redress of historical imbalances between historically advantaged and disadvantaged institutions, or the shift of funding to provide greater support to rural based institutions (2009, p.37).

The Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) was one such national response in that it directly intended to address the inadequacies indicated herein. Furthermore, local institutional responses to these challenges are possible and were mentioned to me by my interviewees. Some of the highlighted initiatives such as the academic development programme in the University of Cape Town's Engineering Faculty academic development program and other institutional initiatives designed to address such challenges. One of the participants referred to the inadequate success rates and practical steps being taken that she is aware of. She commented that:

> *We felt it was vital to support students to succeed and persuaded the university to introduce well-structured foundation programmes at undergraduate level.* (Interview participant #5, 2017)

Recent statistics suggest encouraging progress in postgraduate science, technology and engineering graduations between 2013 and 2014 (NACI, 2015). Furthermore the number of doctoral degrees awarded to Africans have shown a positive increase thus suggestion that government interventions in response to concerns about low postgraduate rates have begun to show an upward trend. More encouraging is the reports indication that this upward trend is being reflected in increasing numbers on black researchers joining science councils in much larger numbers than before (NACI, 2015).

Various researchers (Zeleza, 2015; Marginson, 2016), as well as the participants in my research pointed to the constraints confronting Africa in successfully expanding higher education and achieving change. The research refers to common features found in attempted solutions in Africa, Latin America and the Indian sub-continent. Marginson (2016) attributes most of these interventions to a near universal phenomenon of countries seeking to achieve 'high participation systems' as a solution to demands for increased access to higher education. He goes on to robustly critique the tendency to use high participation as a means of achieving inclusion and redress. A common result of this desire for high access levels in many states is to allow the increased presence of private providers. However, as Zeleza (2015) indicates, private institutions are costly, offer programmes that do not respond to critical skills needs, and fail to advance equity.

This comment reflects an expected meaning of transformation, in that the participant had believed all universities would be open to all race groups. However, despite a strong commitment to redress

and institutional change, HDIs in South Africa have remained largely black, in the margins, vulnerable, and accessed by the poorest students with the lowest school leaving outcomes.

6.4.4 Access and institutional redress

The following comment from an interviewee provides insights into expectations of the institutional redress was expected to follow the end of apartheid rule. As he said:

> *I thought transformation meant historically black institutions would also be attended by other students and be better funded.* (Interview Participant #7, 2017)

Document analysis reflected similar expectations of focussed interventions to address the imbalances inherited by historically black institutions. According to Reddy (2006) insufficient attention was given to this need, Odhav (2009) stresses the expectations of such support that were created in the NEPI research discussions and work. The debates emphasised the need to pursue redress and to address historical inequities that remained as apartheid legacy issues. In similar vein Badat (2010) points out that the development needs of historically black institutions have not yet been fully attended to. Odhav (2009) also indicates that the various policy papers referred to expectations of redress, but did not commit to strategies or funding that would be aimed at improving their status and their dismal financial position. This neglect resulted in historically white institutions retaining their privileged status of greater finances, of hosting critical fields of study and of being research-intensive institutions. This lack of what could be construed as a 'radical change' was reflected upon as follows by one participant:

> *The major issue that was in our minds was the fact that the black students needed to apply for ministerial approval to attend a white university, so the major issue for us was looking at non-racial universities in terms of admission of students as well as opportunity to work at these universities.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

The irony of this comment is that it indicates that the abiding concern was most likely entry to historically white universities. Democracy appeared to leave historically black institutions isolated, and not as sought after for places as the former white universities. Thus, 'non-racial

universities' seems to be a reference to former white universities. This reality was reflected upon by several participants who expressed the view that more should have been done to address the needs of historically black universities.

As Badat (2010, p. 10) argues, it appears that historically black institutions have been left behind to varying degrees. They have had to compete for students in a post-apartheid, open contest for all students. They pursue the competition devoid of the advantages apartheid policy granted to historically white institutions. Unlike in the past – where even the best black students had no choice except their ethnically defined university – in the era of democracy they are left to admit those students who could not get into a historically white university, and to offer programmes that are not regarded as having strong social or economic value.

It would seem from these comments and a large volume of data gathered through document analysis that while the higher education policies developed from 1994 supported the achievement of laudable successes, the legacy of inequality left by apartheid education policy is immense and could not be fully attended to by the new government of South Africa. Beyond concerns related to meanings in terms of institutional redress, the need to alter the gender profile of higher education also emerged in the course of this study.

6.4.5 Access and gender

Some respondents in this study stressed the importance of gender representivity. I noted with keen interest that this featured largely in the narratives of female participants. The responses referred to the role female academics played in ensuring that reporting and monitoring frameworks include a focus on gender. This was pursued this avenue in order to address the neglect of such a focus under apartheid education. In the recent period there have been several accounts (discussed below) of the progress of higher education in achieving gender equality.

In an insightful article on higher education and challenged women in India, Dawn (2015) documents the persistent disadvantages and inequality that confront young women with disabilities in India. She shows how architecture, inadequate funding, and attitudinal barriers inhibit

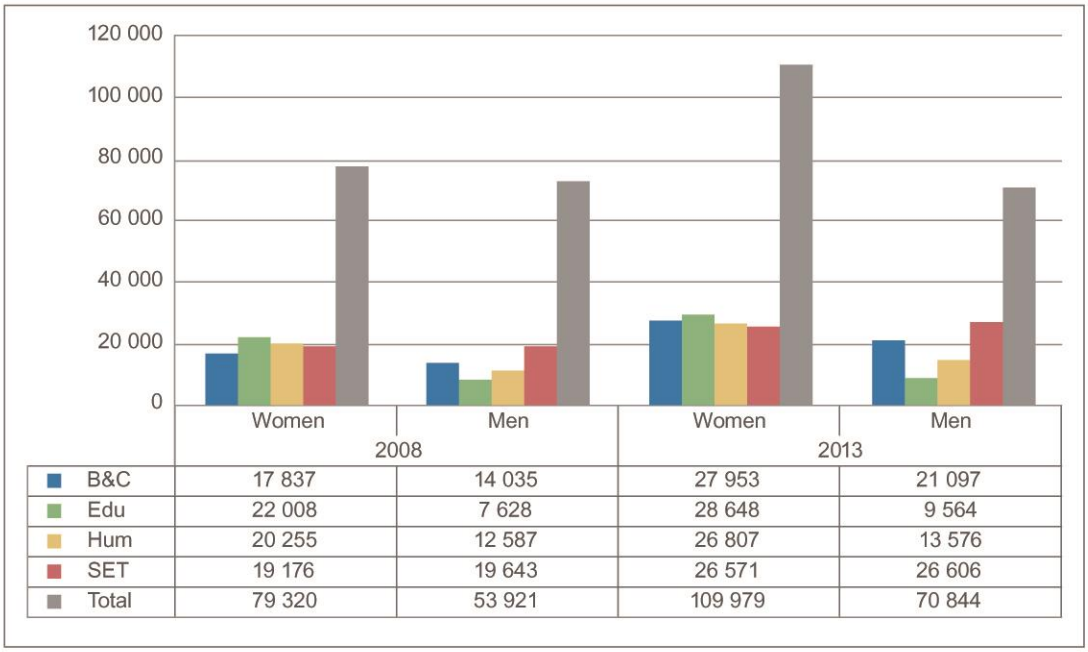
opportunities and access to higher education for women with disabilities. With respect to South Africa, and citing official sources (DHET, 2009), Badat (2010) reports:

> … there has been commendable progress in terms of gender equity. Whereas women students made up to 43% (202 000 out of 473 000) of enrolment in 1993, by 2008 they constituted 56.3% (450 584 out of 799 388) of the student body (p. 5)

Recent statistics published by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET, 2018a) indicate that in 2016 more than half of the students enrolled in public higher education institutions were women (58.1% of all students than males at 41.9%).

The CHE Report of 2010 (CHE, 2010) confirms this progress. It shows that there has been increased and broadened participation within higher education with students enrolments growing from 473 000 in 1993 to 799 388 in 2008. Badat (2010) reports that there has been extensive deracialisation of the student body. However it is important to note some continuing inadequacies. There are significant differences in the gender profiles of particular faculties, with women constituting over 60% of student numbers in the social sciences and less than 25% in the engineering and built environment fields. The report focuses on statistics in three universities and clearly points to increased access of women, but inadequate change in terms of fields of study. See Figure 6. The Figure shows more women registered in fields of education, humanities and business and commerce in both 2008 and 2013. While men are a majority in science engineering and technology consistently for both periods, thus suggestion continuing inadequacies in access for women to these critical disciplines.

FIGURE 6: Male and female students and fields of study (2008 and 2013)



	Women	Men	Women	Men
	2008		2013	
B&C	17 837	14 035	27 953	21 097
Edu	22 008	7 628	28 648	9 564
Hum	20 255	12 587	26 807	13 576
SET	19 176	19 643	26 571	26 606
Total	79 320	53 921	109 979	70 844

Source CHE (2014)

This study presents data that indicates that the concerns expressed by some of the participants about slow or inadequate progress on gender equality in higher education merit attention. Of the 26 universities in South Africa, in 2018 only four are led by women Vice-Chancellors. Women are also a minority in the senior ranks of academic staff and senior researchers (CHE, 2018b).

