# CHAPTER TWO

# A REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the first research question on the theoretical foundations of Public Administration and specifically public policy. Public Administration is the study of the means of developing and implementing government policies. Public Administration could be explained in terms of its generic functions, one of which is public policy. Public policy relates to the guidelines set for the achievement of set goals. There are public policies on higher education in South Africa, and the government's intervention in higher education is a public policy attempt to improve higher education in the country. This study investigates the government intervention in higher education that is supported by various higher education policies, while policy options will be offered in that regard.

The first section of this chapter shows how the study is embedded in Public Administration. The second part examines public policy, since government policies for the higher education sector are under consideration in the thesis. This section gives specific attention to the concept of public policy and policy analysis. The process of policy analysis is explored up to the theory and practice of policy implementation, including implementation complexities, monitoring, evaluation and policy option generation. Ethics in policy analysis is given due consideration, since ethics has a significant place in public policy.

Although an examination of the government's policy agenda and implementation processes within the higher education sector reveals substantial shortcomings, it is worth noting that the government's intervention initiatives in this sector are all aimed at creating a better atmosphere within the higher education sector, which was badly fragmented under the previous government, in order to redress the

imbalances of the past and set the higher education sector on a path of growth and development.

## 2.2   PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Government intervention in higher education in South Africa is a public policy effort to correct the inadequacies inherent in the system of higher education, and as a result, set the higher educational landscape on a path of growth and development. Public policy is an aspect of Public Administration. In Latin, the word 'public' means people, while dictionaries define it as "pertaining to the people of a community, nation, or state" (Rainey, 2003: 65). Public Administration is at the centre of human efforts to reshape and restructure contemporary societies (Jreisat, 2002: 6). It is about taking care of the affairs of the state by public officials. Public Administration is concerned with all areas of government such as the three spheres or levels of government (namely, the national, provincial and local spheres as in the South African context), the executive, legislature, judicial and all kinds of public concern. It refers to administration of these spheres or levels of government (Reilly, 1979: 5-6), which oversee, administer and manage public programmes, establish policies and laws. In general, these spheres or levels of government oversee the execution of government programmes aimed at taking care of the needs of the public. Public Administration is "simply the collective name for the complex of state departments, local authorities, state - controlled corporations and others" (Hanekom and Thornhill, 1986: 7).

Public Administration is the study of the mechanism by which government policies are developed and implemented by government agencies and it "is one of the most important aspects of change in the country" (Brynard and Erasmus, 1995: 149; LeMay, 2006: 11). It is part of the political process as it plays an important role in policy formulation (Reilly, 1979; 6). Public organisations can

experience political interventions and they are usually accountable to the executive, which mainly consists of politicians, and they are also subjected to scrutiny by the legislature (Reilly, 1979: 5-6).

The practice of public administration involves the establishment, maintenance and execution of the administrative system. The administrative process, for Cloete (Hanekom and Thornhill, 1986: 7), is inextricably linked with public institutions functional activities such as policy making, staffing, financing, organisation, the exercising of control and the development of work procedure. It is part of "a much larger political and social system and is therefore closely involved with private groups and individuals in serving the public" (Reilly, 1979: 7). The practice of public administration involves the bureaucratic agents of government in all stages of the public policy process. These agents are often the actors who alert society to a problem. They help shape perceptions about the nature of the problem when brought to the agenda of government by outside forces such as political parties, interest groups, the media, and other political actors (for example, elected officials at the same or another level of government). They often play important role in placing a problem on the agenda of government (LeMay, 2006: 11).

## 2.2.1  The Boundaries of Public Administration

The boundaries of Public Administration are not clearly defined and because it lacks sufficient theories that are indigenous to the field of Public Administration, many of their conceptual frameworks are borrowed from other disciplines such as business administration, leadership, economics, philosophy, political science, history, theories of management, employee motivation, and theories of structural arrangements such as legitimacy, representation and accountability (Box, 2005: 32 &14). As a result of the importation of theories from other disciplines, Public Administration has developed substantial literature and knowledge. For instance,

economists developed theories of public bureaucracy that is different from private business. Political scientists focus on public organisations' political role and on the relationship between public organisations and legislators, chief executives, courts and stakeholders. Economists emphasise the absence of economic markets for the outputs of public bureaucracy. They conclude that the absence of economic markets leads to a more bureaucratic public organisation, which is susceptible to political influence than private corporations and characterised by inefficiency and resistance to change (Rainey, 2003: 9). As result of the importation of ideas from various disciplines, Public Administration has become a field of practice based on applied sciences.

### 2.2.2  Generic Functions of Public Administration

Public Administration comprises the following activities:

a)  The generic administrative functions, such as policy making, exercising control, staffing, financing, organising and the development of work procedure;

b)  The functional activities that each institution or department is designed to perform such as education, security, defense, energy and nursing;

c)  The auxiliary functions that play vital roles in the carrying out of the generic administrative functions and functional activities, such as research, analysis and collection of data, data processing, record keeping and costing (Hanekon and Thornhill, 1986: 10, 17).

In terms of the generic functions of Public Administration, the following elucidation will serve to shortly define each of these functions:

## Policy Making

Public policy entails what governments do or the decisions they make, the results of their decisions or the programmes they sponsor in order to achieve their set goals (Garson & Williams, 1982: 403). Public policy includes major areas of concern to government, such as education, defense, welfare, regulating trade, building public houses, agriculture and controlling inflation. The activities and commitment of government are important to the meaning of public policy because there will be no public policy without government direction and involvement (Gerston, 2004: 5-6).

## Exercising Control

Control relates to ensuring that set objectives are attained in line with established plan and command, and taking necessary steps to ensure that failures to achieve set objectives are rectified (Barton & Chappell, 1985: 246; Hanekom & Thornhill, 1983: 179). Control means that there must be set aim or policy statement that outlines future goals. Moreover, objectives can be outlined for the realization of the aim. Control measures include reporting on the outcome of set goals and auditing to determine whether income and expenditure comply with legal requirements. These measures will probably remain in public organisations. The other generic administrative functions also serve as control measures (Roux, Brynard, Botes & Fourie, 1997b: 156, 158, 159).

## Staffing

Staffing relates to the hiring and training of all personnel and maintaining favourable conditions in the organisation (Barton & Chappell, 1985: 247). It is the means of ensuring that high quality personnel is provided, properly trained and guided (Roux *et al.*, 1997b: 159).

## Financing

The administration of public organisations largely depends on government revenue (Peters & Pierre, 2003: 393). Financing relates to budgeting for the costs of running the organization or unit, fiscal planning, accounting for income, expenditure and control (Barton *et al.*, 1985: 247). In South Africa, the *Public Finance Management Act (PFMA),* 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) ensures transparency, accountability and sound management of revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities of all governmental and affected organisations. It significantly influences their daily operations and emphasizes the importance of good management and accounting practices. The PFMA emphasises the need for appropriate financial systems and procedures. It places clear responsibility on accounting officers to ensure effective and efficient management of the assets, liabilities, revenue and expenditure of departments. Accounting officers must uphold improved expenditure management and transfers, by planning properly before spending or transferring funds or benefits (National Treasury, 2000: 17 - 18).

According to the PFMA (1999, (45)) line managers are responsible for the effective, efficient, economic, and transparent use of financial resources within their areas of responsibility; they must, within their functional areas, take effective and appropriate steps to prevent any unauthorised expenditure, irregular expenditure, fruitless and wasteful expenditure and any under-collection of due revenue. Moreover, since measurable objectives must be submitted for each departmental programme, line managers may be held accountable for generated outputs (IPFA, 2000b: 13).

## Organising

Organising or organisational arrangements relates to the establishment of the hierarchies of officials and offices. It refers to the formal and informal nature of organizations. Formal organisation relates to the official structure and relationships. Structures and processes that are established by legislation,

prescription, laws or regulations represent it. The organisation's rules, regulations, policies, code of conduct and structures provide for the formal relationships among employees and between superiors and subordinates. Informal organisation is constituted by the unofficial social relationships and structure as shown in human and group behaviour. The informal relationships develop from the natural desire of employees to socialize. This leads to the emergence of informal groups in the workplace. Employees experience degrees of self-actualisation when they become part of the group (Roux *et al.*, 1997b: 11,13 & 59).

