

CHAPTER 2

REVIEWING THE LITERATURE IN SEARCH OF THEORY

PART I: DEBATES ON RACE, RACISM, SEGREGATION, DESEGREGATION AND INTEGRATION.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In providing an overview of the thesis, Chapter 1 has not only focused on the introduction of the inquiry but also on the analysis of the research problem and question. Most importantly, it has briefly highlighted the purpose for carrying out this research project - together with an introduction to the research site and the approach. This chapter has three main parts: the first part places the study within the debates on race and racism; the second section deals with the history of segregation and desegregation in the South African context; and the last section reviews both the national and the international literature on diversity and school desegregation. The current Chapter intends to place this study within the realm of the broader debates on school integration.

2.2 THE CONCEPTUAL BASE

In order to fully understand the issue of integration - and lack thereof - in schools during the segregation period; the apartheid period; and the post-apartheid period, it is important to first understand the contextual meanings of the key concepts used in the study. For this reason, this study is anchored in the exploration of concepts, such as race, segregation, desegregation, integration, diversity, multiculturalism, assimilation, Afro-centricity, Euro-centricity, etc. These concepts are now explained and their

relevance to the study is pointed out.

Although I depart from the standpoint that there is no such thing called ‘race’ (Tobias, 1961: 34) and because this is a socially constructed concept, I do acknowledge that as a social construct race cannot be ignored. Of course, I am also aware of Clough and Burton’s (1995) argument that “inevitably, to research ‘race’ is to construct ‘race’, because the very fact of using the concept makes it alive; yet ignoring it or not using it does not erase it either.” In fact, one may ask, how race can be ignored when it continues to haunt the life of every South African - even in the post-apartheid era.

In their most useful work on the concepts of race and racism, *An Ambulance of the Wrong Colour*, Baldwin-Ragaven *et al*, (1999: 134) maintain that if we accept the compelling evidence that genetically distinct human sub-species do not exist and that ‘race’ is not a valid category in human biology, it can be argued that the use of racial labels and categories in research is “ill-conceived, misleading and divisive.” The authors claim that using nationality to differentiate between groups tends to reinforce the view that geographically isolated - and genetically distinct - human races exist. They further maintain that using racial categories legitimises the process of discrimination and generates a ‘racially’ structured view of society that encourages further discrimination. I am inclined to differ with what the authors suggest - especially because this entails a narrow view of the subject which results from an uncritical application of apartheid terminology. What happened in the education system of South Africa was a result of stratifying society into these categories. I, therefore, cannot study desegregation without referring to this terminology, since our education has a history - and as Phatlane (2006: 31) argues, history is a record of what happened. Against this background, I cannot realistically shy away from such historical concepts in this study.

Klaas has also interrogated the different ways in which race is conceptualised and used in research. He accepts, however, that although many studies acknowledge the controversy of the concept ‘race’ and the categorisation of people, those studies do not suggest alternatives. He further accepts that he, too, also ends up being caught up in

the same circle as other researchers on race because he cannot seem to suggest an alternative terminology to replace the racial denominations of people (Klaas, 2005: 16).

It should be borne in mind that the apartheid regime founded its segregationist practices on differences that were believed to be insuperable. This was a racist belief in the absolute inferiority of all race groups other than Whites - particularly the African sector of the population. Segregation in South African education did not begin in 1953 when the *Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953* was adopted. It had been a feature of educational practice for centuries, since Jan Van Riebeeck and his sailors landed at the Cape after the breaking of the Haarlem (Malherbe, 1977: 44). There is no question that schools and curricula became more formally - and more legally - separate since that date (1953) and race remained an important feature in the division and provision of education in this country (Cross & Chisholm, 1990: 54).

The notion that each population group was entitled to its own schools and other institutions clearly corresponds with the view that each race should have its own separate existence and, therefore, separate education system (Steyn, 1998: 8). Although this was clearly in keeping with the spirit of the *De Lange Report*¹¹, it was accepted and expressed by government thus: “The government finds the principle of freedom of choice for the individual and for the parents in educational matters and in the choice of a career acceptable, but within the framework of the policy that ‘each population group is to have its own schools’” (RSA, 1983: 4). In time, this thinking formed the basis of the policy that sought to segregate the different race groups in all spheres of existence - including education.

Scholars have criticised the apartheid regime’s inconsistent definition of race - whereby whites and coloureds were defined by skin colour, while Natives were defined by their country of origin and Asians by their continent of origin (Manzo, 1992: 173). Although any one of these criteria could have been consistently applied to differentiate the population, it is clear that consistency was not conducive to the requirements of white domination at the time. For instance, the country of origin as the

11. Government set up a commission - with De Lange as its leader - to investigate the provision of education in the RSA in 1981. The Human Sciences Research Council was commissioned to undertake the study. Details of the *De Lange Report* are given in the next chapter.

defining hallmark of race would have split the required common identity among whites, while the continent of origin would have made the classification of coloureds impossible. Similarly, colour alone as a defining factor would have created a single black majority (Manzo, 1992:173).

Closely interwoven with race is racial diversity - which clearly evolved from the concepts of multicultural and anti-racist education. Klaas (2005), on the other hand, analyses the different models of the concept of multicultural education, namely the Conservative Model, the Liberal Model, the Pluralist Model and the Cosmopolitan Model. Each of the models has its advantages and disadvantages in diversified environments, but I tend to argue for the Pluralist Model which - although it does not address structural inequalities - recognises differences. It also encourages different groups to share their culture in the hope of gaining better understanding and more respect for one another.

In his opening address of the Durban National Conference on Racism, the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, argued that “The legacy of racism is so deeply entrenched that no country so far in the world has succeeded to create a non-racial society” (Mbeki, 2000: 5). In fact, Orfield (2004) and Kozol (2005) have found that the US schools are now re-segregating after they had been desegregated for years. For example, Kozol (2005:3), writing about the United States, acknowledges that during the 1960s “tens of thousands of public schools were integrated racially and the gap between black and white achievements narrowed. But the earlier 1990s saw a reversal of the process with nearly absolute apartheid [sic] in thousands schools across the US. Other authors noted similar trends in desegregation and resegregation (Frankenberg, Lee and Orfield, 2003; Orfield, 2004). Orfield points out that schools in the United States are today divided along racial lines, as was the case before the 1950s: “Southern Schools and those in a number of big cities are moving back toward intensified segregation, now based largely on residential segregation in the metropolitan areas” (Orfield, 2004:97). Ironically, schools such as Martin Luther King Secondary in New York, that were founded on multicultural and multiracial principles given King’s own contribution to the eradication of segregation, are now becoming racially segregated (Nkomo & Vandeyar et al, 2007: 11).

In this thesis I am inclined to concur fully with Tierney's conclusions that human populations cannot be separated into discrete categories because genetic combinations have never been stable (Tierney, 1982: 6). In fact, what the Nationalists attempted to achieve through the physical separation of the races in education and in other spheres was impracticable and senseless. Tobias has also argued that there is no scientific basis for such racial classification of human beings - as was done when the Nationalists adopted the *Population Registration Act* in 1950 (Tobias, 1961: 22). Yet, this does not imply that research in the field of race and diversity should be abandoned (Sarup, 1986: 49). Closely analysed, the absence of any biological basis for race does not in any way change the social implications of a belief in race (DoE, 2001:6).

Although the idea of race is not based on scientific truth - as revealed by Tobias above, it remains real in the sense that it affects how we see ourselves and how we see one another (DoE, 2001: 7). Speaking at the International Comparative Conference on Educational Opportunities - the Brown Conference - in 2004 in South Africa, Professor Hans Visser emphasised the importance of continuing to interrogate the phenomenon of race when he argued that "When we speak about race, we can get the young generation to deal with race." Visser's idea is that which Hunter calls the "Biology of liberation" which we must teach in our schools where learners can tackle the concept of 'race' to prove that there is no such thing as 'race' (Hunter *et al*, 1983: 18).

Having dealt with the concepts of race and racism, it would not be out of place to very briefly refer to the concepts of segregation, desegregation and integration - as used in the context of this study. To begin with, one may argue that segregation refers to the separation of the different race groups in South Africa in terms of education and other areas of social interaction. From the historical literature referred to in this study, an attempt was made to show that this separation of the races is as old as the Dutch settlement at the Cape and that it continued during the period of British colonisation until well into the mid-twentieth century - when it was displaced by apartheid as official government policy (Beinart and Dubow, 1995).