The concept transformation features in several domains of study linked to gender and access. De La Rey (2010) reflects on the sometimes-discriminatory perspectives women leaders in academia are confronted with. A recent example was appointments to the South African Research Chairs Initiative, where in over ten years of this research capacity building programme, over 60% of appointments were male and a lowly 23% were female (Department of Science and Technology, 2017). Attention to a variety of aspects related to gender is often called for by women in education. Chisholm (2011) points to the constraints often faced by women in leadership in different levels of education in South Africa, and suggests that apartheid norms of patriarchy continue to exist in education institutions and bureaucracy – subsequent to the adoption of a just and democratic

legislative environment in South Africa. It is clear from the data generated from my interviews that the subject of gender and higher education is deserving of much more study.

In the course of my research, I became alert to the fact that increased attention from students and the broader public has begun to be directed towards institutions and what goes on in them, in relation to the varied meanings of transformation. In recent protests of the 'Fees Must Fall', closer attention has been devoted to factors that are the essence of academic practice – who teaches, what is taught, and how do students experience these? As the data cited in this study suggests (Agarwal, 2007; Nkomo, 2008; McGowan, 2010) higher education as currently structured in many countries, cannot fully contribute to achieving equity and increased social inclusion. Addressing these barriers may require attention to areas of practice that may have been neglected up to this point. I now turn to areas of practice and themes that emerged in the course of this research study.

6.5 ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The preceding section indicated that efforts directed at increased access and representivity of previously excluded persons have led to some notable progress in post-apartheid higher education. However, as also shown, the successes have occurred alongside prevailing inadequacies and poor progress in many areas of higher education practice. The country may increase access of black people into higher education institutions, yet they either not succeed or not secure entry to fields of study to which they were historically denied entry. Thus it has become obvious that the tasks to be addressed in post-apartheid higher education pose a plethora of contradictory demands and outcomes.

6.5.1 Changing the skills profile legacy

Przeworski (2011, 2017) presents a useful perspective on the changing shifts of power in societies confronted with change. He suggests that in formerly oppressive societies – where powerful and wealthy classes governed and faced popular resistance – the formerly oppressed may enjoy success through mass protests and ultimately secure a shift in power to themselves. Przeworski (2011)

argues that this may bring success in the form of initial access to resources and power; however he asserts that the formerly powerful – who are also owners of property and resources – may wage a form of resistance or create obstacles that seemingly shift significant tools of power back to the former oppressor. These shifts result in a situation that resembles the illusion of power and causes disruptions and contestations on an ongoing basis.

Recent analysis of the performance of the higher education sector in South Africa appears to confirm this view of power shifts. Statistics published by the Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2018a; CHE, 2018b) clearly confirm advances, followed by unexpected reversals. The statistics confirm that there has been increased access for blacks in South Africa. This is an advance – however, as is also shown, the success rates of black students have not matched the growth in entry numbers.

The data indicates that the skills profile has begun to alter from the apartheid legacy. For example, in 2014 more blacks graduated with PhDs than white postgraduate students, this was a first in the history of South Africa (NACI, 2015). In addition the number of females graduating has increased particularly with respect to technology and science. However, data shows that graduation in telecommunication fields continues to be of concern, particularly as reported by Statistics South Africa (2012) specifically in the fields of electronic engineering and computer science. These are also professions in which male graduates outnumber females by about two to one (Stats SA, 2012).

These shifting features of higher education graduation categories are evident in the data emerging during this research. It is clear however, that the strong desire for access has been pursued with vigour and that many more young black South Africans enjoy opportunities they had not had under apartheid. However, the contributions of participants pointed at a range of issues that remain unresolved. Several referred to fundamental problems related to knowledge production, gender equity and governance. As one said:

> *We have a student body that now is 93% black, right, we have an academic body that is about 40% black now and still we have a long way to go. Transformation should be about influencing the shape of the institution, but what is the content of the shaping, is it a reproduction of the colonial project or is it an engagement to begin the rupture of that project in its knowledge forms.* (Interview participant #9, 2017)

Another participant said:

> *One area we need to change is demographics, we still have inequity in the South African Academy especially with the senior level being predominantly white and male. I was startled at the breakdown by race and gender of highly rated scientists in South Africa, whites easily constitute even today about 75% of highly rates scientists and that is where the incentive money goes to.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

However, the reminder about nuances and contradiction constantly arose. The same participant concluded:

> *But there are somewhat some success stories, or areas in which we have responded to the challenges we face as a county. If one looks at the research or the response of universities to infectious diseases, HIV and AIDS, I think we became one of the leaders in research around that, which was a response to a national challenge we faced as a society.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

6.5.2 Knowledge production and inclusion

According to several participants, black- and female students often feel alienated in universities due to unresolved challenges of knowledge production and limited access to critical disciplines. One of the issues referred to is proficiency in English which is the language of learning and teaching in higher education. Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) assert that black students from wealthy families tend to cope better with this language demand than students from rural poor backgrounds might not have had sufficient practice in using English for learning. Issues such as lack of familiarity with technology such as computers were identified in the documents analysis. There was also reference to the need for universities in South Africa to embrace ‘decolonisation’ (Nkomo, 2013). The demand for decolonisation is explained as the need for universities to change from a perceived western mindset to a more visible and determined focus on, and inclusion of the study of Africa (Ramoupi quoted by Du Preez et al., 2016, p. 6570).

Research reflecting on the content of various disciplines offered in higher education study suggests that South Africa has greater intellectual links with the North, and neglects study of the East as well as study of knowledge produced by academics in the rest of the African continent (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017; Reddy, 2006). In more than two decades of democracy, South African universities have extended their global links, created new ones, and built links with institutions in other countries in Africa yet these links have not led to a change in the content of the curriculum nor a greater focus on the study of Africa. The rather peculiar feature of such links – indicated by Meyer, Bushney and Ukpere (2011) – is that the formerly white universities have been most successful at creating such contacts and thus further extending their privileges and advantages. As one participant in this study commented:

> *Some of us have found it easier to share knowledge and influence each other through discussions about change, but we have not made the effort to focus more closely on what is taught and how we can improve support to young black students so that they succeed* (Interview participant #7, 2017)

There continue to be concerns about the degree to which knowledge networks have been opened up to include previously neglected content. Reddy (2006) argues that democratic South Africa has given "marginal attention to curriculum content among the issues dealing with transformation" (p. 8). Citing the University of Cape Town's 'Mamdani debate', concludes that the issues were suppressed in order to protect the dominant Eurocentric curriculum of the university.

These concerns are echoed in research that focuses on the subject of institutional culture (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2011), and the view that the social milieu and values in many institutions are forbidding and repel, rather than welcome black students and women students. This perception of the protection of established norms is prevalent in the literature (Du Preez et al., 2016) on knowledge and skills. One of the participants put the matter as follows:

> *... we are producing the disciplines and fields of knowledge of the colonial era.* (Interview participant #2, 2017)

An impression of a lack of enthusiasm to address changes of institutional culture (and going beyond access in numbers and race) was evident in a range of studies. In a seminal study, Bazana

and Mogotsi (2017) illustrate the deep alienation experienced by black students in historically white universities where they are seemingly 'compelled' into "assimilating existing white culture" (p. 4) if they are to succeed. This difficult, alienating milieu contributes to a sense of helplessness and failure due to the absence of institutional policy that pays attention to the plight of black students. Research suggests that black numbers become a prize or achievement (Reddy, 2006), and other factors that influence progress and success are neglected or ignored. These sentiments are reminiscent of the recollection of early days at a white university, related by one participant:

> *I had a degree from a black institution and went to a white university for postgraduate studies. I struggled with the lecturer's accent, with being the sole black in my lectures and finding it difficult to approach teaching staff for help.* (Interview participant #10, 2017)

Reflecting on the learning environment in university, another participant recalled:

> *I gave a presentation to research students in mathematics on what it means to decolonise mathematics, as people take extreme views about decolonisation of what we teach, I explained African scholarship in mathematics but I think this is a signal that something needs to be done about the content of what is being taught without ditching the essence.* (Interview participant #3, 2017)

This comment highlights the belief referred to earlier that the efforts of curriculum change in universities in South Africa have not fully included a focus on Africa or knowledge produced in Africa. These concerns – which are often explained as meaning inadequate transformation – were also reflected when discussions focused on who teaches.

6.5.3 Changing the academic community

The debates and arguments are a reminder of the contents of the 1997 White Paper 3, the seminal policy guide for the 1997 Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997). In the White Paper, one of the policy goals related to the concern presented in section 7.3.2 was set out as follows: "Support a democratic ethos and a culture of human rights by educational programmes and practices conducive to critical

discourse and creative thinking, cultural tolerance and a common commitment to a humane, non-racist, and non-sexist social order" (DOE, 1997, p.7).