## Development of Work Procedure

A systematic and orderly work procedure is necessary for the successful completion of any function at all levels of public institutions. Work procedure relates to the chronological arrangements of duties to accomplish set goals. In that regard, the work procedure in accordance with which public officials will work have to be rationalized and recorded (Roux *et al.*, 1997b: 159; 184).

Public officials perform a combination of the generic, functional and auxiliary functions. According to Adedeji (1974: 127), Public Administration requires two kinds of public officials, namely the administrative generalists and specialists. The administrative generalists should understand the objectives of government policy and be able to implement them. They should posses management techniques needed to plan, coordinate, direct, and evaluate administrative operations. The administrative specialists, who should first be trained as administrative generalists, should receive further training in specialised fields of administration such as management of public organisations, finance, budgeting and planning, economic and social administration.

Senior officials concentrate on executing the generic administrative functions, while their subordinates concentrate more on the functional activities associated

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with their responsibilities. These senior officials are ultimately accountable, however, for leading, directing, arranging and systematising of these three activities, in a manner that ensures that the government's political intentions are implemented. The functional and auxiliary activities are executed when the means for their execution have been created through the generic administrative functions (Hanekom and Thornhill, 1986: 10&17). In the generic administrative function, a policy on the task to be executed is established from the beginning, while the necessary organisational arrangements for its implementation comes next through the establishment of institutions and directing the efforts of employees in particular directions (Hanekon and Thornhill, 1986: 10,17&18).

### 2.2.3  Concluding Paragraph

The preceding sections reveal that Public Administration is a science that studies the activities that occur in the public sector, which the state administers and manages. It also consists of the functions of policy making, financing, control measures, organisation, and the development of work procedure; and they are aimed at the realisation of set objectives. These are indispensable for any kind of action. The description of the generic administrative functions indicates that "policy making indeed provides the point of departure for public activities" (Hanekom and Thornhill, 1986: 7, 10&18).

### 2.3  UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC POLICY

A policy is a significant course of action chosen by either a private or public organisation or an influential person, which impacts on many people. It becomes public policy when it is chosen by government (Macrae & Wilde, 1985: 3). Anderson (Kuye, Thornhill & Fourie, 2002: 73) defines policy as a government's proposed course of action or guidelines aimed at ensuring the attainment of

goals and objectives. It is constantly subject to the consequences of environmental influence and change. Birkland (2001: 132-133) sees policy as a government's statement of what it intends to do or not to do. This can take either of the following forms or a combination of them: an agreed course of action to be followed in many cases (Macrae & Wilde,1985: 3), order, law, regulation, decision or ruling. Policy concerns can be seen in operational and administrative policy, cabinet or government policy, political parties and in departments (Cloete, 1981: 71-77).

Policy, according to Roux (in Kuye, Thornhill & Fourie, 2002: 73-74), "...relates to current societal issues, such as the needs and aspirations of society and its people, economic and technological developments, party politics, environmental and natural events". It can be seen as the attempt to find solutions to complex social problems which have various factors, dimensions, causes and effects (Majchrzak, 1984: 18). For instance, a problem like unemployment could be examined from the perspective of a lack of qualified graduates or from that of a lack of opportunities to access educational institutions.

Three central elements can be detected in the use of the term 'policy'. These are authority, expertise and order. Policy implies that some authorised decision makers have endorsed a course of action. It also implies the existence of the requisite expertise or knowledge of the areas under consideration as well as knowledge of the means to adequately attend to these issues. Lastly, the concern of policy with order implies system and consistency in the sense that, according to Colebatch (1998: 7-8), policy "...sets limits on the behaviour of officials; at the same time, it frees them from the need to make choices".

Although varying understandings of public policy make it difficult to reach a generally acceptable definition, it is clear from these undestandings that public policy impacts on all kinds of people, stakeholders and interests. That is why

government and its policies, according to Birkland (2001: 20) "…are sometimes so controversial, frustrating, and at the same time very important".

The study of public policy, according to Birkland, (2001: 3) "…is firmly grounded in the study of politics". The study goes back to the political era of Plato's concern for the Republic. In *'Plato's Republic'*, citizens carry out their duties and obligations and are not tempted to commit crime, because they are just and realise that happiness does not result from committing crime. The just city for Plato is one which is ruled by the wisest citizens. These citizens understand the meaning of justice in terms of the arrangement of the city and its people in harmony (Ziniewicz, 1996: 1). The systematic analysis of a government's output (public policy) is a twentieth-century creation. Around 1922, the political scientist Charles Merriam attempted to relate the theory and practice of politics to understanding governmental functions, that is, public policy (McCool, 1995: 1; Birkland, 2001: 4). The result of this study was an understanding that the public sector, in line with the main aims of the state, is first and foremost concerned with serving the public interest, by, according to Roux (in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 115), "…ensuring minimum or reasonable right of existence for all inhabitants, particularly the underprivileged section".

Politics leads to policy while administration flows from it. In other words, the policy process has two stages: **first**, decisions are taken on the goals to be achieved (policy) and **second**, these decisions are executed through administration. This means that policy makers have the function of choosing goals, while the administrators have the task of executing the determined objectives (Colebatch, 1998: 74).

The study of policy, in the main, relates to the way organisations (especially but not exclusively public organizations), work and, in particular, how these organisations should be steered. It is about the gap between how they function and how they should operate (Colebatch, 1998: 77). The services that are often

provided by authorities cut across the various levels or spheres of government, such as the national, provincial and local spheres in the South African context. Most of the authorities, given their independence from normal governmental procedures, are involved in every phase of the policy process (Mitchel, 1992: 3).

Many changes have taken place in every field of public policy and these have ensured more benefits for marginalised as well as less privileged members and groups in society, while at the same time increasing the benefits for the more fortunate members and groups (Nagel, 1990: 195).The functions of government, citizens and community organisations in public policy have been re-examined worldwide, especially in developed countries. In the early 1990s, Western democracies were criticised for failing to find solutions to societal problems. Following such criticisms, policy analysts and scholars took on the challenge of examining strategies, policies and actions that enhance the functioning of the democratic system. The activist agenda of President Bill Clinton's administration in the United States (US) in the 1990s is a good example of this new approach to public policy. From the commencement of his terms in office, President Clinton supported the national service programmes through community-based development projects, community organisations and government-voluntary collaborations. These initiatives show that steps can be taken to enhance the effectiveness of public policies to meet the needs of citizens by restructuring the way government functions (Ingram & Smith, 1993: 1).

This shows, as Wissink argues (in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 286), that policy process can be seen as a complex set of events that determines the actions governments will take, "...and from this determines the effects these actions will have on social, political, economic and physical conditions in society". Since the policy process seems to lack a clear beginning or end, and the boundaries between the various stages are not certain, the policy-making process therefore tends to be disorganised and complex. A policy process is not complete because a specific policy is adopted by a government and its implementation initiated. A

demand for new policies may result from existing policy. No policy is ever complete since it is a continuous and changing process. Its various stages, though distinguishable, are however mutually dependent for the resources and information needed to maintain the policy system (Wissink in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 286-287).

## 2.4  THE POLICY- MAKING PROCESS

Policies are formulated to accomplish some objective. Policy arises in the decision to pass a law or regulation on specific issues, and to provide for its enforcement and implementation. The following stakeholders are responsible for the formulation of public policies: legislative bodies at various spheres or levels of government and administration, political office bearers, senior public officials, and interest and pressure groups. It is necessary that proper information relevant to the policy be made available if these stakeholders are to play a central role in policy formulation. Public officials are better placed to provide valuable information for public policy's development, since they carry out their functions daily at the grassroots level. They are, therefore, properly placed to identify limitations in public policy as well as to execute proper means of correcting such constraints (Roux, in Kuye, Thornhill & Fourie, 2002: 76).

