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**THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF SOUTH AFRICA ON HIGHER EDUCATION:  
A PROGRESS REVIEW.**

**By**

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Master of Public  
Administration (MAdmin) in the Faculty of Economic and Management  
Sciences**

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## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the students who took part in the struggle for the reduction of fees and free education in 2015.

## **Acknowledgements**

After this long and bittersweet road, I realised that my involvement in the completion of this work was minimal, and every important person in my life deserves more credit. This work would not have been here had it not been for the love, support and encouragement of the people below.

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God bless South Africa.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation gives a review of progress made in the National Development Plan (NDP) on higher education institutions in South Africa. The NDP is a blueprint that aims to make South Africa a better, more vibrant and first class country to tackle unemployment, poverty and inequality, with all the goals achieved by 2030. The South African government has had plans and policies in place with the goal to eradicate the triple threat of poverty, unemployment and inequality previously but many of these plans have failed largely because of lack of sufficient implementation. In order to win this battle, the NDP places education at the forefront as the tool to realise positive results over the triple threat. This need for a breakthrough cannot be realised without producing an educated citizenry with tertiary qualifications, especially in the fields of engineering, mathematics, science and technology. What this thesis shows is that there have been unintended disruptions in the early stages of the implementation process, with tertiary student protests across the country's universities and colleges with regard to issues such as tuition fee decreases and free education, and other challenges such as the political winds blowing the numbers off of the ruling party's grip, resulting in the loss of key metros. The latter challenge is most likely to lead to the scrapping of the NDP, as a new party might bring with it a set of new ideas and policies to address the challenges faced by the country at the time. What also threatens the realisation of the NDP goals is the much anticipated Elective Conference of the ruling party in 2017, because as history informs, the new leadership, much like with the change of political party in power, will most likely want to introduce a different Plan, depending on the winning slate. It was stated that since this work can only be improved on as it was conducted during the early days of implementation, and while some of the mentioned challenges are still getting resolved (e.g. the Commission looking into the feasibility of free education was still in progress when this work got completed), government needs to listen to the people and consider increasing funding for university subsidies, in order to accommodate the large university intakes and to keep experienced staff in these institutions and to help realise the goals of the NDP for higher education.



## Table of Contents

Heading	Page	
<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction and Background</b>		
1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Background	4
1.3	Post-Apartheid South Africa	6
1.4	Higher education and training in a democratic South Africa	9
1.5	Legal framework of higher education in South Africa	11
1.5.1	Higher Education Act 101 of 1997	11
1.5.2	Further Education and Training Colleges Act	12
1.5.3	National Qualification Framework Act	13
1.6	Problem statement	13
1.7	Research objectives	15
1.8	Clarification of concepts	16
1.8.1	Public Administration	16
1.8.2	Public sector	17
1.8.3	National Development Plan	17
1.8.4	Higher education	18
1.8.5	Policy	18
1.8.6	Public policy	19
1.8.7	Corruption	19
1.9	Research Methodology	20
1.10	Structure of the dissertation	21
1.11	Conclusion	22



## **Chapter 2 – Research Methodology**

2.1	Introduction	25
2.2	Quantitative research	26
2.3	Qualitative research	27
2.4	Functions of qualitative research	29
2.4.1	Contextualisation function	30
2.4.2	Explanatory function	30
2.4.3	Evaluative function	31
2.4.4	Generative function	32
2.5	Qualitative research designs	32
2.6	Data gathering techniques	34
2.7	Qualitative research challenges	35
2.8	Mixed method research	36
2.9	Why the research method was chosen	37
2.10	Sampling	38
2.11	Research topic	40
2.12	Research question	40
2.13	Research objectives	40
2.14	Data analysis	41
2.15	Ethical considerations	42
2.16	Limitations of the study	43
2.17	Conclusion	44

## **Chapter 3 – Literature Review**

3.1	Introduction	47
3.2	Monitoring and evaluation and Public administration	49
3.3	What is public administration?	49
3.4	Generic administration functions	50

3.4.1	Policy making	50
3.4.2	Organising	53
3.4.3	Financing	53
3.4.4	Staffing	54
3.4.5	Methods/procedures	54
3.4.6	Control	55
3.5	Monitoring and evaluation	55
3.6	What is monitoring?	56
3.7	What is evaluation?	59
3.7.1	Diagnosis evaluation	60
3.7.2	Design evaluation	61
3.7.3	Implementation evaluation	62
3.7.4	Impact evaluation	62
3.7.5	Economic evaluation	63
3.7.6	Evaluation synthesis	64
3.8	Public administration and monitoring and evaluation interface	64
3.9	Challenges facing successful the implementation of the NDP	65
3.8	Conclusion	69
<b>Chapter 4 – Introduction to the Case Study</b>		
4.1	Introduction	73
4.2	Importance of a case study	74
4.3	New Growth Path	76
4.4	Higher education policies	78
4.4.1	Higher Education Act	78
4.4.2	White Paper for Post-School education and Training	79
4.4.3	Language Policy for Higher Education	80
4.4.4	Further Education and Training Colleges Act 16 of 2006	81
4.4.5	National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008	83