This goal appears attuned to the expectation found in literature (Waghid, 2002; Nkomo, 2013) that change in post-apartheid higher education would mean significant change to programmes, material read and taught, and arguments conveyed and debated in the process of teaching and learning in higher education. A frequent comment on the academic community is that change of the demographics of academic staff in historically white institutions remains a challenge because the number of black professors is insufficient. Recent arguments in higher education refer to this as yet unfulfilled expectations and call for more determined attention to the prevalence of cultural arrogance, exclusion of the majority in university symbols and rituals, as well as the need to create a more diverse institutional and academic culture (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017; Nkomo, 2013).

In the course of gathering data, participants referred to the lack of change in the producers of knowledge and the low numbers of blacks and women involved in research. CHE statistics (CHE, 2018a) indicate that there have been advances in post graduate access in post-apartheid South Africa. Interestingly the numbers indicate increased post graduate graduation by females as compared to males by 2016. Nevertheless black people and women have remained under-represented in academic and professional positions especially at senior levels (CHE, 2018b). Some participants confirmed that these features are found in the composition of full-time researchers in South Africa with the majority of researchers being white males and very few blacks employed as full-time researchers.

The concerns and progress mentioned above needs to be understood alongside significant changes that have occurred in higher education institutions. According to Horsthemke (2016) there have been concerted efforts directed at altering curricula and ensuring support to students so that they succeed. As one participant said:

> *I was really pleased to see how foundation programmes have supported students of all races to succeed in their academic studies. When we started such programmes in our university the focus was black students because of the initial challenges, but now all students needing support can benefit from these programmes.* (Interview participant #6, 2017).

6.6 DECOLONISING THE ACADEMY

The arguments for transformation meanings to include decolonising the academy were also a consistent feature in the research process and findings. The meanings of decolonisation were largely related to the aspects discussed in this section. Decolonisation has been a dominant feature of higher education debates in the past two and a half years as with transformation, there are many contestations as to its meaning. It is utilised to refer to change in the composition and practices and form of governance structures, changes in curriculum, replacing of old symbols with new symbols, attending to gender inequity and addressing racism (Engelbrecht & Bhengu, 2015; Nkomo, 2013).

6.6.1 Symbols

Recent debates and demands for transformation in universities, focus has been directed at various symbols that are said to be directly associated with the era of colonial rule as well as with the apartheid era in South Africa. The symbols are regarded as representative expressions of racial and sexist oppression, and as offensive to students and staff, as well as to a newly democratic South Africa. One of the better known examples of this challenge to Eurocentric and racist symbols (Heleta, 2016) is the ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ campaign of students and staff at the University of Cape Town in 2015. This centred on objections to the prominent statue of the well-known businessman and explorer of the nineteenth century colonial era, Cecil John Rhodes. Matebeni (2018) referred to Rhodes as a mining magnate who amassed substantial wealth from exploiting mineral resources in Southern Africa. He became a major benefactor to the colonial enterprise in Africa and supported universities such as Rhodes University and the University of Cape Town. To many who have suffered colonial and apartheid oppression, Rhodes is regarded as a participant and lead player in the promotion of injustice. The protest against the prominent display of his statue drew attention to the continued presence and affirmation of persons responsible for great repression on several campuses in South Africa. Following weeks of protest, the University Council elected to remove the statue from its prominent position.

Wealthy benefactors provide resources to privileged universities in South Africa in a manner similar to practices in European countries and the United States of America. Individuals such as Rhodes then have buildings and other facilities named after them even when it is known their wealth was acquired through the exploitation of the millions of ordinary workers. South African heroes and heroines who fought for freedom often have no visible place of honour in such institutions thus neglecting their more honourable contributions to humanity.

The changing student body including youth alert to histories of oppression has led to objections and direct action against symbols and practices such as initiation in residences which they regard as further alienating them from becoming full members of their university community. These struggles for changing symbols continue in South Africa today as apartheid and colonial heroes are a visible presence in street names buildings and even city names. The efforts to make symbols a key component in the meanings of transformation continues into the present. In addition to the matter of symbols, transformation as changing and developing indigenous languages were also referred to.

6.6.2 Languages of learning and teaching

South Africa's Constitution affirms eleven languages as the official languages of South Africa. The constitution directs the country to pursue and invest in the development and use of these languages, and more particularly the indigenous languages that have been so neglected in the past. Universities in South Africa offer teaching and learning through just two of the official languages – English and Afrikaans, which are also viewed in some quarters as the languages of the oppressor.

Some researchers argue that while universities have developed new policies and practices since 1994, and that these affirm equality and transformation, there has been little change in "institutional cultures and epistemological traditions" (Heleta, 2016, p. 2). This is illustrated in the continuing dominance of languages that are a second, and at times, almost a foreign language for many black students in universities in South Africa. Some that argue (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017; Reddy, 2006) for decolonisation have demanded the introduction and use of African languages such as Setswana and Isizulu as teaching languages in higher education. They argue that the low

throughput rate in universities is linked to the difficulties posed by studying in English. These views reflect research in other countries in Africa that points to the negative effect poor learning in English has on the success rates of African students. In writing of the neglect of African languages by publishing houses, Bgoya (2003) laments the lack of literature in indigenous languages of Africa. Referring to learning and education in Tanzania, Bgoya (2003) argues that inadequate literature and poor teaching in English in schools renders black children vulnerable to failure and poor economic prospects.

Demands for the transformation of language insist that the lack of a tradition of accessible literature and literacy leads to poor cognitive development and the absence of a reading culture within families and communities, which in turn impacts severely on higher education students. Researchers in South Africa (Boughey, 2002; Shay, 2005) have argued for universities to devote increased resource and research support to understanding and overcoming the language and learning difficulties confronted by students studying in universities that do not address academic development needed by lecturers as well as students. Some lecturers regard the newly entering black students as 'the problem'. Researchers (Bazana & Mogosi, 2017; Nkomo, 2013; Reddy, 2006) argue that the university itself in need of renewal and academic development, so that it becomes better able to create an environment in which young people thrive intellectually.

Recent research (Du Preez et al., 2016; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017) shows that since significant gaps continue to exist and widen – the gap between access and success – universities have accepted the need to give greater attention to epistemological access and to enhancing students' capacity to manage challenging academic demands. Institutions have thus acknowledged that the "achievement of equity regarding access to higher education was an issue of institutional and systemic transformation rather than individual remediation" (Boughey, 2005, p. 66). The language of teaching and learning has featured prominently in debates on decolonisation, referring to the need for students to be supported to succeed in higher education. Reddy (2006) argues for a change to languages of learning and to the introduction of teaching in languages black students are familiar with. Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) express similar views. Some institutions have responded to calls for such changes and have introduced South African black indigenous languages into different programmes such as the health sciences at the University of Kwazulu Natal where isiZulu is now

taught to medical students. These are recent developments but they form the beginnings of a responsiveness that has been widely welcomed.

The notion of transformation meaning systemic change is also evident in decolonisation demands that focus on staffing changes; this is discussed in the following subsection.

6.6.3 Staffing and change

In the course of gathering data for this study, participants referred to the lack of change in the producers of knowledge, and the low numbers of blacks and women involved in research. CHE statistics (CHE, 2018a) indicate that there have been advances in access to postgraduate studies in post-apartheid South Africa. The numbers indicate that by 2016 larger numbers of women had graduated with postgraduate degrees when compared to males. Nevertheless, black people and women remain under-represented in academic and professional positions, especially at senior levels (CHE, 2018b). Some participants confirmed that these features are found in the composition of full-time researchers in South Africa, with the majority of researchers being white males, with very few blacks employed as full-time researchers.

Speaking at a law seminar in 2000, the late minister Dullah Omar said, “There is a smug assumption among large sectors of the legal fraternity, including our judiciary, that generally speaking, we have a very fine legal system, a good judiciary, and an excellent legal profession which needs very little tampering with” (Iya, Rembe & Balaro, 2000, p. 135). If the references to legal institutions were replaced with ‘universities’, the sentiment would still ring true, according to current research (Nkomo, 2013). Transforming the demographics of academic staff remains a challenge in historically white and historically black institutions.

The number of black professors has remained small according to the South African Human Rights Commission (2016). Black academics are a minority and are largely in junior positions, finding it difficult to access senior academic positions and professorships. There has been some attention to reversing this trend through policy support. Following proposals by academic leaders such as Professor Selim Badat, the Department of Higher Education in South Africa introduced a state supported programme for young black academics and women, called the New Generation of

Academics Programme (nGAP). The initiative supports the selection of young academics and their progress to a senior postgraduate degree, with the intention that they will be appointed as permanent academic staff. Initiatives such as these are directed at promoting transformation in the academic staff at universities, and reversing the still-visible features of apartheid that are visible in a mainly white and male academic community teaching an increased and now majority black student community. Some academics argue that much more needs to be done to ensure equity in the staff profile of universities (Bazana & Mokgotsi, 2017; Potgieter, 2002).