### 2.4.1  Factors Influencing the Policy-making Process

The policy-making process is influenced daily by a variety of internal and external factors, which have to be taken into consideration by policy and decision-makers. Internal factors include elements within governmental bodies which influence policymaking, such as conditions of establishment; political assignment; legality according to state and administrative law; financial means; abilities of personnel; physical facilities; and the managerial style of the head of department. External factors include elements outside public institutions which should be taken into

account in the policy making-process, such as circumstances; policy directions of political parties; pressure groups, interest groups and mass demonstrations; research and investigations by commissions and committees; and the personal views of public servants and political office bearers (Botes, Brynard, Fourie & Roux, 1992: 306-309).

## 2.4.1.1 Internal Factors:

The following elements within public organizations influence the policy making process:

### a) Conditions of Establishment

A department cannot take over, duplicate or undo another department's work or act outside its mandate, since it is established with the objective of achieving specific aims. A department, therefore, can only establish policy directions that are within its jurisdiction (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 306-307).

### b) Political Assignment

Public sector organisations exist to execute policies and political mandates in the interests of the public. However, these policies are not usually executed in a neutral manner, since they tend to take the interests of the government of the day into account as well as to negotiate their personal and political agendas (Pasteur, 2001: 1).

### c) Legality according to State and Administrative Law

The policies that public institutions make may be influenced by administrative law, especially where such policies are illegal or unlawful and infringe on the rights and freedom of individuals or groups (Botes *et al.,* 1992: 307).

## d) Financial Means

The success of the policy programmes of public institutions also depends on the availability of sufficient funding (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 307).

## e) Abilities of Personnel

The employees responsible for the implementation of policy play a significant role in the success or failure of such policies, through their action or failure to act appropriately, as well as a result of their level of expertise and sufficient number of employees (Pasteur, 2001: 3-4).

## f) Physical Facilities

A successful policy process requires the availability of adequate physical facilities (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 308).

## g) Managerial Style of the Head of Department

The policy-making process is influenced by the head of department's management style. For instance, although an autocratic style may get the work done, it does not consider the input of surbordinates. A lenient management style on the other hand may create a relaxed atmosphere but can lead to laxity among employees (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 308). Furthermore, the level of experience of the head of department, the political nature of the matters under consideration, the complexity of the decision to be made and the time required to carry out the process have an impact on the decision-making behaviour of the head of department (Simons & Thompson, 1998: 7).

## 2.4.1.2　　External Factors:

The following elements outside public institutions influence the policy making process:

### a) Circumstances

Changing or unforeseen circumstances such as drought, (threats of) war and even international pressures may necessitate the formulation of new policies (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 308).

### b) Policy Directions of Political Parties

The government of the day, which in a democratic state is elected by voters to represent their interests, endeavours to make policies that are in the best interests of these voters in order not to lose their confidence and trust (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 309).

### c) Pressure Groups, Interest Groups and Mass Demonstrations

The relationship between representatives of leading interests groups and government officials is powerful (Hanney, Gonzalez-Block, Buxton & Kogan, 2003: 44-8). Policy making, therefore, involves the process of bargaining and negotiating between government and interest groups, as well as among various interest groups that compete on the basis of their differing interests, such as the allocation of resources or social interests (Pasteur, 2001: 2&1). These groups utilise the occasions of mass demonstrations to deliver memoranda to senior officials or ministers (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 309), when their demands or views are not favourably considered.

## d) Research and Investigations by Commissions and Committees

Commissions and committees are appointed by the government to research and make recommendations on matters that need clarification. The government, however, may reject some recommendations and accept others (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 309). Policies that are informed by adequate research are better than those not informed by such research. Research provides a variety of policy options. It gives legitimacy to policies and creates legitimate doubt about other policies (Hanney *et al.*, 2003: 11 & 31).

## e) Personal Views of Public Servants and Political Office Bearers

The administrative and political heads of department play significant roles in the policy outcomes of their departments. Although the administrative heads of department are usually experts in their fields, the political heads (ministers) are in most cases not experts in the fields they head. As a result, they rely on the expertise of appointed officials to execute their departmental mandates (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 309).

### 2.4.2  Stages of Policy Formulation

There are various versions of the policy-making stages, which are similar in nature. The following stages constitute a chronological and logical guide to the central activities of policy making.

### 2.4.2.1     Problem Identification

The stages of policy formulation begin with the identification of problems and the need to resolve those problems through policy processes (Dunn, 1994: 16).

## 2.4.2.2    Agenda Setting

Agenda-setting is the stage where the issues to be focused on are chosen. Problems are placed on the public agenda by appointed or elected officials. Only a number of these issues can be included on a government's agenda at any specific time. Many of the problems are not acted upon, while others are addressed only after long delays (Dunn, 1994: 16) because there are many problems to choose from.

The agenda-setting stage involves relevant groups or individuals' recognising that a problem exists, defining the problem, deciding that the government needs to be involved in the problem, and mobilising support from relevant stakeholders to ensure that the problem is included on the agenda of the government. Competition enters these activities in a number of ways. The **first** is that various people lobby for the inclusion of any particular problem on the agenda, by competing to get the attention of relevant government officials. **Secondly** there is competition among the groups and individuals concerned with specific issues over the definition of the specific problem as well as over which opinions and groups to mobilise and how to mobilise them (McCool, 1995: 159).

## 2.4.2.3    Formulation of Goals and Programmes

All agenda items are not translated into policy, but any item on the agenda that is adequately addressed gets to the stage of policy formulation. This stage involves the making of policy statements, which are declarations of intent. They include some form of goal statement. This stage also involves the design of programmes that concretise the declaration of intent. The design of the programmes and the goals tend to be sketchy and vague because too much clarity and specificity can hamper the reaching of a compromise between competing stakeholders. These stakeholders, who otherwise might disagree, can be satisfied and their support

assured if the goals of the policy statement are kept at a level that is more general and unclear (McCool, 1995: 160).

## 2.4.2.4    Policy Adoption

A policy alternative is adopted on the basis of agreements reached among heads of organisations, with the support of the majority of law makers, or as a result of court decisions (Dunn, 1994: 16).

## 2.4.3  Institutions Involved in Policy Formulation

The following institutions are involved in policy determination, information gathering and advice: legislative institutions; executive councils and committees; commissions and committees of inquiry; select, standing and joint committees of parliament; cabinet committees; and internal auxiliary services and staff units (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 310).

## 2.4.3.1    Legislative Institutions

In South Africa, elected legislative bodies such as Parliament can determine policies. Parliament consists of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces, which both participate in legislative processes in line with constitutional directives (South Africa, *1996a*: 42 (1)). It is the supreme public institution in the Republic of South Africa (COSATU: 144), and its institutionality is expressed in the gathering of the whole legislature in plenary (Calland, 1997: 1-2).

## 2.4.3.2    Executive Councils and Committees

All political office holders formulate and implement policies. These include the Cabinet, the supreme executive council made up of national departments'

Ministers; the Premier, the head of a province assisted by the heads of provincial departments known as Members of Executive Council (MECs); and the executive committee members within municipalities (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 310). In South Africa, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) are divided into committees. The parties in Parliament are represented in the committees. Each government department has a committee in the National Assembly that deals with the Bills that come from government departments (South Africa, 1999: 125(1)).

### 2.4.3.3    Commissions and Committees of Inquiry

The President appoints commissions of inquiry and Ministers appoint committees of inquiry, to investigate specific matters of public concern. The results of these investigations and the recommendations of the commissions and committees are tabled in reports, which the government may accept (University of Cape Town, undated). Commissions and committees of inquiry contribute to the determination of government policy through policy advice to political office holders and through investigations into particular issues in order to establish the loopholes in the policy process (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 310).

### 2.4.3.4    Select, Standing and Joint Committees of Parliament

Members of select committees come from the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and report to the same NCOP. Their work includes processing legislation, oversight, and investigating how government functions are executed (NCOP, 1999: 20). The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) is Parliament's means of monitoring the use of public funds by public institutions. The Auditor General carries out special investigations on behalf of the Committee, acts as a specialist adviser and provides Parliament with information on financial management of public sector institutions (Committee Section, 1999: 40). Joint committees consist of members of the National Assembly and the

National Council of Provinces. The Joint Rules of Parliament govern their functions (Committee Section, 1999: 8-10).