I have also stated that in the earlier period such segregation was not based on race, but on class (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005). Since 1948, however, apartheid, which replaced segregation, was based on race - as defined in the *Population Registration*

Act, Act No 30 of 1950. Since then, race was a hallmark of the classification of persons in South Africa until 1994 when developments - that were welcomed internationally as the “miracle of the 1990s” - changed this approach to human existence. However, my findings confirm Seekings and Natrass’ argument that since 1994 class has emerged as a means of discrimination. Although it does not totally replace race as a criterion for segregation, it is a form of exclusion and, therefore, also serves as the basis of inequality in the post-1994 South Africa (Seekings & Natrass, 2005).

This observation clearly suggests that in spite of all efforts at desegregation there are still pockets of discrimination which, although not based on race - as was the case in the pre-1994 period – are, nevertheless, still prevalent and are now based on class and other mechanisms of polarisation. To a certain extent this kind of segregation explains the persistence of the negative attitudes of different race groups towards one another - despite deliberate government attempts to forge a non-racial society, using school integration as one of the mechanisms.

A desegregated school in this context refers to a school that enrolls learners and employs educators and staff from different racial backgrounds and other identities, such as class and religion. To reiterate the point mentioned earlier, in the *Population Registration Act, Act No 30 of 1950*, the apartheid government of South Africa divided people in terms of their physical characteristics, namely whites, blacks, coloureds and Indians. These classifications are used in this study only to demonstrate their actual impact on the social dynamics of the school environment. South Africans are presently classified as blacks and whites. ‘Blacks’ are all persons who are not classified as whites. They include Africans, coloureds and Indians (Nkomo, 1990: 308). The term, ‘African’, is generally used to denote people of black African descent who were grouped - through the state policy - into varying territorial units within the borders of South Africa (Van Warmelo, 1930: 7). To a larger extent, the concept, African, still denotes the black people of African descent - although there are some debates on who is really African in South Africa.

Recently, the political and social consciousness of the oppressed classes - together with some whites who have always fought against apartheid and those who despise it even though they could not fight it in South Africa - have produced a self-definition which

is descriptive of their desire to unite in the common project of dismantling apartheid (Nkomo, 1990: 2). There are some white people who have never associated themselves with Europe - who either fought against apartheid or did not support it – who, also, call themselves Africans. Another category of white people – who, although they supported apartheid - came to realise how bad it was for South Africa. They also associate with Africa now more than they do with Europe. It is, therefore, too narrow to regard all white South Africans as racists. One should also not forget about some racist black South Africans.

In *The Dictionary of Psychology*, Corsini defines integration as the unification of parts into a totality - which is the developmental process in which separate drives, experiences, abilities, values and personality characteristics are gradually brought together into an organised whole (Corsini, 2002: 493). School integration means the incorporation of different ethnic/racial groups of learners in the same classes in a school (Corsini, 2002: 866). It includes the use of teaching content from diverse groups when dealing with concepts and skills in an effort to help learners understand how knowledge in the various disciplines is constructed. This will go a long way in helping learners develop positive intergroup attitudes and behaviour. In time, this will foster the development of an equality of status among learners in schools (Banks, 2001; Irvine, 2003). Closely analysed, there seems to be nothing new incorporated into the definition of the concepts of diversity education, school integration and citizenship education - which was, otherwise, lacking in multicultural education. Thus, whatever one chooses to call it, the fact of the matter is that in a plural society with many cultures - such as South Africa, the quest to promote only one way of doing things will remain problematic and suspect.

While the changes that have taken place in schools and their restructuring in post-1994 South Africa are commendable, given the legacy of apartheid education it is evident that much still needs to be achieved. In fact, current research on diversity and racial integration (Carrim, 1998; Vally & Dalamba, 1999; Zafar, 1999) - which has tracked change in desegregated schools - shows minimal changes in the practices and cultures of such schools as well as the absence of coordinated programmes to address issues of diversity and inequality (McKinney, 2005:4). This lends credence to the view that the more things change the more they stay the same.

On the issue of legislation, a timely reminder is provided by Orfield (2004) who argues that “announcing a policy does not mean the policy is realised. Legislators often act as if the enactment of a law or the issuance of a regulation or the statement of a leader actually produces the intended change.” Orfield suggests that attention needs to be paid to conditions that will enable the successful implementation of policies. Such conditions should be closely studied and delineated in order to render policies symbolic – which, then, calls for closer attention to what practices schools adopt.

Difference in terms of age, gender, language, sexual orientation, colour, capabilities and disabilities, race, ethnicity, culture and social class (Banks: 2001: 45; Irvine, 2003: 5) characterise diversity in desegregated schools. Another concept that merits attention is multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is not assimilation - as is often thought to be the case. It is a philosophy and practice that allows groups who interact to discover who they are through a critical and often complex examination of their own and others’ cultures. As Collins puts it (2004, 17), it arose in the US as a reaction against *Euro-centrism* and *Afro-centrism*. In the beginning, America’s reaction towards the minorities in ‘their’ country was *assimilation*, which disregarded and ignored the ethnicity, gender, class and religion of the minorities and advocated the belief of a “one America” and everybody else had to conform to what Collins refers to as a “White, Anglo Saxon, Protestant and male view of the world” (Collins, 2004: 19).

In education, multiculturalism would mean that the way subjects - especially in the humanities - are taught in school curricula should include the contributions to knowledge of minorities, i.e., what other researchers call ‘people of colour’. There is a cultural reality - which results from diverse groups interacting in a variety of equal and unequal relationships over generations - which cannot be ignored even when there is deliberate attempt to do so. Each culture is influenced by other cultures and a new culture comes into being. Admittedly, ‘multi’ means many and, therefore, multicultural means many cultures. Collins (2004: 18) maintains that the concept lost popularity in the US because it became misconstrued as Afro-centricity. Multiculturalism was examined as a reaction to Euro-centrism which accepted the European way of doing things as absolute. This is also referred to as the theory of the ‘melting pot’ - also

known as *assimilation* or *Americanisation* where blacks, Native Americans, Italians, Jews, Japanese and Poles would, essentially, ‘melt’ into the American ‘pot’. According to this theory, being American meant accepting the values of Western Europe; the capitalist way of life; and the Protestant work ethic. This included the speaking of the English language (Collins, 2004: 19).

Assimilation, on the other hand, involves the process of absorbing the social and cultural values of the people involved (Collins, 2004: 16). However, true assimilation cannot occur unless a person has already gained an understanding of his own culture. It is, therefore, important for everyone to know themselves first before they can even think of assimilation into another culture. In America, assimilation meant the ‘Americanisation’ of the incoming minorities and of the African-Americans. In South Africa, a similar experiment was attempted in the 1820s when efforts were made to Anglicize the Cape by encouraging and supporting British settlers (Malherbe, 1977: 44).

The Afrikaner Nationalists in South Africa were against this when they advocated self-determination and the development of their own language, Afrikaans. Surprisingly, in 1976 they wanted Afrikaans to be forced on the African people who also had their own languages. The theory of the melting pot - as Collins suggests - continued to dominate American public education until the 1970s. Afro-centricity emphasized the African-American way of being; the African experience; and generally suggested that Western culture was inferior to ancient African cultures - because its advocates wanted to contest the dominance of Euro-centrism (Collins, 2004, 18).

Stanford University educators have amalgamated the concepts of desegregation, assimilation, integration and multicultural education and blended a new concept - diversity. Conceptualising the concept, *diversity*, is done in this study by building on the work of Stanford University educators who ‘divide’ diversity into three dimensions: structural diversity; diversity related initiatives; and diverse interactions. *Structural diversity* refers to the numerical and proportional representation of learners from different racial/ethnic groups in the school (Hurtando *et al.* 1998, 1999) - which

Nkomo *et al* (2004) refer to as “desegregation” in the South African context. This issue of racial diversity has been taken a step further by the *South African Schools Act, Act No 84 of 1996* where the preamble makes explicit its intentions to combat racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination and racial intolerance (Section 5.3 [c], RSA, 1996 [2]; SASA, S5.1-5). The significance of this legislation lies in its effort to make public education accessible by creating only two categories of schools - namely, public schools and independent schools - where none is based on race.