Decolonisation remains a vocal demand in higher education. Attempts at transformation are being made, but the visible scars of the apartheid education legacy continue to shape and scar the higher education landscape in South Africa today.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The findings reported on above provide an indication of the different perspectives that are held with respect to the meanings of transformation and strongly suggest that the contested meanings derive from the multiple and contested dimensions that are associated with the concept among researchers and policymakers. It is also very apparent that access is regarded as a key aspect of transformation. The prevalence of contested meanings might also be associated with the complex context in which higher education practitioners and policy makers are seeking to pursue the seemingly contradictory and contending goals of equity, development and globalisation.

The findings confirm once more the appropriateness of the inclusion of the notion of complexity in this study. As indicated at the beginning of this thesis (chapter 1, section 1.3 and chapter 2, section 2.2), ‘transformation’ when used to reflect its simple dictionary meaning of substantive change, does not by any means represent the tapestry of intricate dimensions of meanings, as presented in this chapter. The theoretical perspectives of Marginson (2004) and Przeworski (2011) have provided very relevant tools of analysis to develop greater understanding of the trends and practices included and reflected upon in this chapter.

It is clear that in many parts of the world – including this country, much more is expected of universities than the mere acquisition of a qualification or certificate. The wide breadth of

expectations that spans curriculum relevance, institutions flossed on inclusion of all as well as provision of quality education and action to address demands for recognition of diversity and the creation of institutions that fully affirm diversity. These expansive expectations of universities provide strong insights into the contested meanings of transformation.

It is these successes, challenges and dilemmas that have shaped the contested meanings of transformation in post-apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter sets out the contributions to the field of knowledge made by this study. The study set out to investigate the ongoing and persistent concern with transformation, and the various meanings intended by users of the concept, when it is used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Through study and analysis of a wide range of documents and literature I was able to confirm that since 1994 there have been a range of initiatives directed at reversing the legacies of apartheid higher education that were inherited by the new democratic government in South Africa. Despite the stated intentions of these attempts, there continue to be constant arguments, demands, analyses and critiques which assert that the intention of achieving transformation in higher education is not being realised.

The wide ranging views and uses of the concept suggested some element of contestation in presenting its meanings, hence the reference to 'contested' meanings. In pursuing the elucidation of the contested meanings of transformation when it is used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, the study unveiled a rich variety of meanings that appear to provide expansive commentary on all the components that could be said to constitute higher education.

Extensive research in the course of the study identified and analysed these contested meanings and presented the spectrum of meanings of transformation in the preceding chapters. The study was directed at responding to the following primary research question and associated secondary questions:

Primary research question

What meanings are attached to the concept transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa?

Secondary research questions

1. Have these meanings found expression in higher education policies developed and adopted in post-apartheid South Africa?

2. In what ways have the expectations of various stakeholders regarding the meanings attached to transformation been met in the adoption and implementation of policies?
3. Why does the sector continue to experience contestation on progress with transformation?

The contributions that are elaborated in this chapter are an attempt to answer these research questions. The evidence gathered in the course of the study confirms that there are varied meanings associated with the term 'transformation' and that this concept enjoys currency and probing whenever post-apartheid higher education is scrutinised and evaluated.

One of the key observations emerging from this study is that higher education enjoys a position of great importance in society as a critical sector for empowerment and for overcoming – and indeed reversing – the legacies inherited from apartheid. A second important observation is that apartheid policy and practice in higher education wrought severe harm to the sector and bestowed a legacy of very difficult challenges to be faced by South Africa's new democracy. A third evident fact is that the various meanings uncovered do not separately explain all the contested meanings of transformation. It is when they are considered holistically that a fuller perspective on the meanings of transformation in respect to post-apartheid higher education emerges.

The use of, and debate on the many meanings allows for examination of different facets of the elements that constitute higher education. In other words, the meanings may refer to students, academic staff, curricula or success rates – all in reference to higher education in South Africa. It is important to state that the meaning mentioned most often was access. The study also reports findings to the secondary research questions. I used my findings to indicate the manner in which policy on higher education in South Africa has been formulated with the intention to address the inadequacies in higher education that are the concern of those who argue for transformation. Furthermore, I indicated stakeholder perspectives on transformation and used the documentary analysis to present stakeholders views and the incorporation of their views and proposals in legislation and in institutional policies.

Some of the meanings of transformation are utilised to point to current inadequacies in the sector, while others may focus on desired features that are regarded as limited or entirely absent at present.

The meanings may also be a presentation of reasons or explanations for inadequate progress, or indeed criticism of policy makers, for failing to ensure the achievement of desired outcomes. The study confirms that this is a widely used concept, not only by stakeholders in higher education such as academics, students or staff, but also by a wide range of external stakeholders for whom higher education is a sector of great importance. Linked to this broad appropriation and use of the concept is the evidence presented that many in society aspire to enter higher education as they believe it offers a chance to improve their personal circumstances and social status.

The thesis drew on the glonacal heuristic (Marginson, 2004) to indicate the impact that global, national and local influences bring to bear on higher education. The selection of this analytical tool was regarded as relevant, given that higher education is a sector in society that is increasingly linked to global developments. The national level is also of significance, as national policy plays a key role in shaping policy implementation and practice. The local was deemed to imply the institutional level, in that interpretation of policy and the influence of communities often hold significance at the institutional level. Thus, the glonacal framework allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the data that was generated in the course of this research.

In an effort to probe the meanings of transformation and to develop greater in-depth understanding of the evidence that was adduced, perspectives on societies in transition from oppression to inclusive democracy were incorporated in the tools of analysis. The thesis adds to the body of knowledge by setting out the issues, data gathered, and findings as a set of complex phenomena linked to the varied meanings of transformation. The study proposes that it is vital for researchers to be aware of, and to appreciate this complexity, if new and useful contributions to achieving the intended outcomes of post-apartheid higher education policy are to be generated. Each of the chapters of the thesis sets out important parts of the overall contribution of this study to the body of knowledge on higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The contributions and conclusions are elaborated in the following sections, followed by recommendations.

7.2 KEY ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

This section presents the key issues and conclusions that became evident in the course of pursuing this study on contested meanings of transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa.

7.2.1 Higher education matters

The extensive process of data scrutiny and document analysis, interviews and probing of the global, national and local contexts indicates firmly that higher education continues to be regarded as a sector of education that offers opportunity and hope for changing the social circumstances of individuals, families and communities. This observation has proved true for all the countries I studied, and was firmly articulated by the participants in the case of South Africa. This belief in the life changing power of higher education fuels constant scrutiny, evaluation and student demands. It became obvious that this belief continues to be strongly held within the previously oppressed community of South Africa. The apparently powerful influence of a university such as Fort Hare (in its glory days) reinforces this observation.

It is clear that the establishment of the University of Fort Hare in 1916 was a very concrete expression of the desire within African communities to ensure that their children enjoyed the opportunity of higher education, free from the discrimination they believed would be experienced in institutions of higher learning that were established to admit white South Africans only. When I probed their intentions, much was revealed: documents and books I read including my grandmother's autobiography (Matthews, 1994) - they wished their children to enjoy the opportunity to pursue higher education; they intended to create an institution that would offer quality programmes; they wanted to admit all with the talent to succeed, of any race or nation; and they wanted to offer a broad curriculum that would nurture future leaders in South Africa and beyond. These views were also confirmed by some of my interviewees who were former students of Fort Hare.

This broader perspective of aspirations of what a university should be has emerged from time to time during the course of this study. As the research and the study progressed, I realised that the meanings attached to the concept transformation revolve around the expectations of society as to the role of universities; and the constant questioning as to whether universities – in particular those privileged ones created under apartheid South Africa – are still meeting expectations and responding as desired by a wide range of stakeholders.

7.2.2 Policy matters

Apartheid higher education policy shaped the character and role of higher education until 1994. Policy played a key directing role in shaping the practice and culture of institutions. Rather than being a force for change, institutions of higher learning became compliant respondents to odious policy. Acting in a constrained and strictly monitored policy regime, universities were segmented according to race, ethnicity and language. These effects became entrenched over decades and to a great degree, determined the core fabric of institutions under the apartheid regime.

The democratic government of post-apartheid South Africa also used policy as a tool to change higher education to ensure that it serves the imperatives of an emerging democracy. The new policy measures sought new practices from the old universities and managed expectations through a public and very energised policy-making process. This approach gave rise to intense public scrutiny of institutions which was supported by the implementation of the new and empowering legislation. The outcomes reported in this thesis indicate that there has been much change since the adoption of new policy, thus confirming that policy matters.

The study also describes the very stark differences between apartheid higher education policy and post-1994 policy. Apartheid policy intended to promote racial division, to empower historically white institutions, and limit access to higher education for black people. The policies adopted since 1994 seek to achieve inclusion, to open all universities to all the people of South Africa, and to utilise universities as critical institutions in support of national development objectives. The statistics on numbers of young black people entering higher education since 1994 confirm the important role that policy plays in pursuing national objectives.