### 2.4.3.5 Cabinet Committees

Cabinet Committees which consist of Ministers and their deputies are forums where they and other relevant officials investigate and discuss specific issues before they are presented at Cabinet meetings (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2004: 1).

### 2.4.3.6 Internal Auxiliary Services and Staff Units

Internal auxiliary services, which provide the support necessary for the achievement of the objectives of government departments and staff units, advise management on policy matters (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 310).

### 2.4.4 Levels of Policy-making

Four policy levels can be identified, namely political party policy, government or cabinet policy, departmental policy and administrative policy (Roux, Brynard, Botes & Fourie, 1997: 144-145; Botes *et al.*, 1992: 311-312). These policy instruments are various approaches for addressing societal problems or policy matters (Cloete & Wissink, 2006: 19).

### 2.4.4.1 Political Party Policy

This is the policy with which a political party was elected to power and which has to be implemented within the public sector (Roux *et al.*, 1997: 144). The policy should be in line with the moral political notion of government as a mechanism for promoting community good (Shinn & Van der Silk, 1988: 540).

## 2.4.4.2    Government or Cabinet Policy

These are executive decisions made by political office bearers, with the assistance of senior public officials. Government officials execute these decisions (Cloete & Wissink, 2006: 19).

## 2.4.4.3    Departmental Policy

This is the policy that a department has to implement in order to meet its aims and objectives (Roux *et al.*, 1997: 145).

## 2.4.4.4    Administrative Policy

Administrative policy, according to Cloete and Wissink (2006: 19), "…pertains to various aspects of policy such as the income and expenditure of a particular government department…" The policies that ensure the adequate functioning of a department's administration are personnel policy, financial policy, organisational policy, procedural policy and control policy (Roux *et al.*, 1997: 145).

## a)    Personnel Policy

The staff members that implement government policy have to be favourably disposed towards the same policy, especially the aspect of the policy for which they are responsible (Coetzee, 1988: 61). Although there are national guidelines for the appointment, remuneration, promotion and dismissal of personnel, each head of department, in line with these provisions, must develop applicable internal staff policy (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 312).

## b)	Financial Policy

In South Africa, the functions of the public sector have direct bearing on their funding needs and the amount of funds allocated to them by the national treasury (Meijer, Falkena & Van der Merwe, 1991:106).

## c)	Organisational Policy

The Public Service Commission usually prescribes the organisational structure of a government department or an organ of state. However, relevant officials must maintain and continuously investigate the internal functioning of such departments (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 312).

## d)	Procedural Policy

All government institutions function on the basis of particular procedures and methods.  In order to implement proper procedural policy, the head of department needs to be continuously advised by departmental and organisational work-study officials on improved methods and procedures (Botes *et al.*, 1992: 312).

## e)	Control Policy

The functioning of public officials is controlled by policies that aim to minimise error, offence or usurpation of political power, and to achieve the objectives of the department. Control can be exercised through supervision, reporting and auditing (Caiden, 1971: 203-204; Coetzee, 1988: 62).

### 2.4.5 Concluding Paragraph

This section has briefly discussed the concept of public policy, factors influencing the policy-making process, stages of policy formulation, institutions involved in policy formulation and levels of policy-making. Public policy has been shown to be formulated to accomplish particular objectives, or to find solutions to complex societal problems and to impact on various people, stakeholders and interests. Such impact has to be monitored and evaluated with a view to correcting any negative outcomes.

## 2.5 POLICY ANALYSIS

Policy analysis attempts to create, communicate and critically evaluate policy-relevant knowledge within the various phases of the process of policy-making. Each phase is related to the next phase (Dunn, 1994: 15). Policy analysis relates to the use of intuition and judgement. It covers both the examination of the various components of a policy, as well as the design and synthesis of alternative policies. The three elements of policy analysis are: problem identification, goals determination and alternatives. Policy analysis can be seen as determining which of the various public policy alternatives will achieve the determined objectives most efficiently, considering the relation between policies and goals (Nagel 1990: viii). Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 79) however, views the main aim of public policy analysis as finding the best available policy options that take care of the needs of the public in the best possible way. He also views the goal of policy analysis as to process data that is essential to policy formulation in order to find adequate solutions to problems, conduct a cost-benefit analysis of envisaged policy directives, and consider the effectiveness of current policy directives.

Policy analysis also aims to realise political, scientific and professional objectives. On the political level, the study of public policy is generally seen as an

attempt to gain the assurance that government, in order to realise its objectives, follows adequate policy initiatives. The scientific aim is to understand the implications of public policy on political and environmental systems and the consequences of environmental factors on public policy content. The professional aim is to gain deeper insight into societal problems by means of scientific knowledge. It is vital to understand the implications of established public policies (Dye, 1987: 5).

Policy analysis ranges from research into a problem or issue, to clarify it, to the evaluation of a completed programme. Policy analysis can therefore be defined, according to Quade (1975: 4), as "…any type of analysis that generates and presents information in such a way as to improve the basis of policy-makers to exercise their judgement". Policy analysis assumes that a problem exists which needs to be investigated by means of scientific research. It is therefore important that policy analysts possess the requite grasp of scientific investigation. The existence of a problem, according to Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 79), is seen in scientific terms, as a stimulant and motivation for research, while any scientific research is preceded by  a clear problem statement. This is also the beginning of any policy analytic investigation. In other words, according to Roux (in Kuye, *et al.*, 2002: 79) "…a researchable problem must exist, which, after thorough data collection and systematisation of knowledge, could lead to a point where alternatives could be identified and recommendations be made".

The methods of public policy analysis, according to Nagel (1990: x), are the means by which a decision is reached about which policy to adopt, drawing on available data on policies, goals and relations. These methods involve establishing the relationship between goals and policies, and determining which goals to consider and which policies are available for adoption.

Since policy analysis not only produces facts but also offers possible courses of action, it includes both policy evaluation and recommendation. Since policy

analysis is an applied discipline, it draws from a variety of disciplines and professions such as public administration, law, the behavioural sciences, philosophy, systems analysis, ethics and even applied mathematics, which possess descriptive, prescriptive and evaluative foci (Dunn, 1994: 62). Although public officials should, as a result of their day-to-day work experiences and personal understanding of their departmental activities, be able to carry out the function of policy analysis, they may not be able to devote sufficient time and energy to the process as a result of their other work commitments. It is preferable to have a separate section within a department whose sole responsibility is the scientific analysis of policy matters (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 77).

The first concrete result of a properly conducted policy analysis is a well-structured written report in which the facts are not misrepresented. The report has to meet acceptable scientific report-writing standards to ensure that it contains adequately structured, systematised and classified information, verifies all its fact and arguments through acceptable reference techniques, and lists all sources consulted (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 95-96).

### 2.5.1 Role Players in Policy Analysis

The role players in policy analysis include:

- Public officials who implement policies and examine policy implications;
- Consultants who can analyse public policy objectively since they are external parties;
- Divisions or units that are primarily responsible for analysing departmental policies;
- Non-governmental organisations;
- Political parties;
- Community-based organisations;

- International organisations;
- Commissions of Inquiry;
- Parliamentary Committees; and
- Research institutions  (Roux, in Kuye *et al*., 2002: 76-77).

## 2.5.2  Forms of Policy Analysis

Policy analysis can take on any of the following forms: incrementalist, utilitarian, prospective, retrospective, and integrated policy analysis (Forester, 1993: 11; Dunn, 1994: 75-80).

### 2.5.2.1     Incrementalist Analysis

The focus of incrementalist analysis is on the negotiations involved in policy formulation and implementation. In the process of formulating policy, advocates of various interests lobby and bring their influence to bear on the shaping of the proposals under consideration (Forester, 1993: 11).

### 2.5.2.2     Utilitarian Analysis

The questions that utilitarians ask are whether ends have been attained, which ends these are, and how they were reached. The utilitarian line of policy analysis can be compared to the widespread interest in the various forms of cost-benefit analysis as a foundation for considering alternative policy proposals (Forester, 1993: 11).

### 2.5.2.3     Prospective Analysis

Prospective policy analysis is a means of synthesising information and drawing policy alternatives and preferences from it, as a basis or guide for making policy decisions (Dunn, 1994: 75–76).