The second dimension - *diversity related initiatives* - refers to cultural awareness workshops and ethnic studies in learning areas that occur on school campuses which would, then, touch on multicultural education. The third component would be *diverse interactions*, which refer to learners’ exchanges with other learners from racial and ethnical backgrounds different to their own. The question that remains is: “What are the learners exchanging?”

One cannot divorce the three dimensions of diversity from one another. Demographic shifts/changes in the structural diversity of schools frequently provide the stimulus for diversity-related initiatives (Chang, 1999). In fact, learners are most frequently exposed to diverse information and ideas through their interactions with other learners who are different from themselves. Although each dimension of diversity can confer significant positive effects on educational outcomes, the impact of each is believed to be enhanced by the presence of the other dimensions (Chang, 1999; Gurin, 1999; Hurtando *et al.*, 1998, 1999).

Although diversity encompasses ‘difference’, it should not necessarily emphasise difference (Dibble, 2001; 2). In the commonality and difference of people, how can a common nationhood be forged? A diverse entity includes - amongst other things - difference in terms of race, gender, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, colour, disability, and even academic performance. The challenge in a school with diverse learners would, therefore, be to engender a common national identity that accommodates diversity and also encourages self-determination (Banks, 2004: 48).

A school which enrolls diverse learners in terms of race and colour - in South Africa - is desegregated. Desegregation is the putting together of learners from different racial

backgrounds in the same school. It deals, basically, with demographics. In the South African context desegregation is, mainly, interested in the quantitative elements of integration - namely, how many black, white, Indian or coloured learners there are in a school. It does not go further to find out what matters when those learners are in close proximity to one another. Vally and Dalamba (1999) found that sometimes this proximity was very problematic in some schools, especially in the former Afrikaans-only schools where learners would be involved in racial conflicts. My investigation was out to explore the experiences of learners in a former Afrikaans-only school - which seemed to deviate from the 'norm' that the Vally and Dalamba (1999) study had already established, i.e., *the resistance that these schools had against school integration*.

The desegregation of schooling in America was aimed at improving the school performance of black children (Shujaar, 1996: 54). In relatively affluent urban black communities as well as relatively poor ones, black children lagged behind their white peers, and in both cases desegregation was intended to close the performance gap (Ogbu, 1999:645; Tierney: 1982: 98). In education, desegregation is a process that removes legal and other formal barriers to access educational opportunities. Research proves that desegregation did not really close that gap in America (Ogbu, 1999:648). Research conducted by Orfield seems to contradict the findings of Ogbu, because it affirms that the gap "was closed" (Orfield, 2004).

A review of the literature on the subject of race, racism, segregation and desegregation clearly reveals that the concept of race which is often associated with conflict is still a contentious issue - even in the post-apartheid era. For instance, 'race' as a concept often arouses anger and guilt (Blum, 1998: 860; Cole, 1998: 37; Carrim, 1998: 301; Kailin, 1999: 724, Neisler, 1999: 318, Reardon, 1998: 421; Shujaar, 1996: 73; Spencer, 1998: 25; Sheehy, 1998: 6). Closely analysed, it can be seen that South Africa currently faces the same challenges that societies elsewhere in the world have had to deal with in terms of confronting their own histories of race relations. Most of the literature from North America concerns itself with the integration of minorities and immigrants into the mainstream, which makes education concentrate on cultural, economic and political equity (Banks, 1994: 123). The challenge that the headmasters and the SMTs of schools in these countries are facing is to allay the fears of the

minority and mitigate the arrogance of the majority (Banks, 2004: 48; Chikane, 2003: 1).

In Europe the difficult task is to sensitise the majority to accept difference; to suppress xenophobia; and to embrace multicultural education - instead of what Moodley calls “making Turks Germans” (Adam and Moodley, 1993: 160). This is not, fundamentally, different from the US though. For example, in his analysis of the concepts of race, racism and racialism, Tierney shows the extent to which racism persists as a feature of society - both at the level of personal feeling and personal structures (Tierney, 1982:5). Admittedly, Tierney’s research is somewhat dated, but in spite of its focus on American society, there can be no doubt that his conclusion that there were tendencies within the American education system that promoted ways of thinking that rendered racism and racialism more likely to continue remains valid and applicable to the post-apartheid South African situation - as the next section of the chapter will demonstrate.

PART II: THE HISTORY OF SEGREGATION AND DESEGREGATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.3 THE ORIGINS AND FORMS OF RACIAL SEGREGATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION

Engelhart has argued rather persuasively that - in an ethnographic case study research with historical educational research characteristics - the researcher should have an interest in, and knowledge of, not only his/her specific topic, but also the general history of education (Engelhart, 1972:455). For this reason, a brief overview of the education system in South Africa is given below with particular attention being paid to the pre-apartheid, apartheid and post-apartheid segregation and desegregation. These form the focus of this section of Chapter 2.

2.3.1 Education in the pre-apartheid period

Available historical literature suggests that the forms of racial segregation and apartheid which the National Party began to implement in 1948 are as old as the Dutch settlement at the Cape (Giliomee and Schlemmer, 1993). Although the word 'apartheid' might have been new in the late 1940s, the idea which it was intended to express was certainly not as the separation of whites from blacks was a goal which had been pursued at many stages of the encounter between Europeans and Africans (Keto, 1990:22; Lacour-Gayet, 1991:295; Phatlane, 1998:1).

According to Malherbe (1925:28), the first school in South Africa was established at the Cape in 1658 under the auspices of the Dutch East India Company. Of particular relevance to this study is the fact that of the first 17 learners ever to be enrolled at this school, 12 were whites, one was a Hottentot and four were the children of both local and enslaved Africans (Horrel, 1963:27). From the given racial composition of the school, it stands to reason that an individual's skin colour was not a determining factor for admission to the school. Thus, colour prejudice - which came to characterise a later period - was non-existent during the early days of formal schooling in South Africa (Malherbe, 1925:28). The Dutch settlers brought with them to the Cape a tradition of religious education in terms of which the church provided an authoritarian framework within which education and other social services developed (Behr, 1988:11). As a result, the education that was provided in South Africa - albeit on a small scale - was mainly religious and under the direction of the Dutch Reformed Church (Behr, 1988:11; Keto, 1990: 27). It is not surprising that the Dutch Reformed Church soon objected to an arrangement whereby free and 'non-free' children were lumped together for education in the same school (Jeeves, 1982:138). The fact that the religious and civil affairs of society were closely connected during this early period explains why the church played such a pivotal role in matters affecting education at the time.

South Africa was not unique in this regard. With the exception of Prussia, Europe – too - had to wait almost until the 20th century for the establishment of a fully state-controlled education system which was free from church influences (Tunmer,

1982:82). Although the church, itself, was divided at the Reformation, the notion that education should be administered by the church persisted until well into the 20th century (Behr, 1988:11). Perhaps, with the wisdom of hindsight, it is clear that the subsequent ideology of apartheid grew out of this early tradition of no equality between people of different social backgrounds - in terms of which discrimination was, however, based not only on racial lines but also on class lines (Terreblanche, 2002; Seekings and Natrass, 2005).

As a consequence of the church's misgivings and objections to these early tendencies of school integration, South African children were schooled in segregated environments and every level of schooling was cast in a racial mould in terms of “budget, structures, staff and pupils in schools, curriculum and ethos” (Carrim, 1998: 2). It is not surprising that separate schooling systems were launched in South Africa in 1663, whereby formal schooling co-existed with traditional educational practices of indigenous societies (Dolby, 2001: 19; Keto, 1990: 23). Thus, the subsequent establishment of the school for white children and the school for coloured children in subsequent years may be said to have marked the beginning of racialisation in schooling which then displaced class as a hallmark of segregation and discrimination in school and social life (Malherbe, 1925: 28). This meant that the poor and the rich white children were placed in the same school.