The research process has pointed to many difficulties and obstacles confronting policy makers and those overseeing its implementation. As a tool to support and advance change, policy does matter, but the relationship between desired outcomes and actual results is not linear. Producing new legislation does not necessarily lead to successful implementation. Experiences of policy processes in democratic South Africa reflect this contrast. Participants reported that difficult lessons have been learnt about policy making. Firstly, choices as to what to include must be carefully considered. Secondly, when the proposed policy appears before parliament, it may be amended in unexpected ways; and thirdly, it takes time to achieve impact and at times, citizens become impatient while waiting for change to materialise.

7.2.3 Unintended consequences

The probing of the intentions of apartheid higher education utilising the research questions revealed that its intentions were that policy was exclusion, erosion of black opportunities, and the creation of a compliant and complicit sector. Denial of opportunity gave rise to some institutions becoming active sites of struggle and resistance. Several universities across the country held protests, organised student and staff formations argued and fought for change, and offered subtle resistance to the dictates of apartheid policy. The racist policies united races and prompted the emergence of common purpose. This was not the case in all universities, since the divide within the sector was intensified by apartheid law. The historically white English-speaking institutions could be distinguished as being more inclined towards liberal principles and thus there was participation by some within them in the active resistance to the apartheid regime. Some white universities even admitted black students, notwithstanding the prohibitions imposed by the regime. On the other hand, the historically white Afrikaans-speaking institutions had strong links with the apartheid state and generally supported the execution of its racist project as supporters within the academic community. The fiercest resistance was prevalent in the historically black institutions.

The spectre of unintended outcomes can be identified in the democratic era. Despite the intention to increase access opportunities for black students to higher education institutions in order to generate skills to support the economy and promote development, the increased access of black students did not result in the expected development of skills linked to the economy as access did

not result in graduations in disciplines required in the economy. Also, even though new policy asserted commitment to gender equality, for many years women remained a minority among students and academic staff. Furthermore rather than becoming places where the values of South Africa's new constitution could thrive, several universities have not been able to rid themselves of racism, gender discrimination and exclusionary practices.

7.2.4 These challenges are global

While apartheid policy in general and in terms of education are uniquely South African legacies, investigation of the contested meanings of transformation has revealed that the challenges associated with the varied meanings are a global phenomenon affecting many countries, both developed and developing (Marginson, 2016). In many countries, popular belief in the life changing effects of higher education has resulted in a search for responses to address inequality in access to higher education, specifically targeting access for historically marginalised sectors in society. The development of policy in support of these endeavours is commonly undertaken by governments. However their ability to secure achievement of desired goals is limited by insufficient numbers of public higher education institutions; the growing cost of university education; and in some countries, resistance to government objectives in the form of developing restrictive admission requirements that perpetuate exclusion.

The conundrum of whether it is possible to utilise higher education to reverse many decades of discrimination has become the subject of much research attention (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.1). The benefits to young people were much clearer when university systems were small and exclusive – the development of near universal access in some countries has resulted in strident demands for increased access in many parts of the global community and this has strained institutional capacity as well as national finances. The difficulty of many is how to promote increased opportunity while ensuring equity and responsiveness to national goals as well as maintaining quality and acceptable success rates. As shown by Marginson (2016), many countries have adopted policies to expand university access or funded private institutions to address unequal opportunity. Despite these interventions, as the study shows, inequality in higher education access and success persists in many countries.

Practice in many countries has confirmed the importance of putting in place support and other measures to increase the likelihood of eroding persistently unequal opportunity while maintaining desirable success rates. Universities have been encouraged to give greater attention to interventions that improve learning, teaching and graduation outcomes. Tinto (2012) provides evidence of a plethora of select interventions, such as foundation and bridging programmes, support for academics to improve teaching, and the recognition of academic development programmes as core professional practice in higher education. The amelioration of inequality has resulted in a range of student financial aid programmes to ensure that students from poor families are not denied entry to higher education because of poverty. Linked to these outcomes is the development of university teaching as a respected academic career and increased investigation into programmes that may lead to positive achievements. The planned and structured pursuit of equality has thus become an important part of many systems of higher education.

Despite the worrying levels of inequality in post-apartheid South Africa, the position in many other countries on the African continent is far worse. Many have limited numbers of public institutions and, as in other developing countries, the growth of private higher education has been encouraged as a solution. However, prohibitive costs and limited offerings in disciplines such as engineering, science and technology have resulted in outcomes that seem to perpetuate inequality rather than limit or reverse it.

The global dimension is also apparent in the influence of international collaboration with experts from many countries. In the first five years of democracy, South Africa developed its new policies supported by many international advisors and several international organisations. These partners are often powerful due to substantial financial resources and being able to wield influence in a range of ways. They have the power to convene groups of government ministers, institutional leaders and fellow academics. Their summoning power lends immense status to their proposals and leads to diverse and sometimes inappropriate experimentation. For example, they often hire renowned experts who serve as ‘globetrotters’, developing advice in countries in which they have never lived or worked. The benign use of this ‘soft power’ (Nye, 2005) is regarded as a new form of international influence that offers expertise and funding for policy workshops and other activities, in order to secure the preferred outcomes of the international partner without the use of conflict or force. Some researchers (Jansen, 2004) have criticised the eager embrace of ideas

generated through these interactions, claiming that public servants become attached to proposed policies without adequately examining their relevance to South Africa's context, and without effective scrutiny of potential pitfalls.

7.2.5 Legacies last

One might be excused for thinking that twenty-four years should be sufficient to make a decisive impact on the apartheid legacies inherited by democratic South Africa. However, I have been startled at the continuing influence and impact of apartheid's legacy. One of the more troubling observations is the mantle of 'deserved superiority' that lingers in privileged institutions, as opposed to the one of 'enduring inferiority' still evident in universities that bore the brunt of apartheid oppression. This fracture is visible even among those who work and study in these institutions (Erasmus, 2006; Akoojee & Nkomo, 2011). Even though there is evidence of progress in transforming higher education in post-apartheid South Africa, continuing features of discrimination remain prevalent. Universities that are historically white continue to be institutions of choice for white students and white academics. Although black students from various class backgrounds enjoy greater access to these institutions, many struggle to fit in and to succeed. One of the reasons is the assertion by some researchers (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2011; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017) that institutions have not devoted attention to addressing discrimination and alienating institutional practices.

The expectations of families from poor communities is that their children who gain admission to formerly white public schools and private schools will succeed and provide support to their siblings or relatives. Inadequate success rates lead to great disappointment within higher education. While I could not find evidence of studies into the class backgrounds of black students, several of the formerly privileged white institutions admit black students from largely formerly white public schools and private schools; while the rural-based, poor historically black institutions receive largely black students from the poorest families and from schools that are often the worst performing in school leaving examinations. Researchers (Reddy, 2006; Badat, 2010) who refer to this phenomenon indicate that this places difficult burdens on already poor universities and that new policy has failed to provide redress measures that would ameliorate the problem. Thus the

historically black universities that were most harmed by the apartheid Extension of Universities Act (RSA, 1959) on higher education continue to be in a position of academic disadvantage and spatial disadvantage.

There is contestation as to which of these legacies requires attention most urgently (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017; Odhav, 2009) and it is in articulating these meanings that the desired goals are stated. One of the often mentioned meanings of transformation by participants in my study and in documents are the alienation experienced by black students and staff in their universities. They expressed concern that what they teach, learn and study has no link to their country, the continent of Africa, or their development challenges. The data I gathered showed that some universities do not take their concerns and interests into account, and that curricula have remained unchanged for decades. The belief that there is inadequate inclusion of African scholarship and intellectual product is described as promoting the myth that Africans have made no contribution to world knowledge (Reddy, 2006). These observations seem to suggest that Przeworski (2011) is correct in suggesting that one of the toughest tasks to pursue in our increasingly unequal world is equality and social justice.

Social justice would probably begin to be achieved in South Africa if access to a range of professional occupations and high value academic disciplines were to become part of the process of change. However as evidence indicates (CHE, 2015), black students are not a majority in science faculties, economics disciplines such as statistics and engineering, and in veterinary sciences fields in which there are jobs and enterprise needs. These exclusions continue centuries of negligible black numbers in these fields of study (Badat, 2010). The snowball effect of these inadequacies is reflected in the evidence that high output researchers are mainly white and male, as are senior academics especially at professorial level. Women too, face exclusion in these fields and in academic leadership. White women have achieved more progress and success in higher education than black women, which appears to entrench gender inequality and racism even more.

The characteristics gleaned from this research study seem to affirm Marginson's (2004) view that globally generalised changes in higher education – especially its high costs – have led to a severe break with the earlier equalising power of higher education. In contrast, recognition of the status changing power of higher education among the poor and excluded has resulted in a highly

contested environment for places, opportunity and relevance. These characteristics emerged as prominent features when meanings of transformation were referred to. I see this desire consistently and it is one that few governments are able to resist.