## 2.5.2.4     Retrospective Policy Analysis

Retrospective policy analysis has to do with the production and transformation of information once policy actions have been taken. This is the operating style of three major analytic groups namely discipline-oriented analysts, problem-oriented analysts and application-oriented analysts. Discipline–oriented analysts attempt to describe the causes and impacts of policies, as well as develop and test discipline-based theories. They produce hardly any information which is directly useful for finding solutions to policy problems, mainly because policy-makers may not be able to manipulate the variables which are relevant for the formulation and testing of general scientific theories. Problem-orientated analysts also attempt to describe the causes and effects of policies. They are, however, more concerned with identifying variables which policy makers may manipulate in resolving problems, than with the development and testing of theories which social science disciplines consider important. Application-oriented analysts do not concern themselves with the testing and development of discipline-based theories, but attempt to describe the causes and effects of public programmes and policies. They are also geared towards identifying the objectives and goals of all stakeholders, including policy makers. Information about these objectives and goals provides a foundation for monitoring and evaluating particular policy outcomes, which in turn may enable policy makers to classify policy problems, generate policy options and propose ways of resolving the problems (Dunn, 1994: 77-78).

## 2.5.2.5     Integrated Policy Analysis

This is a more comprehensive type of analysis as it links the prospective and retrospective phases of policy analysis, and also requires analysts to continuously produce and transform information over time. In other words, analysts engage in cyclical production and transformation of information either prior to or after action. Unlike prospective and retrospective policy analysis,

integrated analysis makes provision for continuous monitoring and evaluation of policies (Dunn, 1994: 78-80).

### 2.5.3  Process of Policy Analysis

An adequate policy does not always have to move from the problem definition to the selection of a preferred alternative in a straightforward manner. Rather, as understanding of the problem widens, the policy process works forward and backwards. It is not necessary during analysis to follow these steps linearly as individual situations can influence the need to do a complete or partial policy analysis. Problem identification, goal determination and alternatives, which are the three elements of analysis, according to Roux, (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 95), "...do not represent a series of steps to follow in a linear way. Rather, they represent an iterative and interactive series of events".

The process of policy analysis can be divided into three phases, namely: preparatory phase, theoretical construction and real analysis.

### 2.5.3.1     Preparatory Phase

The steps in this phase are:

a)      initial problem identification;

b)      collection of data relevant to policy formulation;

c)      arranging of information;

d)      identification and definition of the real problem and the actual client;

e)      environmental impact assessment; and

f)      taking the decision, on the basis of the cost of the investigation, as to whether analysis should be conducted in-house or by external consultant (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 94).

## 2.5.3.2    Theoretical Construction

The steps in this phase are:

a)    determining the theoretical foundation; and

b)    choosing the approach and model (Roux in Kuye, *et al.*, 2002: 94).

## 2.5.3.3    Real Analysis

The steps in this phase are:

a)    facts to be outlined;

b)    alternatives to be developed;

c)    alternatives to be analysed in terms of cost benefits, values and effectiveness;

d)    choosing the alternatives considered to be best;

e)    if possible, conducting a simulation;

f)    verification (control);

g)    making recommendations;

h)    executing implementation;

i)    beginning the process of re-evaluation from phase 1 (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 95).

## 2.5.4  Ethics and Policy Analysis

Ethics is a system of moral principles relating to right or good conduct. It involves considering or balancing the interests of various stakeholders in a way that reflects organisational values and standards. Ethics also considers the implications of social, political, economic and environmental activities on all stakeholders' interests (Rossouw, 2002: 4).

Policy analysts are confronted with the ethical challenge of maintaining objectivity and fairness and upholding high ethical standards in the way they conduct their analytic work. As human beings, they are subject to the challenge of remaining both subjective and objective in their decision-making on whether policy recommendations and options would be advantageous or disadvantageous to the client (Roux in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 82).

The ethical obligations of policy analysts cannot be overlooked since, as with other human beings, they are often tempted to make decisions based on what they perceive to be valuable and in the process overlook the values and systems of other people. The kinds of ethical dilemmas policy analysts face include the following:

- whose interests among all the stakeholders' should be maximised? Is it the interest of the larger society, political parties or special interest groups?
- should raw data be shared, with whom and to what extent?
- should people be put at risk in the evaluation process?
- should the research process incur or save costs? (Nagel, 1990: xix).

The problem, according to Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 82), is further complicated by the idea of loyalty, which raises the following questions: in making policy decisions, to whom should policy analysts be loyal? Should the stakeholders affected by policy changes benefit from the policy decisions taken?

A key factor in the resolution of ethical dilemmas in policy evaluation, according to Nagel (1990: xix), is that by being explicit about what they are doing about the above problems, policy analysts or evaluators have complied with basic ethical obligations. Furthermore, the execution of professional policy analysis, according to Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 82), demands that policy analysts possess the following attributes: competence, discretion, integrity, honesty, loyalty and

diligence. Added to these, policy analysts must always consider the interests of all parties equally and impartially.

## 2.5.5 Theory and Practice of Policy Implementation

Policy implementation is preceded by the formulation and analysis of public policy. Policy implementation covers the activities of private and public organisations, individuals or groups, which are geared towards the realisation of objectives outlined in prior policy decisions (Brynard, in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 166). According to Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 90), policy implementation relates to the execution of policy directives which the decision makers have authorised, in a well planned and programmed way.

Policies are implemented primarily by a complex system of administrative agencies. These agencies perform most of the day-to-day work of government and thus affect citizens more directly in their actions than any other governmental unit (Anderson, 1979: 93). Various actions are required in the process of implementing a policy. These include, according to Edwards and Sharkansky (1978: 293), "…issuing directives and enforcing them, disbursing funds, making loans, awarding grants, making contracts, collecting information, disseminating information, assigning personnel, hiring personnel and creating organisational units". An implementation programme, according to Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 90), has to take the following requirements into consideration: the institution's ability to cope with the new policy challenges; the financial requirements of the implementation process; and human resource needs in terms of availability of required personnel as well as their commitment to carrying out their mandates professionally.

## 2.5.5.1    Problems of Policy Implementation

All over the world, the implementation stage appears to be the most difficult in terms of its practical execution, a result of non-existent implementation programmes. In South Africa, for instance, the government annually formulates and analyses impressive policies in its bid to make the best policy options available to South African society. However, such options appear often to lack proper guidelines on their implementation (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 89).

The process of policy making and its implementation is complex. Making a policy does not guarantee its implementation, while commencing a programme is not a guarantee that desired or significant results will be achieved. The results may be below expectation, or a programme aimed at alleviating difficulties may create other problems. It is difficult to implement policy in a straight forward manner. The implementation of policy is always influenced by political, economic (or structural) and institutional constraints.   Sharkansky (1982: 243 & 258) observes that policy making and its implementation are both not easy, and there is no certainty that a programme will be implemented once a law has been passed. It is also not certain that a programme will produce the desired results once the programme has commenced. He notes further that it is possible that no significant results may be achieved, while the results predicted may not be the ones achieved. It is also possible that other problems may be created by a programme designed to alleviate a problem. The other factors that stifle implementation are inadequate planning, insufficient resources, complexity within organisations that make co-ordination impossible and complex environments.

In South Africa, the policies formulated since 1990 have not been as successful as contemplated, and this is evident in such failed and deficient policy directives as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), and the Higher Education policies. For instance, the African National Congress realised that the

redistributive orientation of RDP was economically unfeasible, while the pro-business and neo-liberal market based policies of GEAR that served the interests of capital while neglecting the interests of the working class was inadequate in redressing the injustices of the apartheid era. Pityana, among other prominent stakeholders consider higher education policies incoherent, prescriptive, contradictory and ineffective (Marais, 1998: 131 & 150; Kraak, 2001: 2; King, 2006: 8; Pretoria News, April 7 2005). These policies will receive more attention in the following sections. The more detailed description is necessary, within the context of the main theme, to show the gap between the government's policy directions and the outcomes of the implementation processes.