The official policy of all governments at the Cape until the mid-19th century was, essentially, concentrated on keeping the races as far apart as possible. However, when Sir George Grey arrived as High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape in 1854, he initiated a new policy of gradual political and economic integration of the white and the black races. Sir George Grey’s move was, partly, the reason for the Great Trek¹² which was - in essence - a revolt against the British policy of placing whites and blacks on an equal footing.

With the discovery of diamonds and gold in the second half of the 19th century, an industrial revolution was launched in South Africa whereby a rural community of both blacks and whites was transformed into an urbanised one. These new

12. The mass exodus of Afrikaners (Voortrekkers) in the 1830s from the British ruled Cape Colony into the interior of what is now South Africa.

developments brought in their wake a state of political turbulence which – eventually - led to the outbreak of the South African war at the turn of the century (Marks & Rathbone, 1982; Van Onselen, 1982; Worden, 1994). At the conclusion of this war - and in terms of the *South Africa Act of 1909* - the former two British colonies of the Cape and Natal and the two Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were brought together as provinces of what, eventually, became the Union of South Africa.

Between the years 1910 to 1948 a great deal has been written about the ideological and political content of the curriculum objectives. These objectives were, seemingly, humanitarian and disinterested in the colonial context. There was much evidence of indigenous resistance to such an attempt to impose an ‘adapted’ form of education on African rural communities. It would be accompanied by resistance (Kallaway, 1984: 2-3) from the time of the Phelps–Stokes Commission in the 1920s to the run-up to independence in British Africa (Murray, 1980, King, 1974; Kallaway, 2002).

Kallaway describes this period as a period during which the history of African education in South Africa from colonial times to the apartheid era had much in common with the history of colonial and post-colonial education in Africa. According to him, in both contexts there was a constant emphasis on the need for special attention to be given to the education of rural peoples and the orientation of the curriculum to the needs of rural societies (Kallaway, 2002). As with colonial, missionary education in Africa, the early attempts at ‘adapted education’ in South Africa - pioneered by C.T. Loram and the Natal Native Education Department - were not particularly successful. They had not changed the nature of education from formal/academic education to vocational education (Murray, 1980). One of the major reasons for this was that any form of technical education - however modest – such as wagon-building, leather-work, carpentry or masonry in the old mission days, or training to be a motor mechanic, electrician, plumber, or computer operator in recent times, required expensive workshops and laboratories which were not available for the underprivileged sector of the population (Kallaway, 2002) who were - in most cases - black.

2.3.2 Education during apartheid (Bantu education)

In May 1948 the National Party won a general election with ‘apartheid’ as its key election policy. After this date the Nationalist leadership soon recognised that blacks were not only pressing for total integration but were also aspiring for more political rights. Total integration would be irresistible unless a new orientation was given to the political structure of the country as a whole. Hence, the decision to extend the traditional segregation policy of the pre-1948 period to that of apartheid where blacks surrendered all claims to what came to be known as ‘white South Africa’ in return for greater autonomy in their erstwhile reserves-cum-homelands (Phatlane, 1998). Indeed, this policy of racial separation was developed and brought to fruition by Dr H. F. Verwoerd in his capacity as Minister of the, then, Department of Native Affairs (1950-1958) and as Prime Minister (1958-1966). Whatever the rhetoric of Bantu education was regarding a separate education for the development of Africans in their ‘own’ rural areas, the practical reality never reflected this shift. Although whites and blacks had very different educational experiences under apartheid, those differences were dictated by the unequal allocation of resources to the various racially and geographically defined sections of the system rather than through the differences imposed by varieties of curricula. According to Kallaway (2002), the reason for this lack of curriculum change - in spite of the spirited statements by Verwoerd and others to the contrary - has not yet been adequately explained. At the very least, the secondary school curriculum remained formally the same for all. It soon became clear that this was part and parcel of the apartheid policy which was designed - through education - to confine and isolate the Black people from the economic activities of the country.

In the light of the foregoing background, it stands to reason that apartheid and the separation of black and white children - in all spheres of social encounters - was not a unique set of ideas that had sprung ‘full blown’ out of the heads of Afrikaner Nationalists in 1948, but entailed practices that were woven over a long period of time. What the Nationalists did after taking control of the state apparatus was to institutionalise such race separatism and, thereby, enforce it with the aid of legislation. The key laws underpinning apartheid that were introduced by the National party were:

- The *Population Registration Act, Act No 30 of 1950* which classified all the people of South Africa in terms of race upon birth;
- The *Group Areas Act, Act No 41 of 1950* which racially divided the residential areas where people lived;
- The *Separate Amenities Act, Act No 49 of 1953* which racially segregated public amenities such as parks;
- The *Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953* which determined the Education of all indigenous black people of South Africa; and
- The *Extension of University Education Act, Act No 45 of 1959* which also extended racial segregation in education to the higher education level.

All these Acts perpetuated apartheid and racial segregation in different ways. For example, in 1949 - barely a year after assuming office, the Nationalists set up a Commission on Native (Black) Education under the chairmanship of Dr W W M Eiselen. The commission had very significant terms of reference. Of particular relevance to this thesis was the commission's mandate to formulate the principles and aims of education for "Natives" as an independent race (Behr, 1988: 32). In 1951 the Eiselen Commission presented a report which proved to be the blueprint for Bantu Education for the next four decades.

Integration - as understood in the present study - was, thus, no longer a dream in the country's public schools. In fact, the Eiselen commission also paved the way for the eventual abolition of the missionary influence which the Nationalist Government regarded as "nothing less than an instrument in the hands of liberalism.... native education has achieved nothing but the destruction of Bantu culture... nothing beyond succeeding in making the Native an imitation Westerner" (M C Botha, quoted by Malherbe, 1977:545-546). While in no way lacking in appreciation of their own culture, it was understandable why many black people regarded this sudden solicitude on the part of the Nationalist government about their cultural development with suspicion. It soon became very clear that this concern with African culture was part and parcel of the apartheid policy which was designed - through education - to confine and isolate them from the broad stream of South Africa's socio-economic life.

Thus, beginning with the premise that black and white education should be different - primarily because the race groups were perceived to be inherently different and distinctive in many respects - the Commission set the tone for a segregated education system in South Africa for the next four decades. The advent of apartheid reinforced the idea of a separate curriculum which would promote distinct racial identities for Africans (Kallaway, 2002). In terms of the *Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953* which followed the commission's major recommendations, it became law that children belonging to different race groups in South Africa could neither be taught in integrated classes nor attend the same schools. With the exception of a few remaining mission-run institutions which continued to maintain some form of racial integration of learners in so-called multiracial schools - with which the apartheid government later interfered - all schools conformed (Christie, 1990).

On the basis of recommendations by the HSRC (De Lange Commission) in 1981, and *The Education Renewal Strategy* (1991), vocational guidance and technical education were extended at both the secondary and tertiary level - as opposed to the previous primary school only set up. Although the success of these initiatives was uneven (Bot, 1988), the effort to change the direction of policy was significant (Kallaway, 2002). The previous assumptions - that vocational education and training for blacks was either to be discouraged as it posed a threat to the monopoly of skills for whites or that blacks were only to be trained for skilled work in the 'homeland' areas - were both abandoned as the issue of skills shortage entered into the centre of the debate about economic growth (Chisholm, 1984: 387-409). Big business and the state - along with a range of other pressure groups - applauded these changes as a significant break with the past practices of labour market racial discrimination and a fundamental step towards addressing human resource development problems in South Africa (Kallaway, 2002).

The responses from anti-apartheid groups and educationalists to National Party initiatives to reform education - predicated on the vision of a new education constructed by the Peoples' Education Movement of the 1980s - was distilled in the report of the *National Education Policy Investigation* (NEPI, 1993a) in 1993. The investigation drew on the skills and experience of a variety of researchers who were

keen to provide a radical vision of educational change - in keeping with the social, democratic principles that had been a fundamental feature of both the internal and external wings of the liberation movements (Kallaway, 2002).

For instance, in explaining the rationale for such a racialised approach to education at the time, Verwoerd was very unequivocal about the purpose of African education when he declared in the House of Assembly:

The school must equip the Bantu¹³ to meet the demands which the economic life in South Africa will impose on him. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his community, however, all doors are open... Until now, he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze....” (UG, House of Assembly Debates, 1953:3576-3586 as quoted by Carrim, 1992).