Institutions and government need to pay more attention to specific measures to address these persistent features of disadvantage. Such measures may include policy intervention such as legislation as well as well-designed, targeted initiatives aimed at responding to specific concerns. In South Africa such actions include funding allocated specifically for programmes such as academic support programmes and foundation programmes for students who might need such support.

It is also necessary to devote attention to and provide more resources for historically black universities. Their current status, inadequate facilities, and poor infrastructure continue to place them in a position of inequality. There have been many attempts at redress, but they have not led to the desired changes. The continuing limitations in these institutions cause them to be viewed as a liability rather than as offering competent support in reversing the above-mentioned legacies. This may be one of the reasons for the ongoing contestation about the meanings of transformation particularly when the analysis (Reddy, 2006) focus on historically black institutions.

In response to the question as to why there continues to be contestation on transformation, some of the interviewees mentioned that policy to address these challenges has been developed in South Africa, however, they have not always led to achievement of the intended objectives. The flaw in efforts at change seems to lie in poor follow through on promises and commitments. Some researchers (e.g. Jansen, 2004) suggest that improved policy formulation may lead to far better implementation and outcomes. Some institutions have not eradicated the culture of constant protest and demand that developed in the struggle against apartheid. It seems that many institutions have not had university-wide conversations on what should be done to ensure quality, success and responsiveness to the country's development objectives.

7.2.6 Resources have not followed commitments

The concern that South Africa chose a path of development that did not prioritise funding for higher education as the main priority after the demise of the apartheid regime is demonstrated in some of the literature (Reddy, 2006; Odhav, 2009). South Africa's macro-economic policy is labelled as 'neo-liberal' and 'conservative' (Bond, 2000) and cited as unsuited to a country confronting such daunting development challenges.

Such reflections (Bond, 2000) tend to focus on one sector, for example, higher education, and not to include acknowledgement of funding needs for other socio-economic needs in South Africa. Thus, the absence of a comprehensive reflection makes it difficult to properly consider the needs of higher education alongside a full understanding of the total spectrum of needs in South Africa. The democratic government has maintained public funding for higher education and there has been commitment to funding university costs for poor students. However, state subsidies have not grown to a level that efficiently supports all the needs of the sector. It is critical to point out that although the apartheid government presented South Africa as a rich, modern economy to the world, it was a costly regime that bequeathed high levels of debt and a moribund economy to the new state. Therefore, the new state has not had much capacity to provide increased support to higher education. This links to the secondary questions that sought responses on how government has responded to demands for change and explanations for the continued existence of contested debates on meanings of transformation.

It is necessary for the state to improve resourcing of higher education if the objectives of transformation that were identified in the study are to be achieved, beyond the progress already demonstrated. The growth in fees – which has largely confirmed the glonacal heuristic view that higher education has become an expensive commodity – led to national protests in South African higher education that were reminiscent of struggles under apartheid. Events such as the 'Fees Must Fall' campaign and other national protests in the period from 2015 to 2016 indicated the urgent need for increased public funding, and resulted in the state agreeing to fully fund poor and working class students for the first time in the history of the country.

In response to demands for increased support and financial resources to support the various meanings attached to transformation, the government has begun to provide finances for research and improved infrastructure in universities; it has also developed financial measures for the postgraduate training of future black and female academics. A recently announced University Capacity Development Grant (DHET, 2017) provides support for capacity in areas which were robust demands during the 'Fall' campaigns, such as curriculum development.

7.2.7 Changing the demographic profile of university faculties

An interesting outcome of freedom in South Africa is that it is really quite rare to find individuals who acknowledge that they supported apartheid. It as though the very visible disparities within and between races and different classes were wrought by an invisible, unknown hand. Yet, the imprint of inequality remains clearly evident.

7.2.7.1 Access to critical disciplines

A prominent feature of access as a key meaning of transformation was commentary on the subject of critical sought after disciplines. The Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) refers to the objective of ensuring that higher education produces the skills required for the economy of South Africa. Among the skills mentioned are professions such as engineering, accounting and health professions, such as doctors. Several participants I interviewed who are mature adults today, reported that while they worked very hard to gain a university place, to many of them and their compatriots, universities were a place of struggle just as the streets, factories and townships were. They reported that they regarded graduation ceremonies as events for student protest and that many attended graduations to protest rather than to celebrate. Interestingly, graduation featured in discussions on the current period when talking about participants' views on transformation. Several participants mentioned their disquiet about present-day graduation ceremonies – in particular, the low number of blacks in the science and engineering graduating classes. It seems there are black graduates in these disciplines, but they are from other African countries. The

admission and success of black students from other African countries appears to be a response to demands for change, but to the participants, this phenomenon is said to indicate (Badat, 2010) ongoing resistance to transformation for black South Africans. Citing popular struggles in older democracies (Hall, 2012), researchers refer to the adoption of subtle means of rejecting the need for change. In other words, powerful beneficiaries of past privilege have control of institutions and continue exclusionary practices, while appearing to facilitate change and at the same time resist transformation (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017).

Monitoring the changing demographics in university faculties is needed to ensure that there is real change. If it is to be responsive to the anticipated meanings of transformation, such change must include looking beyond the numbers, at features such as disciplines accessed, gender, the presence of persons living with disability, and support measures for all those who require them. Early assessments of transformation in South Africa focused on numbers and the changing profile of students, but inadequate attention was given to numbers in science, commerce, engineering and medicine. The elaboration of contested meanings of transformation has demonstrated the need for reviews that go beyond numbers and provide a more detailed critical analysis of trends in terms of change in higher education.

The various meanings of transformation often debated and reported in literature reflect various focused attempts to gauge advances and reversals (Badat, 2010). The advances may include increased access of black students while the reversals might be worrying dropout levels of black students.

7.2.7.2 Transformation advances and reversals

The term ‘access’ is often repeated in these discourses, which has proved to be a tool of reflection and assessment in order to articulate perspectives on the concept transformation. Some who argue for transformation assert the demographic of race as demonstrating evidence of change (Govinder et al., 2013). While this perspective initially enjoyed strong advocacy in energetic analyses and public discourses, it soon became apparent that race on its own cannot be construed as ‘transformation’. As alluded to earlier, the reasons for the need for further elaboration of the

concept transformation are linked to the fact that once researchers had probed the effect of the presence of black students in universities (and especially formerly white universities), they identified trends that pointed to the need for further scrutiny besides bare numbers.

One of the features of the confirmed increase in numbers of black students in universities is a practice labelled as the 'revolving door syndrome' – this refers to worrying black student dropout rates at all stages of study, but especially during the first year. Responding to contestation over the progress of transformation implies the need to actively respond to ensuring that black students succeed.

A second feature of access that is also scrutinised by researchers (Nkomo, 2013; Makgoba & Seepe, 2004) is directed at a much more senior level of university activity. This focus is on who produces knowledge, and the content of new and emerging knowledge. While there have been increases in numbers of black students entering universities, too few proceed to senior researcher status, and too few become principal investigators or lead researchers. Although the democratic government has created mechanisms to assist black postgraduate students and junior black researchers to conduct research projects, much more needs to be done to enhance research performance.

A third feature of access is linked to growing attention being paid to internationalisation. Many universities seek to be competitive by being ranked with the best in the world. The marketisation of higher education implies a position in world university rankings, research publications in international research journals, and partnership in a global research project, all of which enhance the status, value and attractiveness of a university. For universities with a strong research tradition – such as formerly white universities in South Africa – this international competitiveness is intently pursued to the benefit of both students and staff. However, for historically black universities, achieving this level of competitiveness is extremely difficult, thus leaving them on the margins of achievement and further increasing the historical divide. Recently, there have been the beginnings of improvement in research achievement due to the fact that the Department of Higher Education and Training has developed interventions and programmes directed at assisting historically black universities to improve their research performance.

A fourth aspect of access is the ongoing debate about transformation of access to epistemology, pedagogy and the curriculum. Some researchers (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2011; Zeleza, 2017) hold the view that existing epistemology and curriculum have enshrined within them exclusion and affirmation of knowledge drawn from the North, with very negligible attempts to encompass the study of Africa or the South. This includes inadequacies in providing a bridge to learning for newly entering students.

These attributes are some of those associated with transformation by many in the literature and in the interviews I conducted. These contested meanings of transformation indicate the need for continued attention to ensuring that the desire to benefit from higher education is realised through concerted focus on actions that will support positive outcomes. While I identified stringent critiques of various actions in policy and practice, I found that even the most critical opinions conceded that there have been advances; nevertheless participants argued that ongoing efforts at advancing transformation are absolutely necessary in order to achieve the anticipated levels of change and social justice.

7.2.8 Stakeholders matter

A study on higher education in post-apartheid South Africa would be incomplete without a reference to stakeholders. This study shows that stakeholders have played an important role in shaping higher education in South Africa and continue to do so at present. Scrutiny of stakeholders and their roles under apartheid shows that university education was considered important, even in that oppressive period. While many black people could not access higher education, the desire for such access was confirmed by protest, public declarations and active political demand on campuses. Stakeholder involvement was not limited to university community members – it included community-based organisations, student formations at school and university level, academics organisations, trade unions, and leaders of the liberation movements inside and outside South Africa. In other words, broad stakeholder demand for change at the time was democratic and inclusive.