The other problematic policy issues which will be examined in the main chapters of this study are:

- transforming the system of higher education to redress the imbalances of the past;
- restructuring the system of higher education in the country to meet developmental challenges;
- transforming the values, cultures and governance structures of higher education (South Africa, 1997a: 35);
- ensuring a high quality system of higher education which is sustainable, equitable and productive and which contributes to the human resource, knowledge, skills and research needs of the country in an efficient and effective manner (Department of Education, 2003: 2);
- providing equal opportunities to everyone, and transforming into non-racial institutions (Van Essche & Masson, 2004: 1);
- ensuring the right of all citizens to quality education on an equitable basis and an inclusive education free from discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or disability of all forms (South Africa,1996a);

- ensuring the development of a higher education system characterised by excellence, quality, efficient and effective governance and management system, responsiveness and equity (Van Essche & Masson, 2004: 1);

- increasing student access and participation rates;

- implementing a new funding formula aimed at eliminating the financial difficulties confronting higher educational institutions and improving the overall efficiency of the system of higher education; and

- merging or incorporating higher educational institutions to overcome the fragmentation that existed in the system of higher education, promote efficiency and effectiveness in higher education management and administration, overcome the historical divide, strengthen the academic nature of institutions, reduce overlap and duplication in academic programmes, and consolidate existing academic programmes so as to produce a variety of programmes that meet national and regional needs (Department of Education, 2001a; South Africa, 1997a).

## a.     Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) aimed to change the material conditions of people's lives in the country (Mbeki, 2006: 5). It was established to mobilise citizens and the country's resources to eradicate the legacies of apartheid, meet basic needs, develop human resources, build the economy and make it globally competitive, and build a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society. It integrates economic growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution into a unified programme (South Africa, 1994: 1.1.1).

The RDP detracts from the commonly held idea that development is a deduction from growth, that the processes of growth and redistribution and those of growth

and development contradict each other. On its part, it conceives reconstruction and development as parts of an integrated process, and as a result, it integrates the following into a unified programme: growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution (African National Congress, 1994: 6). The RDP promoted the idea of an integrated package of policy reforms which are linked together for social reconstruction in a single coherent plan. The RDP attempted to link the economic policy to the following policies: human resources development, employment growth and labour market reform, youth training schemes, public works, education and training (Kraak, 2001: 12).

During this period, the ANC also held another core policy position that emphasised the need for an 'enabling state'. This is the claim that adequate solutions to the problems confronting the country can neither be found in a commandist central planning system nor in an unrestricted free-market system. Rather, the solution, according to the ANC, can be found in a 'slim' enabling state which is able to strategically intervene while using its scarce resources judiciously. It supports direct interventions by the state which are targeted and selective, made on the basis of sectoral planning. In line with the example of other successful newly industrialised countries, the state will also intervene in ensuring that highly skilled technicians and engineers are trained, technological capacity, research and development infrastructure are developed, and industrial clusters and particular sectors targeted to develop products that can compete in world markets (Kraak, 2001: 12-13).

### b.  Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) and Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA)

The aim of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), a macro-economic strategy, was the implementation of structural adjustment

policies such as low budget deficits, privatisation of state assets, relaxation of labour laws, competitive exchange rates and low inflation, in order to attract foreign direct investment, which would in turn ensure higher economic growth rates and job creation (Centre for Policy Studies, 2000: 2). As soon as the new South African government took charge, it took on the complexities of governance. For example, GEAR, though aimed at industry, in effect, curtailed the new government's capacity to plan and direct higher education's transformation and reconstruction initiatives (Kraak, 2001: 2).

Government's attempt to implement vital aspects of the GEAR's policy such as an integrated package of fiscal stabilization, privatization, liberalization and faster labour market reforms was not successful. The accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), unlike GEAR, aims to be a coordinating strategy for various policy activities, in order to achieve the RDP's and GEAR's objectives differently (Taljaard, 2006: 2).

ASGISA is not a comprehensive development plan. Rather, its initiative "consists of a limited set of interventions that are intended to serve as catalysts to accelerated and shared growth and development" (Mbeki in Tralac, 2006: 1). Through ASGISA, Government hopes to tackle the problems of poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment and skills' shortage, in partnership with relevant stakeholders. In addition to seeking higher annual growth rates, environmental improvement, higher employment rates, and poverty eradication, it is envisaged that inequalities will be reduced, new businesses will be created, and the level of skills that the economy needs will be developed. ASGISA further hopes to bridge the gap between the first and the second economy; the leverage of the first economy will be used to address the second economy, while the second economy will be eliminated in the long run. ASGISA will support small businesses, while the African Chamber of Commerce will establish 100 000 new and medium enterprises annually. In order to ensure the achievement of the shared and faster economic growth, national social objectives and the Millennium

development goals, the government and its social partners, will regularly evaluate ASGISA. The social partners include Harvard University based economists and scientists (Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, 2006: 2-4,8, 10-12, 14, 18-19).

## c.  Higher Education Policies

Policy implementation in the South African higher educational sector since 1994 has been difficult as a result of lack of unanimity around the new higher educational policies. This period has been worsened by tension resulting from competing ideas over the modalities for transforming higher education. The higher education community in South Africa has never had a strong consensus over the content of the new policy framework, since there has always been a high level of competing interpretations and discursive tension which have characterised such policy debates since the 1990s. This kind of policy gap is not unique to the higher educational sector, since there is usually a gap between policy formulation and its implementation as explored above. The following competing discourses have significantly influenced the processes of policy formulation, adaptation and retraction in South Africa: high-skills theory, equity position theory and stratification theory. Although these competing theories have had various degrees of positive influence, they have overall made it difficult to attain certainty and unanimity about the government's policy on higher education (Kraak, 2001: 2). These problems of implementation, including the impact of tight fiscal policies and the multiplicity of participants and multiplicity of perspectives, will now be examined.

## d.  Multiplicity of Participants and Multiplicity of Perspectives

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) contend that a multiplicity of participants and perspectives is among the major difficulties in the implementation of new

programmes. Multiplicity of participants creates room for multiplicity of perspectives. The results of such diversity of participants and opinions are problems that hinder the smooth implementation of any programme. Policy implementation can be complex, especially new policies, even when there was initial agreement among participants in the policy process. Policy implementation is complex because there are so many factors or bodies involved in the execution of any single policy.

Participants may agree with the main goals of a proposal, but disagree with the means of achieving it. They may find that the merits of a proposal are incompatible with other aims of their organisation, even when they agree with those merits. Participants may not be opposed to a proposal, or prefer a different programme, but their focus and time may be tied to other projects, which may lead to delay in programme implementation. The attention of organisations or individuals may be needed in the process of implementing a project if the project falls within their area of jurisdiction, but they might not have a sense of urgency about the overall programme. Participants may agree on the goals of a programme, while they may not agree on who should execute the programmes. Some participants may delay or suppress implementation if they believe that their interests are being jeopardised (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973: 100-101).

Policy making is a complex procedure. Those who implement policy often receive vague information on when and how to execute the implementation process. They may not know what to expect when a new programme is about to commence. Moreover, according to Sharkansky (1982: 249), "...a programme statement may list a number of goals, without clarifying which ones are the most important. Policy makers do not have either the time or the expertise to develop and apply all necessary details for implementing policy. As a result, they leave most, if not all the details to subordinates. In turn, this, according to Edwards & Sharkansky (1978: 299), "...provides subordinates...with considerable discretion for interpreting their superiors' decisions and orders". The details of the orders

received from superiors are further expanded and developed by subordinates at each hierarchical level. Subordinates may not know what to do since as they were not there when the policy decisions were made and they may not be fully aware of what the policies are meant to achieve.

Sharkansky (1982: 249) contends that when administrators are left with substantial details to decide on at the stage of programme design, what results is a crisis at the stage of implementation. This can cause delay, as administrators struggle to come to terms with what to do. The programme can also be stifled because unenthusiastic administrators use the confusion as an excuse to do nothing. New programmes often experience an acute shortage of adequate and sufficient staff for their implementation. Insufficient funds lead to insufficient staff for programme implementation. Furthermore, it is not always easy or possible to get adequately skilled staff, even with the availability of unlimited funds (Edwards & Sharkansky, 1978: 303).