Verwoerd’s declaration was contrary to the fact that due to economic reasons only 37% of black people actually lived within their own communities or in the homelands where supposedly “all the doors would be open.” In 1959 such racial segregation in education was extended to universities as spelt out by M D C de wet Nel who, as Minister of Bantu Education, expressed the concern that “If the non-Whites are allowed to enter the universities, most of the students in the near future will be non-white, with full control.... as long as the National Party remains in power, it will strive for university apartheid” (The Argus, 1959: March 10). With the knowledge that, like the white students, black students were also capable, De wet Nel wanted to prevent black students from accessing the same university education as their white counterparts. Striving for university apartheid implied keeping black students out of the white universities.

With views, such as the foregoing, expressed as they were at such a high level of government, it stands to reason that it would have been extreme optimism to expect the National Party Government to voluntarily desegregate schools and, therefore, encourage integration without any form of pressure being brought to bear on the very political structure of society. There is no doubt that among the reasons for the separation of different race groups in education was the fact that the Nationalist

13. A term used to refer to black people of African origin - the indigenous people of South Africa.

Government was acutely aware that integration or keeping the children together in the same school would result in these children learning to appreciate each other as human beings through playing in the same school teams and, thereby, laying the foundation for a common loyalty as South Africans (Malherbe, 1977:39). This would pose a serious threat to apartheid, itself, and the only way it could possibly be avoided - according to the apartheid logic - was to keep the races apart. Hence, the Broederbond's¹⁴ conviction that, "by separation, the future of Nationalist policies would be assured" (Malherbe, 1977:47).

As a result of all these developments the education system in South Africa consisted of a number of separate sub-systems based, largely, on race. For example, among other outcomes of the *Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953* was the removal of African education from provincial control to state control while - in terms of legislation adopted in 1963 and 1965 - both coloured and Indian education, respectively, were also placed under the control of the central government (Tunmer, 1982: 50). The four provincial departments of education that catered for the white population, coloured population, Indian population and blacks in the so-called white areas, all fell under the control of the National Department of Education and Culture (Steyn *et al*, 1998:8).

In addition to these, however, there were nine - later ten - other departments of education and culture in the 'homelands' - six self-governing and four 'independent'. Besides advocating that different racial groups should have different schooling systems with different curricula, syllabi and media of instruction (Nkomo, 1990: 292-5), Bantu Education also ensured a lack of contact between blacks and whites while at the same time it provided what had been perceived in black liberation circles as education for perpetual subordination (Behr, 1988: 37). Part of the reason for this separation of the races in education was the erroneous perception embodied in the so-called Christian National Education (CNE) that equality between blacks and whites was a threat to the very existence of European civilisation and culture (Maylam, 1986: 170; Cross *et al*, 1998a: 185).

14. A secret organization at the heart of apartheid created to advance Afrikanerdom and apartheid ideology and systems.

In this way Bantu education laid a firm foundation for the present racial prejudice that makes integration in schools such a problem - as revealed by recent research into the subject (Carrim, 1998; Vally & Dalamba, 1999). For practical reasons, the exclusiveness of the school served to generate stereotype attitudes with regard to black-white relationships - as witnessed during the recent Babeile¹⁵ crisis. The fact that young people - at the prime of their lives – were, by law, deprived of the normal opportunities of rubbing shoulders with their peers across the racial divide tended to make them less adaptable in meeting the changed circumstances after the formal ending of apartheid in 1994.

It is natural that when children come to school for the first time they bring with them initial feelings of social distance, prejudice and antipathy towards other race groups and also towards other children, in general. These attitudes are, usually, a reflection of the attitudes prevailing in - and around - their home environment. However, by the time they reach Grade 6, the school would have had a marked effect upon whatever attitudes and stereotypes they might have brought from home. Therefore, in a segregated school system the children remained with these attitudes and stereotypes throughout their school lives which would only prove detrimental in the post-1994 era.

The question of the medium of instruction - which had, all along, been a sensitive matter in South African history - soon came into prominence in the mid 1970s when attempts were made to enforce the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in certain school subjects for Africans. This is not surprising if cognisance is taken of the pronouncement made as early as 1942 by J G Strijdom, the former leader of the Transvaal Nationalists and later Prime Minister, that “Every Afrikaner who is worthy of the name cherishes the ideal that South Africa will ultimately only have one language and that language must be Afrikaans” (Malherbe, 1977: 72). Although this idea is more about domination than education, it affected education in the sense that it led to the 1976 Soweto¹⁶ uprisings, which later served as a landmark event in the

15. The name of an African boy who attended a former white school and stabbed a white boy with a pair of scissors. This incident attracted wide media coverage.

16. 1976 was the year during which the youth of South Africa took up arms against the apartheid government for wanting to introduce teaching in Afrikaans throughout the African schools. The youth

history of youth resistance against Bantu education. After 1976, unrest in black education became the feature of student life until well into the 1990s. The so-called bush universities were the driving force behind student activism (Nkomo, 1984; Sehoole, 2005 33). While the black people did not seem to lack enthusiasm to maintain their own culture and to develop the use of their own language, they felt the necessity of having English as an official language to serve as an open window to the world beyond. Most of them still retain this idea - even to this day (The Star, SABC News) - where, for economic reasons, parents insist that their children be taught in English rather than in their indigenous languages.

No wonder Mncwabe sees apartheid and the ruthlessness with which it was implemented - particularly in the field of education by means of Bantu education - not only as a recipe for social and economic disaster, but also as the root cause of the crisis in education - even in the period beyond apartheid (Mncwabe, 1990:17).

The De Lange Report (1981) was among some of the initial efforts towards reforming the apartheid education system. It was released in 1981 following an investigation by the Human Sciences Research Council which was commissioned by government to report on the provision of education in South Africa. This committee presented very significant findings and recommendations. Of particular interest to this study was the fact that for the first time - since the promulgation of *The Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953* - there was, now, a general recognition that equal opportunities and standards for education for all the people of South Africa - without distinction related to race, sex, colour or creed - would be the concern of the state. Perhaps even more importantly was the recognition of both the commonality and the diversity in people's religious and cultural ways of life (The De Lange Report [HSRC, 1981:33]).

Closely analysed, however, this report was still functional to race separatism in education because the principles it enunciated still emphasised segregation by proposing that each population group should have its own schools and education authority. Hence, the 1983 White Paper - which followed this report - further

in a township known as Soweto took the lead. Most of them were arrested while many lost their lives on 16 June 1976. The day is commemorated in South Africa today as Youth Day.

emphasised that the education departments for each population group should do justice to the right of that group to self-determination (RSA [2], 1983:4). To all intents and purposes what the *De Lange Report* of 1981 and the subsequent White Paper of 1983 could achieve was, merely, to confirm the continuation of racial segregation in education until well into the 1990s.

2.3.3 The post-apartheid desegregation policies and practices

The year 1990 may be said to be a watershed in the history of education in South Africa, in general, and of desegregation, in particular. This was the year in which - for the very first time - the Nationalist government officially announced the possibility of white schools enrolling learners from race groups other than from whites, especially black learners. The historic announcement was made by Piet Clase, the Minister of Education and Culture at the time. The announcement was made in 1990 and it was not surprising - in the light of the political developments in the country since the State President, F. W. de Klerk, made his landmark pronouncement on apartheid and racism by releasing Nelson Mandela and unbanning political parties in February 1990 (Carrim, 1998:7).

Indeed, Clase's announcement offered white schools the freedom to choose from three options directed towards desegregation. In terms of Model A, the white state schools could choose to close down as state schools and re-open as private schools. Model B allowed such schools to remain state schools, but with an open admissions policy. And finally, Model C gave white schools the option to convert into semi-private and semi-state schools in terms of which staff salaries would be the responsibility of the state while all other expenses incurred by such schools would be borne by the school community.