A known feature of this form of demand by protest is that it can sometimes be very wide ranging, and may include reasonable as well as unreasonable demands. The formulation of demands under apartheid focused on the experience of exclusion and tended to be directed at demanding access and change in formerly white universities. Once a democratic parliament was installed, popular demands were directed to the new government. The reality that the majority of new legislators were the former leaders of popular protests led to a belief amongst various stakeholders that emergent proposals would be accepted and acted upon. These stakeholder expectations reflect responses to second research sub-question. An unexpected dissonance occurred, however, activists and stakeholders discovered that new legislation did not adopt all the proposals they submitted, and that considerations such as funding, government capacity, and the views of university leaders shaped the policies that were finally adopted by parliament.

In the course of time, as the new parliament steered policy formulation, there was some disappointment and anger, fuelled by a feeling that the government was not being bold enough in advancing transformation in higher education as articulated by stakeholders. It would seem from the interviews I conducted that policy makers were bound by the dictates of their party policies, the new Constitution of South Africa and various other factors, so they were not able to simply adopt demands from activists and convert them to law. In fact, as governance increasingly matured, some stakeholders began to believe their government had become distant and neglectful of their demands, despite the well-established progress that is reported upon (Badat, 2010).

Such dissonance between previously fully united activists has arisen in other countries after democratic governance has been installed. Unity in action that was possible in struggle is not always maintained in freedom. This ‘breach’ is referred to by Przeworski (2011) as being common in newly emerging democracies – he argues that protest gives voice to shared popular demands that may prove difficult to implement and adopt as government. Also, it would appear with reference to South Africa that governments need to be more constrained with respect to ambitious policy announcements (Odhav, 2009). Global evidence (Gupta, 2006; Lucchesi & Malanga, 2010) suggests that the desire for a particular change may not be sufficient. It may take years of experimentation and reformulation before the desired objectives are attained.

Nonetheless, it is important to continue to seek and achieve a modicum of national consensus and shared priorities. South Africa's practice of seeking broad consensus and making parliament a place for broad public debate has been cited by many as positive. Thus, while some stakeholders may be concerned that their aspirations are not being fully pursued, they confirm that they are participants in the democratic project of developing a post-apartheid higher education sector.

7.2.9 Manifold complexities

In investigating contested meanings of transformation with regard to post-apartheid higher education, I learnt that the use of the concept is wide and very diverse, and there is a great deal of complexity embedded in the concept and its meanings. As I have indicated in chapter 1 transformation is sometimes used to present one aspect of the many meanings that have been presented in this study. My attention had been focussed on the notion of 'redress', as this appeared to be the main perspective in South Africa in a range of debates (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2011; Zeleza, 2015). However, it became clear that the intended meanings of transformation are much more complex, and that they are themselves influenced and constrained by a range of complex realities. The most referred to meaning of all those that I uncovered is the topic of 'access'. It seems to be a unifying concept in this field of contrasting perspectives.

In the international literature – while equity and social justice are referred to – imperatives such as increased competitiveness, achieving high status in innovation and research, and attracting a diverse international body of staff and students are almost equally prominent. Universities and other higher education institutions appear to be regarded as much more than conduits through which the objective of equality is pursued. South Africa is not mistaken in such concerns; however the point may be that attention to the core purpose of universities (i.e. knowledge generation and the development of new ideas) should not be drowned out by the current focus on transformation.

Furthermore, the participants who were interviewed in this study pointed out that there are several other considerations that should enjoy attention in the pursuit of equality. As one said, supporting persons with disability to enter university is not enough if there is no wheelchair access or assistive devices for those who need that kind of support. They pointed out that South Africa has adopted

very empowering policy imperatives, but these are sometimes limited in scope due to the more difficult practical aspects of implementation.

The first sets of policy instruments may not have been adequate in responding to this immense task of change. However, the government has been very open about recognising the need for new approaches and mechanisms whenever practical implementation points to a requirement for changed laws and regulations. Recent reviews by the Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2016; CHE, 2017; CHE, 2018a) indicate that South Africa does attempt to refine policies and remodel practice from time to time.

Nevertheless, it would seem that there is a need to be more open about the complexities accompanying these challenges of change. The contested meanings of transformation – while having many common features – suggest inadequate broader societal discourse on the critical aspirations of, and reviews by various stakeholders.

Understanding the possibilities and limitations of policy is a skill acquired over time. Popularly elected governments sometimes show reluctance to publicly admit that a change that was demanded on the advent of democracy may be realised only decades later. While South Africa's Constitution (RSA, 1996a) clearly indicates that achievement of socio-economic rights would be incremental, this is rarely discussed as a possible contributor to the challenges South Africa experiences in respect to achieving greater social cohesion.

Notwithstanding the above cautions resulting from manifold complexities, it is important for a nation to have ambitions that are bold. The constant search for approaches and initiatives to support the achievement of equality is a bold endeavour and should be encouraged and supported appropriately.

The study has sought and gathered data on contested meanings of transformation. It has not focussed on one selected aspect of the meanings of transformation such as race exclusively or access. It thus goes beyond a wide range of studies that adopt such a selection. In addition, the use of the glonacal framework has permitted the study of higher education outside South Africa and allowed for a deeper appreciation of the fact that such challenges are not uniquely South African

and there are solutions to these challenges available from other higher education systems on the continent and globally.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.3.1 Recommendations for addressing neglected issues

- The findings strongly imply that the government conducts insufficient evaluation of institutional responsiveness to policy imperatives. There is a need for regular assessment and reporting on progress in achieving goals as set out in policy. Furthermore, higher education institutions should be held accountable when there is no progress. The Department of Higher Education and Training should put measures in place to assess such progress.
- The concerns apparent in the contested meanings of transformation identified in this study point to a worrying call for assistance (Reddy, 2006) particularly to students who may be impacted upon by the experience of alienation referred to by Bazan and Magotsi (2017), and Engelbrecht and Bhengu (2015). Some of the data gathered implies there is a growing view that policy is adopted without a serious intent to secure implementation.
- It is clear from the wide body of evidence gathered that much still needs to be achieved in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa; therefore attention should be directed at addressing the stated inadequacies.

7.3.2 Recommendations for further research

- Research on higher education tends to focus on current trends and developments and gives inadequate attention to considering the future of higher education in South Africa and on the African continent. Focus on such a neglected area may allow for the development of a refreshing perspective on the role higher education could play in Africa.
- Higher education policies seem to consistently link higher education to economic development, yet there is inadequate study of whether or not the promotion of such links

reflects reality, nor on whether universities are institutions that should give effect to such a mandate.

- Research directed at historically black institutions and the reasons for their continuing situation of disadvantage should be pursued to allow for the development of definitive interventions that will indicate a new beginning.
- The preceding chapter provides an analysis of the manner in which context and policy shaped higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. It also reflects the practical experience of higher education as revealed by various research participants interviewed in the course of gathering data. Research on policy and the impact of its implementation should be a focus of future study in order for evidence to support policy making.
- Future researchers should consider pursuing research that focuses on the perspectives of stakeholders about higher education and its role in South Africa and should source these views from a diversity of participants.

7.4 CONCLUSION

This study has unearthed a great deal of rich knowledge sources, to the extent that I had to be selective in identifying issues for more detailed investigation. Close analysis of a wide range of documents and the use of qualitative interviews have provided responses to the main research question. The question posed was: What meanings are attached to the concept transformation when used with regard to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa? The sub questions have been responded to in chapters 5 and 6 and reflected upon in the early paragraphs of this chapter (section 7.2). The findings of the study have allowed for the identification and elaboration of a range of meanings associated with the concept transformation. In addition, deeper probing has led to awareness that many countries are grappling with the task of giving explicit meaning to the concept by addressing the broadening of opportunities for previously disadvantaged people to benefit from higher education. Another observation that emerged is that societies that have experienced odious levels of social engineering (such as those associated with apartheid) find it very difficult to transition into equality, and struggle to encourage institutions with very different histories into a united force in support of national change. The use of interviews in this study enabled the gathering of wide perspectives on experiences, observations and reflections associated with the meanings of

transformation. While the intention of the study was not to primarily evaluate progress in achieving goals that are contained in policy, response to the sub questions in chapters 5 and 6 permitted reflections on performance and progress. Having considered all that I heard and certainly learnt, I present the following conclusions based on the findings of my study.