Interest groups push for their own demands by taking advantage of the discretion granted to subordinates (Edwards *et al.*, 1978: 300), while private and non-governmental organisations that are contracted by government, according to Sharkansky (1982: 247), "...take part in design, delivery and monitoring of social programmes from outside of government". This can lead to improper programme integration, as the various related activities are in the hands of different agencies, and the problem of co-ordinating the various bodies affects programme implementation. Central control of service quality is often lacking, and some government officers charged with arranging or monitoring programme implementation are irresponsible (Sharkansky, 1982: 248).

### e.    The Impact of Tight Fiscal Policies

The impact of tight fiscal policies such as the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which outlines the government's priorities and expenditure

patterns over a three-year period, denies the higher education sector the opportunity for more financial resources. Although the national government does not have unlimited financial resources, and despite its commitment to fiscal discipline, the higher education sector must receive sustained financial investment in order to develop the kind of competencies and high level skills necessary for economic and social development. Other areas also have high additional costs, such as rectifying existing inequities, restructuring existing programmes, and building greater student participation. These costs cannot be met without substantial private contribution and adequate public funding (Kraak, 2001: 24).

## f.     The High Skills Theory

The high skills position has emerged because of globalisation, which poses huge new challenges for the training and education systems of economies around the globe. Adequate knowledge of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has become a criterion for employment prospects (Selwyn & Brown, 2000: 661), because emerging technologies need the expertise of a highly qualified, specialised labour force and well rounded  and diverse skill competencies  that can add value to existing products and services. Entire labour forces capable of adapting to rapid technological change and to volatile and unpredictable global product markets are required by corporations. Such enterprises also need broad problem-solving skills to detect production flaws. Value is placed on the capacity to retool and quickly attend to rapidly changing market conditions. Globalisation, in essence, has imposed new conditions on competitiveness, bordering on the attainment of greater levels of productivity based on a very skilled workforce (Kraak, 2001: 9).

The high skills theory considers reform in education as constituting part of a larger set of socio-economic reforms. It argues that achieving meaningful reform in one institutional area such as education depends on achieving parallel

changes in other institutional spheres, such as the labour market, the macro-economic sphere and the work place. The high skills thesis played a significant role in the development of the educational and macro-economic policies of the ANC between 1990 and 1994. The central ideas of South Africa's variant of the high skills theory are firstly to promote the idea of a 'developmental' state that will drive the implementation of such an integrated agenda of complimentary reforms; secondly, to link labour market, education and macro-economic restructuring within an integrated single socio-economic reconstruction programme; and thirdly, according to Kraak (2001: 10) to privilege "the idea of a unified and integrative education and training regulatory framework".

The high skills theory was unable to gain sufficient basis for implementation in South Africa, even though it was central to the ANC's education and economic position. This was partially due to the opposition it generated in many commentators, who viewed it as another form of renewed capitalism or capitalist exploitation in the form of globalisation. Many of these critics, however, failed to posit an alternative to the connection between education and economy. The rejection of the high skills thesis in various quarters can also be attributed to a lack of a coherent set of policies around human resources, economic growth and industrial development that could have satisfied the urgent need for high skills. It can also be attributed to failings on the part of the Department of Education, as well as the failure of the policy formulation process. As a result of this discursive conflict, the higher education sector could not reach a binding agreement in support of the new government's official policy (Kraak, 2001: 21-22).

## g.    Equity Position

The equity position relates to the ability to gain admission to and successfully complete higher education. Application of the equity principle implies, on the one hand, taking stock of existing inequalities which result from discriminatory policies, structures and practices and, on the other hand, a transformation

programme which involves abrogating all kinds of unjust differentiation and, according to the *Education White Paper* (South Africa, 1997a: 1.18), "...considers empowerment, including financial support to bring about equal opportunity for individuals and institutions".

The demand for equity aims at rectifying the social and institutional consequences of apartheid education. The staff, students and ex-graduates of previously disadvantaged institutions demanded the overhaul of these institutions to bring them up to an acceptable level relative to that of the previously advantaged institutions. During the education policy debates of the early 1990s, a number of analysts saw the demand for equity and the demands of the high skills discourse on issues of economic development as contradictory. Such analysts consider equity as not necessarily a consequence of development, and equity policies as not necessarily leading to development. These analysts contend that favouring one goal will jeopardise the other, as shown by international experience. These goals, they contend, should rather be pursued as parallel instead of as correlative objectives. The tension between equity and development, they claim, should be recognised, and the two planned for separately in order for both to be achieved. These discursive tensions between equity and development continued from 1990 to 1997, when the higher education policy was made. The new state adopted a cautious response as it did not want to be seen as privileging one demand over the other. Rather, the new state attempted to balance these double higher education policy imperatives (Kraak, 2001: 14). The attempt to resolve the tensions between equity and development, however, contributed to the government's reconfiguration of the system and institutions of higher education through mergers and incorporations. This is a necessary condition for a transformed higher education system which is able to meet the objectives of a developmental state.

## h.    Stratification Theory

The root of this theory lies in the apartheid government's education policy, which adopted a trinary system of higher education as proposed by the Van Wyk De Vries Commission of 1974. The trinary model proposed the following rigid differentiation of function between institutions: universities should focus on the research and teaching of science's basic fundamental principles, technikons should focus on applying scientific principles to technology and practical problems, while colleges should focus on providing vocational training. Some of the fundamental ideas of this trinary divide are unsatisfactory to various stakeholders. In 1995, for instance, the state acknowledged that higher educational institutions were working in isolation, while the system itself was characterised by inflexibility and rigidity. The trinary divide was problematic and difficult to sustain for the following reasons: career and professional training are aspects of university curricula, knowledge and the use of technology are dependent on links between disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, and the technikons moved outside their core function of technology application by offering courses in the social sciences, commerce and business, and securing the right to offer degree programmes (Kraak, 2001: 15-16).

Since many of the complexities of policy implementation arise because those who end up implementing policies are not usually those who formulate them, the policy analyst has a vital role to play, not only in the formulation and analysis of policies and the identification of policy alternatives, but also in the offering of advice on their implementation. Since policy analysts play a strategic role in policy formulation, they are therefore responsible for analysing policy issues, monitoring and evaluating policy outcomes, and implementing and managing the entire policy process (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 76).

### 2.5.6  Policy Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are necessary processes in policy implementation. Policy monitoring refers to the process of finding out how the policy is performing. The monitoring process involves obtaining data about the policy through documents, tests, observation, records, feedback from clients, ratings by colleagues and physical evidence. The functions of monitoring include compliance, auditing, accounting and explanation:

a)    Compliance: Monitoring assists in establishing whether the actions of various stakeholders such as employees and programme administrators are in line with procedures and standards laid down by law makers, professional associations and regulatory agencies.

b)    Auditing: Monitoring assists in establishing whether the resources allocated for specific projects and beneficiaries were actually utilised for the purposes intended.

c)    Accounting: The monitoring process produces information, which is essential in accounting for the economic and social changes that follow the implementation of various programmes and policies.

d)    Explanation: The information that monitoring provides also provides reasons why the outcome of programmes and public policies differ (Roux, in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 91).

The evaluation process entails the assessment of the outcome of the policy implementation process, to show whether programmes are effective. Evaluation determines the impact of policy outcomes (Quade, 1989: 272-273). It gives policy makers the opportunity to come to terms with the level at which they are achieving their set objectives and to act accordingly. Since policy is concerned with the attainment of goals, it is therefore sensible to find out if these goals have been attained (Colebatch, 1998: 67). Various kinds of professionals execute the

evaluation process. These include researchers within both public and non-public sectors, interest groups, officials and legislators. The evaluation process can either be based on systematic analysis of data or on political judgements and instincts (McCool, 1995: 160-161). The evaluation process produces policy relevant information relating to the shortfalls between expected and actual policy performance, and, according to Dunn (1994: 19), "…thus assisting policy makers in the policy assessment phase of the policy-making process". The information generated in the evaluation can help in the fine-tuning of current policy, set the stage for new policy processes, and even lead to the conclusion that a whole new policy approach is needed. The evaluation of a programme requires an objective and systematic framework in order to avoid the natural bias of programme managers and coordinators. In other words, the evaluation design should be prepared ahead of policy implementation in order to, according to Bonser, McGregor & Oster (1996: 51-52), "…include the collection of the necessary data and other information in the implementation plan. It cannot be properly done as an afterthought to implementation".