A close analysis of Clase's announcement, however, shows - without a doubt - that all three models prompted all white schools to enrol black learners where the concept 'black' meant 'other than white' - a term which also included the coloured and the Indian communities. It would be recalled that in the strictest racist terminology of exclusion - from park benches to beaches - the concept 'black' meant 'non-European' (Lacour-Gayet, 1991:294). It should be noted that though white schools were legally

allowed to enrol black learners, there were still conditions attached to such a move. For example, all schools were to ensure that - amongst others -

- 51% of the school learner population remained white.
- the cultural ethos of the school remained white.
- the school had no obligation to shoulder the financial burden of incoming black learners.
- schools were under no obligation to provide any support systems and special programmes to facilitate and ease the adaptation of black learners to the new environment (Carrim, 1998: 2).

Perhaps even more important was the provision for white parents to remove their children from a desegregating school to a non-desegregating school at the state's expense (Steyn, 1998: 5; Carrim, 1998: 7). Precisely because of such a concession, it may be argued that there was little commitment on the part of the state to facilitate integration. Scholars have argued that what the Nationalist officials were trying to do during this early period was to ease political tensions both in social life and in education by reforming those aspects of apartheid that were not so crucial to white supremacy in South Africa. The desegregation of schools was probably one such an effort. Hence, my argument that Clase's major policy pronouncements - though framed within the reformist rhetoric of the time - were not in conflict with the basic tenets of apartheid. Thus, rather than transform the system from its very foundations, the Clase announcement merely sought to "assimilate black learners into an existing structure" (Le Roux, 1993: 180).

A view that Clase's policy changes did not go far enough - and did little more than just prick the apartheid skin - finds credence here. Unlike Clase, perhaps a significant shift from the traditional apartheid education came with the *Curriculum Model for South Africa* and the *Education Renewal Strategy* (DoE, 1991a: 18 & 32). In terms of these initiatives, race ceased to be a hallmark of differentiation in terms of admission to schools.

These developments did not go unchallenged from conservative white constituencies

which viewed them as a threat to their privileged position (National Education Coordinating Committee, 1992: 32). In spite of such intense opposition, integration was insisted upon and the government resolved to forge ahead with non-racialism in schools (Cross *et al.*, 1998b: 5) so much so, that by 1992 almost all white schools were changed to the Model C option described above, and they remained as such until 1996 when the *South African Schools Act* was adopted (Carrim, 1998: 8). The adoption of SASA abolished all Model C school types and provided for only two types of schools in South Africa – namely, public schools and independent schools. All public schools would be state owned and salaries of staff would be paid by the state. Schools were further divided into categories depending on their resources and the community they were supposed to serve.

A document - which was referred to as the *Norms and Standards for School Funding* - was produced after this process. This document, served to categorise schools into poor schools and the ‘not so poor’, Section 21 and Non-Section 21 schools. The Section 21 schools were schools which had the capacity to professionally spend money which was awarded to them by the Department of Education. The problem which arose after this process was under funding of some schools which were wrongly categorised, e.g. A school in a so called rich suburb would be given less money using the category of the community around the school, and not using the community inside the school. After the desegregation of schooling in South Africa, schools which originally belonged to white communities were also required to cater for learners from black communities. Some of these learners were bussed into these schools from townships. The demographics and the financial status of those schools also changed in the process.

After the official abolition of racial segregation in 1994 and the official abolition of race-based schooling by the *South African Schools Act of 1996*, the former white schools came under severe pressure to transform from segregation to desegregation and then to integration. Thus, the process and success of racial integration in schools had major relevance for the official policy agenda (Klaas, 2004: 35). According to the research conducted by Carrim in 1992, schools had many racial problems and regarded the incoming students as the ‘others’. The reaction of the schools towards the incoming learners was assimilationist in nature (Soudien, 2004:89). The incoming

learners were expected to conform to the host culture of the school. According to Vally and Dalamba, by 1999 this racial integration had not been successful. Carrim's 1996 study - which was a follow-up to the 1992 one - found a shift in the way the teachers approached the learners. The schools had now - as Carrim puts it - moved from their assimilationist approach to a more multicultural way of teaching and existence. This study aims to take the baton further by documenting the progress made in the movement from the assimilationist nature to the more multicultural way of teaching as noted by Carrim (1996).

Research that was carried out in the early nineteen nineties in South African desegregated schools show that it was problematic for learners from different racial groups to attend same schools, or at least if they did, the schools were characterised by racial conflicts. As years go by, there is a change of attitude that is documented which moves from the rigid separatism to a more acceptable interaction. In his parliamentary speech in support of the budget for Public Works, Reverend Chikane confirmed the progress made in South Africa in general when he said:

It is a long way we travelled since 1994, we moved from the white male dominated empire to the Department that represents all the tapestry of all the people in South Africa. We changed the face of nepotism to that of all young and vibrant community with women taking central position which were reserved for whites only. Our symbols represent united nationhood at work as enshrined in our policy. We grappled with the tasks and expanded on mainline function to include community based public work programme, which has gone a long way in poverty alleviation and transfer of skill to the deprived, and formerly disadvantaged communities in cities and towns alike, in informal settlements and rural areas.

People have water and electricity. Access roads are created where none existed. Bongani and Jan can be heard talking in the single classroom trying to share common ideas on the problems before them. This state of affairs was regarded as anormally. Mama Shenge and Annikie Van Wyk can today share a common topic from their television episode of Madam and Eve, which was uncommon in the days of our dictators. Even Van der Merwe feels uncomfortable with the term BAAS. MRS now applies equally to all those who have celebrated matrimony. South Africa is at work. Apartheid is behind us, but there are challenges to face

still. Poverty and unemployment are still dogging all we have done and must be removed henceforth. It is my task and yours to not threaten the poor with 150 000 police but poverty with decisive strategy.

Let us not fight back those who have brought about the system that is envied by most people world over, Let us expand the programme to include all those we have not reached today. Let us isolate the lunatics who continue to advocate separate and unequal development between Sandton and Diepkloof. Bongi whom I talked about has been accepted as a pupil in the nearest school She does not have to walk the long road in the Platteland whilst her counter part who is also her play mate enjoying the free ride in the bus. Jannie who was a student at the University of Pretoria who studied engineering is now a Proud South African. He has no plan to leave his fatherland. He does not respond to the false drum beat by some amongst us of the unrythmatic music of Brain drain. He does not want a homeland. He wants a country and to serve his people; difficult and windy as the road to nation building has been, we are happy that progress has been made. Apartheid and discrimination are on their way out. In comes non-racial, none sexist democratic dispensation as enshrined in the freedom charter.

Slowly doctrines of Verwoerd and Malan are fading away and in come equality and self-respect of each other's culture and values (Chikane, 2003: 1-2).

PART III: REVIEW OF BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE ON DIVERSITY AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

2.4 EMPIRICAL STUDIES

This section of the chapter highlights some of the empirical studies undertaken on the phenomenon of desegregation and its challenges. Literature on diversity and school integration needs to be explored in order to position this study within the debates on the phenomenon. Nieto (2000), a leading scholar in diversity, conducted multiple case studies of learners in high schools - using a multicultural approach. The students came

from different ethnic, racial, linguistic and social-class backgrounds. The findings of her study showed that most learners were of the opinion that their cultures and ways of life were not represented in the curriculum. She, then, recommended - amongst other things - that teachers should change their techniques in teaching and adopt a new approach whereby learners from all racial backgrounds are given a chance - teachers must be willing to engage constructively with learners and take on board the different experiences that different learners bring to school. Although it is understandable that the research was conducted in schools, it seems to ignore other issues that contribute to, and impact on, learners' under-performance - except being victims of poor schooling. Of interest to this study, though, is the fact that the learners' accounts of what they think about the curriculum have been examined through research and, therefore, their facts are considered as valid as any other. My study is also on the perceptions of learners about their diversified school environment. I do not concentrate on the curriculum, but on their interactions both inside and outside school. Nieto's study serves as a backdrop to my study - in terms of dealing with the participants, because she regarded the learners' accounts as truth and the information she got from them as valid as any other, as a result giving the learners a voice as well.