Use of the term 'contested meanings' proved useful in that it allowed for the identification of a wider range of perspectives as well as insight into the variety of debates on the progress of higher education change in South Africa. There are differences in perspectives and emphasis, and sharply discordant views among stakeholders. For some, transformation means entry to higher education and they are able to point to the fact that those who were previously excluded now enjoy increased opportunity. However, the views diverge when other features of the contested meanings are introduced to the debates. These are features that go beyond entry and examine deeper levels of access such as age, gender, disability or success. Linked to these is a firm focus on race in all the meanings that I uncovered. Calls for transformation appear to argue for change in the race composition of the student body and staff in order to correct past wrongs, while also insisting that the objectives of a non-racial society should not be neglected. The most vocal differences appear to arise when there is demand for transformation in terms of including previously ignored knowledge, and the study of regions that do not usually form part of academic and intellectual discourse within South Africa's universities. In the more recent period (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017) there seems to be some acceptance that curriculum change must occur.

Among the study participants, awareness that policy making and implementation is not a simple process in which A leads to B, was clearly lacking. There appears to be an assumption that change – in the context of years of racism and previous exclusion – can be achieved in a few years, even in the face of real inadequacies in school-level education outcomes and low public revenues. Emerging concerns about the effects of sustained sectoral disruption such as the recent 'Fees Must Fall' protests – which seem to emanate from poor consensus seeking and a lack of shared debates – has resulted in efforts to convene meetings to develop some shared notions of transformation (Higher Education Summit, DHET, 2015). This development may hopefully lead to the emergence of a shared platform for rational discussion and the development of some degree of consensus.

Evidence of the continuing refinement of policy (DHET, 2015) points to the need for much more deliberate attention to policy development processes and the inclusion of measures directed at carrying out measured assessments of progress in order to determine future actions. Furthermore, given the role played by the 'ability to pay' in an increasingly market oriented sector, the government should find means of ensuring that costs do not extend the reach of exclusion and detract from the goal of seeking social justice and equality. Future research could consider assessment of the impact of more recent policy in successfully addressing the current inadequacies in achieving the objectives of transformation elaborated in this study.

As this study shows, the period since the enactment of the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) has witnessed dedicated attention to a multiplicity of emerging challenging features, including the complex meanings of transformation. The themes of access, culture change and decolonisation were distilled from the data sources as issues that are the most focussed upon and of greatest concern when transformation is discussed or explored. The glonacal heuristic proved to be a most relevant analytical framework. I allowed for the scrutiny of multiple dimensions of change that beset higher education, offering both opportunity and challenge. Through the framework, I was also able to show that while global influences have impact on higher education worldwide, nations through policy makers and stakeholder contributions can shape their higher education to respond to global and contextual imperatives. It is in deciding emphasis that higher education is tested. Marginson (2005) offers telling reminders to governments that social justice and equity should not be ignored.

The significance of the difficulty posed by transiting to a fully-fledged democracy is well set out by Przeworski (2007; 2011), the cautions he draws attention to are timely for those who believe declaring transformation or including the concept in statute is sufficient. The evidence of the wide variety of meanings of transformation give substance to Przeworski's views that it is vital to do much more analysis and study before loosely utilising a concept. While I have found these analytical tools valuable for my study; both of them make very limited reference to the continent of Africa, I would thus urge greater use of the frameworks to study Africa or the development of similar tools of analysis by future scholars.

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ANNEXURE 1: ETHICS CLEARANCE

Ethics statement:

"The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's *Code of ethics for research and the Policy guidelines for responsible research*"

ANNEXURE 2: APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The Vice Chancellor

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The above subject refers. I am a Phd Student registered in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies of the Universitiy of Pretoria. I am planning to conduct a study on transformation in Higher Education titled: **"Contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa."**

The study aims to explore the contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. The rationale for this study is to explore the pervasive use of this concept and its influence on policy and practice in higher education in South Africa. The research will seek to understand the extent to which policy makers anticipated the impact of legislation on transformation and also to explore whether post-apartheid higher education policy is achieving its stated transformation objectives and lessons learned since the adoption of the 1997 Higher Education Act.

I believe that this research will be of benefit to higher education broadly as well as to individual institutions as it is directed at identifying processes and mechanisms that could be put in place to strengthen policy making as well as implementation of actions directed at achieving transformation.

Transformation appears as a strategic priority in national policy as well as in institutional policy documents. Despite the evident importance of transformation and stated commitments to achieving it, a wide body of research and current national debates suggest that transformation remains an illusive objective worthy of study.

My research design includes conducting interviews with participants who will be willing to participate in this project. The participants will be interviewed for 45 to 60 minutes and their interviews will be recorded.

The purpose of my letter to you is firstly to request your permission to approach participants in your institution in order to interview them and secondly to request relevant documents such as institutional policies on transformation that may be relevant to my study.

Participants will also be informed that the information provided by them will be used solely for research purposes. All data collected will be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use as determined by the policies of the University of Pretoria. Should you have any questions of clarity please contact Mrs Naledi Pandor at naledi.pandor@gmail.com or Nosipho Jaca at sipho.mangi@gmail.com

I look forward to your assistance with this request.

Yours sincerely,

Naledi Pandor
University of Pretoria: Student number: 15351913

Professor MT Sehoole
Dean, Faculty of Education

Signature: ……..

Supervisor's Signature: ……..

VICE CHANCELLOR CONSENT

I …….. hereby give consent to Mrs GNM Pandor to approach participants at my institution in order to interview them and secondly to request relevant documents such as institutional policies on transformation that may be relevant in the research project titled ***"*Contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa*".*** I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to me or my institution. The nature, purpose and objectives of the study, the title of the study as well the details of the researcher were explained to me. My confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed as I understand that I have the choice/option to provide/not to provide my name or to give personal details that could identify me or be traced back to me. There will be no risks to me as a participant in this study.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE: ……

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE: ……..

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE: ……

ANNEXURE 3: LETTERS TO THE PARTICIPANTS

Dear Participant

CONSENT LETTER FOR INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

You are cordially invited to participate in a research project for my Doctoral Education Degree entitled: ***"Contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa."***

The study aims to explore the contested meanings of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. Individual interviews will be conducted for 45 to 60 minutes during a time that will suit you. Your participation in this study is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established. Should you declare yourself willing to participate in an individual interview, confidentiality will be guaranteed and you may decide to withdraw at any stage should you wish not to continue with the interview.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, namely, that you participate in this project willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from this research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the study does not obligate you to participate in follow- up interviews; however, should you decide to participate in follow-up interviews your participation is still voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. The information collected during the interview will only be utilised for research purposes. Please note that all data collected with public funds may be made available for public or scientific use. Furthermore, confidentiality will still be guaranteed.

The research will be conducted in English. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact me or my Supervisor, Professor Chika Sehoole, Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, Tel: +27 (12) 420 2327.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Naledi Pandor
University of Pretoria: Student number: 15351913

Professor MT Sehoole
Dean, Faculty of Education

Signature: ……..

Supervisor's Signature: ……..

PARTICIPANT CONSENT

I …….. hereby give consent to Mrs GNM Pandor to involve me as a participant in the research on ***"The meaning of transformation in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa".*** I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to me. The nature, purpose and objectives of the study, the title of the study as well the details of the researcher were explained to me. My confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed as I will not be required to provide my name or to give any personal details that could identify me or be traced back to me. There will be no risks to me as a participant in this study.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE …….

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE …….

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE: ……..

ANNEXURE 4: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND INTERVIEW DATES

Interviewee participant number	**Designation at the time of the interview (and/or former portfolio relevant to the research)**	**Date of the Interview**
#1	Current Senior public servant	27 March 2017
#2	Former student leader	31 March 2017
#3	Former executive leader in higher education	4 April 2017
#4	Current consultant in higher education policy	5 April 2017
#5	Former Senior public servant	6 April 2017
#6	Current University departmental head	6 April 2017
#7	Former Senior public servant	6 April 2017
#8	Current higher education executive leader	7 April 2017
#9	Current higher education executive leader	11 April 2017
#10	Former Senior public servant	21 May 2017
#11	Former executive leader in higher education	19 June 2017

ANNEXURE 5: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What did the concept transformation mean when used prior to the advent of democracy?

2. Could you describe your expectations of change in higher education after the end of apartheid? Did many stakeholders have similar expectations?

3. Were any of these expectations reflected in post 1994 policy and if so in what way?

4. Which institutions, individuals and organizations shaped and influenced post-apartheid higher education policy?

5. How were these influences reflected in the higher education policies that were adopted by democratic South Africa

6. Did these contribute to advancing transformation?

7. Are there any objectives of the new policies that were not achieved?

8. Access seems to have featured strongly in new higher education policies. Was access achieved?

9. What changes and achievements in post-apartheid higher education reflect success in transformation

10. Why do you characterize these changes as transformation?

11. Are there elements of transformation that have not been achieved?

12. There appears to be contestation as to whether transformation has been achieved in post-apartheid higher education, what do you regard as the reasons for such contestation?

ANNEXURE 6: LIST OF ANALYSED DOCUMENTS

Committee of University Principals (CUP). (1996). Committee of University Principals: Comment on the "*NCHE Discussion Document: A Framework for Transformation".* CUP: Pretoria.

Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2004). South African higher education in the first decade of democracy. Pretoria: CHE.

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