The essence of evaluation is providing information about current operations and their effectiveness, so as to make decisions about the future. Evaluation involves learning about the consequences of public policy in real world conditions and providing policy makers with information on the cost and impact of their projects and programmes, and assisting in efficient and effective allocation of resources. It also aims to assist programme managers in managing their programmes well (Quade, 1975: 225; Dye, 1995: 320-321). The other reasons for undertaking policy evaluation or assessment are:

- for the purposes of public relations;
- to test the feasibility of a principle, theory, assumption, theory, model or strategy;
- to measure progress made in the achievement of set policy objectives;
- to provide financial or political accountability;

- to redesign or implement strategies; and

- to learn lessons from a programme or project (Shafritz, 1998: 820).

A common trend today is to incorporate evaluation into the policy process. Various stakeholders such as the legislature, heads of department and interest groups often require evaluation of the activities of officials, departments, grants to various spheres / levels of government or non-governmental organisations, to ascertain the extent to which policy objectives are realised (Colebatch, 1998: 67). The different emphases on evaluation by various authors hinge on the fact that, while policy objectives are linked to outcomes, other objectives are not. Where possible, it is preferable to link policy objectives to outcomes. Policy evaluation or assessment, in its ideal form, should be considered a judging process to compare the objectives of policy with envisaged or actual consequences or results (Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 211-212).

## 2.5.6.1 Evaluation Constraints

Effective policy evaluation is often complicated, prevented or obstructed by difficulties, including the following:

a) politically sensitive evaluation results, which lead to evaluations being conducted in a biased manner (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984: 227);

b) evaluations which are not adequately conducted, for example when the resources needed for the process are not available or sufficient (Cloete *et al.*, 2000: 230);

c) evaluation in which the information generated is incomplete and as a result, leads to inaccurate findings and conclusions (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984: 226);

d) evaluation results which are very critical of management or decision makers and so may not be accepted (Cloete *et al.*, 2000: 231);

e) integrated programmes or projects that cannot be separated and have a cumulative impact that makes it very difficult or even impossible to arrive at adequate conclusions about cause-effect relationships (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984: 226);

f) evaluation that is considered useless as it is too late for specific purposes (Cloete *et al.,* 2000: 231);

g) occasions where the objectives and goals of policy are deliberately hidden, not clear or absent and could possibly change during the life span of the programme or project (Howlett & Ramesh, 1995: 169);

h) tight time frames that do not provide for sufficient time to conduct a thorough evaluation (Cloete *et al.,* 2000: 230); and

i) impractical and very academic evaluations, which are therefore unacceptable (Cloete *et al.,* 2000: 231).

Policy analysis cannot identify all the defects or shortcomings of a policy because of the following difficulties:

- the government is not able to meet all the expectations or demands of a community;
- community issues which are defined in relative terms cannot be adequately resolved;
- obtaining all the data upon which the policy must be based is often difficult;
- quantifying a number of issues such as the measures for comparing the influence of two groups on a particular policy is difficult;
- various factors influence the rationality of political decisions, ranging from community values, politicians, interest groups and environmental factors to public officials;
- policy analysis may only provide improvement if relevant policy makers become aware of it and if they accept it as relevant and valid (Roux *et al.,* 1997: 150-151).

This study reveals that although the South African government intended positive outcomes through its higher educational policies, a number of negative outcomes remain. These include difficulties in achieving culture integration, and many students cannot afford the costs of higher education. Furthermore, the right of universities to determine what courses to teach has been eroded, and financial allocations to higher educational institutions is not sufficient to meet the objectives of transforming higher education and meeting the developmental goals of the country.

### 2.5.7 Policy Option Generation

The aim of policy analysis is to find the best alternative (policy option) available under the circumstances (MacRae & Wilde, 1979: 45). This is finding the best solution or alternative to a problem, that is, setting out all the possible actions which could accomplish the desired goal. This requires, according to Roux (in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 129), "…a systematic search, including various methods and techniques such as cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis of all potential or possible alternatives". The policy options (alternatives) under consideration may have to be expanded if the outcomes of policy process are defective. This can be achieved not only by the contribution of a few leaders and policy analysts, but also by considering the views of all stakeholders (Lindblom & Woodhouse, 1993: 4).

### 2.5.7.1    Requirements for Generating Alternatives

If all relevant information is available to the analyst, alternatives can be generated by employing imagination, sound judgement, intuition, creative thinking and the ability to invent and design. In the process of using imagination and creativity in the quest for alternatives, no assumption may be accepted dogmatically without questioning, and different views must be taken into

consideration without overlooking any particular one as irrelevant (Roux, in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 130). Policy analysts also need to ensure that all assumptions are open to interrogation, and, according to Roux (in Kuye *et al.*, 2002: 80), "…that inquiry is not biased in favour of a particular outcome".

The following requirements must to be borne in mind by policy analysts:

a) it may not be possible to find perfect policy alternatives since a multicultural society entail the presence of complex problems and multiple goals, which an alternative may not necessarily be able to satisfy;

b) subjectivity must never overrule objectivity, in other words, alternatives must be evaluated without bias, and techniques such as cost effectiveness and cost benefit analysis should be utilized; and

c) policy analysts should avoid the temptation of formulating too many alternatives. The alternatives should be reduced to those that are important. Although three to seven alternatives are sufficient, only one of these should reflect current policy, in order to avoid bias for change (Roux, in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 131-132).

## 2.5.8 Concluding Paragraph

Policy analysis relates to determining which of the policy alternatives will best achieve determined objectives. Policy evaluation, which is an aspect of policy analysis, and which relates to assessing the outcome of the policy implementation process, may be constrained a number of factors such as political interference and inadequate resources.

## 2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed relevant literature on Public Administration. It examined the theoretical foundations of Public Administration and specifically public policy, since policy options to government intervention in higher education are under consideration in this research. Public Administration studies the development and implementation of government policy by government agencies. The study of policy relates to the way organisations function, and how they should be steered. Public policy making, analysis and implementation have been shown to be necessary for any government or organisation that hopes to accomplish particular objectives.

Policy analysis aims to find the best available options to address the needs of the public in the best possible way. It ranges from research into a case or problem in order to bring clarity, to the evaluation of a completed programme. A well-structured written report, which complies with scientific report-writing techniques, is the first concrete result of a well conducted policy analysis.

The chapter shows that policy implementation is a complex activity, especially as it involves a consideration of the interests of various stakeholders or interest groups. Policy makers are faced with the challenge of designing policies that meet set goals, while at the same time dealing with political change, group conflict and resistance to implemented policies. Since many of the complexities of policy implementation result from the fact that those who end up implementing policies are usually not those who formulate them, the policy analyst has a vital role not only in the formulation and analysis of policies and in identifying policy alternatives, but also in offering advice on their implementation. Since policy analysts play a strategic role in policy formulation, they are responsible for analysing policy issues, monitoring and evaluating policy outcomes, and for implementing and managing the whole policy process.

Policy option generation involves finding the best policy alternatives to a problem. Policy options are necessary in terms of a policy that fails to achieve the purposes for which it was developed. To come up with alternative policies, analysts have to be objective and consider various views and positions equally, without undermining any position. Analysts need to possess sound judgement, intuition, imagination, creativity and the ability to design and invent.

The role of ethics in policy analysis was highlighted in this chapter. It has been shown that policy analysts are faced with the challenges of remaining objective and fair in the way they carry out their analytic work. As human beings, they are tempted to favour particular interests. However, they need to be able to balance the interests of all stakeholders in a way that reflects organisational values and principles. In this regard, policy analysts need to possess certain characteristics like competence, discretion, integrity, honesty, loyalty and diligence.

The following chapter will examine the international context within which the system of higher education in South Africa operates. This is important since the South African higher educational system was adapted from international best practices. The chapter will also review the South African higher education context and policy developments.