Kailin undertook a quantitative study in 1999 on how white educators in America perceived the problem of racism in their schools. Educators were asked to provide examples of racism in their schools. Their responses were analysed and coded according to major themes which were collapsed into three major categories - namely, the attribution of racial problems to blacks; the attribution of racial problems to whites; and the attribution of racial problems to institutional/cultural factors. The research findings indicate that most white educators in the study operated from 'impaired' consciousness about racism and that a majority 'blamed the victim' by putting the blame for racism on blacks. The study further found that - amongst the white educators - those who witnessed racist behaviour by their white colleagues kept quiet about it and did not challenge such behaviour. As educators play a pivotal role in the sum total of race relations in education, it is critical to consider how they perceive the problem of racism (Kailin, 1999:724). However, the mistake that is mostly committed is overlooking the perceptions of the learners. Kailin examined this problem in a school

district. I, on the other hand, would like to investigate it among learners in a desegregated public school.

A study similar to Kailin's - conducted by Spencer in the United States in 1998 - also addressed the problem of racism in schools and reviewed the historical and contemporary contexts of policies and programmes to reduce racism. Spencer focused on the role of school social workers in helping to combat racism in schools. The study - conducted in the social sciences - concluded that schools need social workers to help combat the scourge of racism. On the basis of most research findings, I concur with Spencer when he says: "Although the United States maintains a goal of protecting human rights and promoting equality, there is an inconsistency between ideology and reality" (Spencer, 1998:25). I think this is the case in South Africa as well (Jansen, 2001: ix). While one cannot deny the importance of school social workers in addressing the issue of racial differences in schools, one also thinks that the experiences of these racial differences - by learners in their specific schools - cannot be underestimated. Even if programmes and legal frameworks are in place, learners are the ones who suffer or benefit from those programmes but, usually, they are at the receiving end.

In 1992 Carrim surveyed Indian, coloured and white schools with regard to their admission of students who were previously not admitted to these schools. This study was a project on the desegregation of South African schools which was undertaken by the Education Policy Unit of the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. The study utilised quantitative measures to determine the rate at which black students were admitted to white schools and also qualitative methods - where school-based practitioners and also learners were interviewed, and observations of daily school routines were carried out. In this study, the researchers further analysed the National Education Ministry's intentions, legislation and policy documents. Carrim - using 'race' as a yardstick - concentrated on the ways in which a new South African educational order was being reconstructed and, also, how much was really changing; how was it changing; and why it was changing. One of his conclusions is that desegregation in South African schools is assimilationist in nature - which, then, implied that the host schools assumed that the incoming students should be assimilated

into the dominant culture. This study - conducted before 1994 - could mean that people were still not sure what they should or should not do.

In a follow-up study in 1996, Carrim utilised almost the same schools for data and the same teachers for interviews - but reduced the original numbers. In this study his findings are remarkably different as he concludes that there was a gradual movement away from predominantly assimilationist tendencies. He bases this change on the national or macro- level tendencies of multiculturalism.

In his study of 1998, entitled *Anti-racism and the 'new' South African educational order*, Carrim traces the desegregation of South African schools - particularly within the Gauteng region from 1990 to 1996. He argues that - at school level - the response towards ethnicity has been predominantly assimilationist. He examined desegregation in the national sphere of the SA education system and argues that attempts to redress apartheid legacies are limited - due to their failure to address the complexity of identities contained within the classifications of 'black' and 'white'. In their conceptualisation of anti-racist education, Carrim and Soudien (1999) argue that racism is not a 'black' against 'white' phenomenon because there is also 'intra-black' racism. This is a very important issue that is usually ignored or overlooked - which, then, leads people to think that all white people are racist and all black people are victims of white racists. There are also black racists who discriminate against other blacks - what Carrim calls "intra-black racism." To take the argument further, there are also black racists with white victims. This study examines the attitudes of learners towards learners different to themselves and therefore takes Carrim and Soudien's finding that it is not just school policies that need to be changed in order for desegregation to take place, a step further.

Carrim continues to argue that macro, national policy initiatives - whilst necessary and unavoidable - tend to homogenise and generalise issues related to race, and for this reason they do not facilitate micro-level change in deracialising schooling in South Africa (Carrim, 1998: 14). It seems as if Carrim blames the failure of integration at school level on national policies. However, I argue that - even if national policies are in place - the people who have to put those policies into practice are, mostly, educators and in the process the learners are directly affected. The problem could be that

educators have not bought into the new paradigm. This, then, leads one to argue that the failure of putting policies into practice is not exclusively due to the fact that the policies, themselves, are difficult to implement. There may be other issues in play like lack of resources or even lack of commitment from the side of school communities. This study gives an ethnographic account of the experiences of learners in diversity studies, a section of the school population that has not yet been exhausted.

The work of Vally and Dalamba (1999) - commissioned by the South African Human Rights Commission - was a national survey whose purpose was to explore the experiences of schools enrolling learners from diverse backgrounds. Vally and Dalamba's study concentrated on 'problem schools', while I based my study on a desegregated school that is neither a problem school nor a subject of research and publicity. The reason for choosing an average school was to solicit information that could be relevant to most average schools. Vally and Dalamba's study uncovered issues relevant to my research which include amongst other that schools are desegregated but encounter a lot of racial conflicts. Although they reported on a seminal national survey of desegregated schools after five years of legal desegregation in South African schools, they did not collect the data in this research project, themselves. I have approached the phenomenon of diversity and inequality from an ethnographical case study design point of view which includes an in-depth understanding of a number of learners' experiences in one school. This means that I was at the school to observe what went on and, also, to talk to the learners. This is a privilege that the researchers in the Human Rights commissioned study did not have. I want to find out if a study such as mine, would yield different results from those of Vally and Dalamba.

Sekete, Shilubane and Moila's work of 2001 on the migration of learners from formerly disadvantaged rural schools to well-resourced suburban schools was groundbreaking in terms of its focus on school integration and providing statistical information which is scanty in the field of school integration in South Africa. This study concentrated on the quantitative aspects of desegregation and showed that enrolments had changed dramatically (2001:33). The researchers were interested in the 'how many' black learners migrated to which school and, also, the fact that this migration was not two-fold. Only the black learners were migrating to former White,

Indian and Coloured schools in other parts of the country. This study found that out of the 79 schools that returned the questionnaires out of the 120 that was originally targeted, 60% of the respondents acknowledged that there were major changes in their respective schools. I chose to conduct a study of this nature in Van Den Berg High School because I knew that the school consisted of all four racial groups of South Africa.

Dolby's work in 2001 on a Kwazulu-Natal school examined the effects of globalisation and popular culture among the youth of South Africa. What is remarkably different with Dolby's findings is that the learners at that school during that year did not relate to the discourse of the rainbow nation and also most of them saw a bleak future in South Africa. It was my intention to find out if learners at this school had any different understanding of the rainbow nation discourse.

South Africa has its own dynamics of diversity because - as already alluded to - the so-called minorities in other countries are the majority in South Africa. In a desegregated school in South Africa the dynamics of diversity had - to date - been assimilationist in nature. Schools have continued to serve the dominant culture (Carrim, 1998: 42). Diversity in a South African desegregated school would cover - amongst other things - race, gender, social class, ethnicity, language, colour, disability, and academic performance. The challenge, therefore, is to engender a common national identity that accommodates diversity or self-determination (Banks, 2004: 49).

Smit's research (2001:67-83) on "*how primary school educators experience education policy change in South Africa*" observed that educators are, indeed, the key role-players in the implementation of policies. She mentions that 'sadly' the same educators are silent voices which are often ignored and discounted when policies are made - a belief which I share, except that the implementation of policy is not the responsibility of educators alone but also of the parents, the learners and the community at large.

Smit concentrates on education policy change, in general, whereby the educators are given a choice of any policy that they would want to comment on - from the curriculum to HIV-Aids. I focused on legal frameworks that already exist and which

address racial diversity and its recognition. While I share the notion that educators are indispensable in the implementation of education policies, I did not want to underestimate the learners in the schools who are always on the receiving end. I also interrogated practices at school level and their reflection of the national legal frameworks on racial diversity. Documents that were drafted at school level, such as admission policies, religious policies, language policies, and policies on HIV-Aids, were examined to find out if they addressed diversity.

Sujee's paper entitled, *Deracialisation of Gauteng schools - a quantitative analysis*, presents a picture of what schools in Gauteng looked like in terms of racial classification (Sujee, 2003:1-21). He does not claim a full study, though, but focuses on what the *status quo* was in education for the Gauteng province from 1996 to 2002. In his paper, Sujee attempts to answer questions on educator and learner profiles and how rapidly - or slowly - 'deracialisation' is taking place across public schools in Gauteng.

Many factors are uncovered in Sujee, but the most relevant one for my study is the finding that "deracialisation of schools require further research into attitudes, friendships and group dynamics within schools so as to develop a real sense of whether racial integration is taking place or not" (Sujee, 2003: 12). My study did just that - it examined the experiences of learners of the transformation process at their school, and experiences include attitudes and friendships together with group dynamics.

Sekete, Shilubane and Moila's (2001) research for the Human Sciences Research Council on *Deracialisation and migration of learners in South African schools* confirms Carrim's 1992 research findings that there is an assimilationist approach to admitting different learners to the same school. The learners who are admitted into the school are assimilated into the existing culture and ethos of that particular school. Carrim's first research on desegregation was undertaken before 1994 and the follow-up in 1998 which means four years after 1994. I wanted to find out if my research - done ten years after - would yield different results.

Klaas (2005) undertook a study similar to mine in two-single sex schools - one for boys and one for girls. In his study he also examined the diverse learning environment. Klaas was in South Africa during the time when apartheid was rife. He admits that he just wanted to see if and how learners from different racial groups could attend school together. He recommends that researchers who research desegregated schools “need a change of focus, they need to stop looking for problems and try to find positives although not ignoring what might still be going on in those schools” (Klaas, 2004: 145). He further recommends that sports can be successfully used as a tool to unite learners from diverse communities. In my study there is a section where I report on the role of sport in integrating learners (See par. 5.4.2), therefore carrying Klaas’ argument forward.

It should be noted that when multiculturalism became popular in America, most African-American scholars advocated in favour of it while European authors criticized it. Some authors preferred to use the term ‘cultural pluralism’. Cultural pluralism - as a concept - was used for the first time by Kallen. Later Locke, DuBois and Banks expanded on Kallen’s ideas (Collins, 2004: 17). The concept has, popularly, come to be known as school integration, diversity education and citizenship education by modern advocates of multicultural education and their critics. There are different approaches to multicultural education (Klaas, 2004) which - although they have their differences - all have the same aim and which I interpret as ‘wanting the best for all learners involved.’ ‘Best’ is also a relative concept as one’s best may not be another’s, but it is, nevertheless, the ‘best’.

When I analysed the concept of multiculturalism closely, I could not find concretely new characteristics incorporated in the definitions of diversity education, school integration and citizenship education - which was, otherwise, lacking in multicultural education. Whatever one chooses to call it, the fact remains that in a plural society, like South Africa, with its many cultures, the quest to promote only one way of doing things and one way of thinking becomes suspect and it may, therefore, not succeed. What should be noted though is that integration is a *gradual* process and, therefore, it needs time for the separate values and personalities to be unified into a totality.

Besides the aforementioned studies, the main arguments in this study are also based on legal documents, such as *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*; *The National Education Policy Act, 1996*; *The South African Schools Act, 1996*, the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* published in 2001 and the *Employment Equity Act of 1998* - all of which were introduced after 1994. Indeed, their significance lies in the fact that they all affect the issue of racial diversity in schools - as addressed in this study (Mabasa, 1997:1; Manyane, 2000: 23).

The above legal frameworks affect diversity in schools. Section 29(2) of the Constitution of 1996 gives everyone the right to receive instruction in the official language of choice in public educational institutions - where that education is reasonably practicable. Many black learners and, particularly, those from the rural schools are denied this right (Pandor, 2004:14) because under the circumstance it is not 'reasonably practicable'. Single medium institutions are not necessarily a right, but they are certainly an option in terms of this legislation. As the following section makes clear: "In order to ensure effective access to, and implementation of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single-medium institutions, taking into account equity, practicability, and the need to redress the result of past practices" (Section 29[2]). How can the results of the past practices be redressed and effective access to schools achieved if it is not 'reasonable and practicable'?

Section 29(3) allows for the establishment of independent educational institutions that do not discriminate on the basis of race. Section 29 of the Constitution does not allow any school - whether public or independent - to discriminate on the basis of race.

On the other hand, Section 4 (a) of the *National Education Policy Act* seeks to guarantee - among other things - the right

- of every person to be protected against unfair discrimination within - or by - education departments or education institutions on any grounds whatsoever.

- of every person to basic education and equal access to educational institutions.
- of every person to the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression and association within educational institutions (RSA, 1996 [1]; *National Education Policy Act*: S6).

Similarly, the *South African Schools Act* takes the racial diversity issue addressed by the Constitution and the *National Education Policy Act* one step further. In its preamble, the Act states - among other things - that South Africa needs a new national school system to redress past injustices in education; to provide education of high quality; and to lay the foundations for, inter alia:

- combating racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination and intolerance.
- protecting and advancing our diverse cultures and languages (RSA, 1996 [2] SASA: preamble).

The Act provides for the access of learners of all races to all public schools by stating that no learner should be refused admission to a public school on the grounds of his/her parents' inability to pay school fees (Section 5.3[a]) and if the learner's parents do not subscribe to the school's mission statement or have refused to enter into a contract whereby they waive any claims for damages arising out of a learner's education (Section 5.3[c]) (RSA, 1996 [2]; SASA: S5.1- 5.3).

The Act further, in Section 12, makes access to public education possible by creating two categories of schools - public schools and independent schools. It further abolishes language testing by public schools as a form of pre-admission (Section 5.1) and so ensures that learners have reasonable access to education in a language of their choice - the language(s) that the governing body of the school decides upon (Section 6.2) - and that learners are not discriminated against unfairly because of their religious orientation (Section 7). One may ask: "Are the learners enjoying these rights - and if not, why not?" Answers to these questions may be found through research.

Indeed, the adoption of the *South African Schools Act (Act No.84 of 1996)* marked the turning point in the South African schooling system because it closed one of the most absurd chapters in the history of education in South Africa. Among other outcomes of this watershed legislation was an official end to the existence of the race-based public schools of the country. Although the legislation was intended to affect all schools in the Republic, the reality was that schools in the rural areas - particularly those in the Bantustans¹⁷ - were left untouched.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Against this background, one may argue that the problem of segregation or integration has been a recurrent theme throughout South Africa's history. Almost from the time of the arrival of Jan Van Riebeeck in 1652 two sets of conflicting forces have been in continuous operation with one trying hard - though not hard enough - to integrate the races, while the other sought to segregate them (Behr, 1988:13). Thus, the apartheid policy which the Nationalist government began to implement from 1948 actually grew out of the forms of domination and segregation which had their roots in the colonial period. This chapter, therefore, sought to demonstrate that it was largely the political developments in South Africa - from the pre-apartheid and throughout the apartheid period - that had significant implications for education until 1994.

Similarly, the chapter sought to draw attention to the fact that it was also the political developments since 1994 which led to major policy changes in education - amongst which was school desegregation and integration of the different races that had been kept separate for centuries by Whites-only governments. This thesis is an ethnographic case study of one city school that has since desegregated. It sheds light on the level of interaction amongst learners from historically separate race groups that goes beyond the classroom into their homes.

I admit that the study does not - in any way - offer a recipe for friendships and interactions of learners across the racial divide. Neither does it claim that its findings

17. These were the areas that were created in terms of the Bantu Homelands Act of 1959 to serve as the legal homes of each of the ethnic groups of the apartheid period.

can be generalisable and, therefore, also be transferred to other schools that operate under different environments. However, The US anthropologist's advice should not be completely lost sight of - "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has" (Mead, 2007):

I have sketched this brief overview of the history of education and, thereby, found that racial segregation - both in school and in social life – was, actually, not an invention of the Nationalist Party during the apartheid period. This chapter concludes that the problems of integration that came to characterise Van Den Berg High School early on as well as most post-apartheid white schools - as revealed by research carried out by numerous researchers and scholars (Christie, 1990; Gaganakis, 1990; Carrim, 1992; Soudien, 1996; Carrim, 1998; Vally & Dalamba, 1999; Carrim & Soudien, 1999; Chisholm, 1999; Zafar, 1999; Dolby, 2001; Soudien & Sayed, 2003) – were, indeed, inevitable because the historical roots of racial segregation in this country go deep into the past.