4.5	Stakeholders	83
4.5.1	Department of Higher Education and Training	84
4.5.2	Council on Higher Education	85
4.5.3	Universities South Africa	86
4.5.4	Institutions of higher learning	86
4.6	The National Development Plan	87
4.7	The Goals of the NDP on higher education	90
4.7.1	Increase university science and mathematics entrants to 450 000	91
4.7.2	Increase graduation rates to more than twenty-five per cent (25%) by 2030	91
4.7.3	Increase participation rates to more than thirty per cent (30%)	91
4.7.4	Produce more than one- hundred (100) doctoral graduates per million per year by 2030	92
4.8	The policy proposals	93
4.8.1	Improve system for skills planning and shaping the production of skills	94
4.8.2	Develop a diverse range of providers of further education and training	95
4.8.3	Enhance the innovative capacity of the nation	95
4.8.4	Address the decline of Humanities	96
4.8.5	Enhance the entrepreneurial capability of the nation	97
4.8.6	Coordinate and steer a differentiated system	97
4.8.7	Build an enabling and high quality differentiated system	98
4.8.8	Fund an enabling, high quality differentiated system	99
4.9	Conclusion	99
<b>Chapter 5 – Findings and Analysis</b>		
5.1	Introduction	102
5.2	Background	103
5.3	Fees Must Fall	104
5.4	Free education	107
5.5	Political uncertainty	109

5.5.1	Loss of votes	109
5.5.2	ANC succession race	111
5.6	Analysis	114
5.7	Conclusion	117
<b>Chapter 6 – General Conclusions and Recommendations</b>		
6.1	Introduction	120
6.2	Fees Must Fall	121
6.2.1	Recommendations	121
6.3	Free education	123
6.3.1	Recommendations	125
6.4	Political instability	126
6.4.1.	Recommendations	127
6.5.	ANC succession race	128
6.5.1	Recommendations	129
6.6	Conclusion	129
	Bibliography	132

## **Chapter 1: Introduction and background**

## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Background**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research gives a progress review of the National Development Plan with regard to institutions of higher learning in South Africa.

The Republic of South Africa is a country located at the southern tip of the African continent (see figure 1). Considered the economic hub of Africa, South Africa falls under the Southern African region, closely neighboured by Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique (see figure 2). It is a democratic country under constitutional rule consisting of 54.96 million citizens (StatsSA 2015).

*Figure 1: The map of Africa*



(Source: <http://www.beautifulworld.com/africa/south-africa/>)  
(Source: Southern\_Africa-Regions.png)

*Figure 2: The map of southern Africa*



(Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map-Africa-Southern\\_Africa-Regions.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map-Africa-Southern_Africa-Regions.png))

Education in South Africa has over the last decade enjoyed the largest share of the national budget. In the last budget speech provided by Minister on Finance Nhlanhla Nene in 2015, tertiary institutions, excluding basic education, were afforded R195 billion, which is more than, for example, the R163 billion afforded to the defence of the state (Department of Finance 2015). This is but a small expression of the importance and value of education in the priorities of the South African government. This gargantuan amount looks to meet the ever increasing demands of the higher education sector, and improve on the *status quo*.

The government department responsible for the affairs and activities of this sector in South Africa is the Department of Higher Education and Training, headed by Mr Blade Nzimande. In a country deprived of skills, this department is of key importance as it gives oversight on training and education that will address this shortage and ensure that South Africa has a capable workforce that can deal with the demands of the working environment efficiently and can be able to compete in parity with the global workforce. To advance the economy and competitiveness of South Africa, an educated workforce becomes not only a requirement but a need.

Like in any other environment, there is a need for goals to be set, objectives to be stipulated, so that the functioning of the organisation can be based on a specific target. This method is not excluding modern governments that have adopted private sector styles of operation. The goals and objectives of the South African government today are expressed through a document that serves as a blueprint, it will channel the efforts of the government through the stipulated 2030 targets; the National Development Plan (NDP).

The key ideas behind the adoption of the NDP is to tackle unemployment, poverty and inequality. The NDP entails all sectors of society and how government should work towards advancing these sectors, elevating them to a world class level that will serve the needs of all South Africans. In it, among other goals to be discussed later, the NDP wants to see a higher education sector that produces a greater number of doctoral graduates than at present, a greater number of South Africans with access to higher education and particularly those who belong in the previously disadvantaged group.

To achieve this, there will have to be a greater number of learners passing Grade 12, the need to retain skilled labour in higher education institutions, to ensure undergraduate students complete their degrees, and most importantly, for the higher education institutions to have the capacity to implement the goals and demands of the NDP.

The background of higher education and the evolution of the NDP will be discussed, which will enhance a clearer understanding of the problem statement, leading to the explanation of the purpose of this study. Prominent concepts of this work will be provided, followed by its general structure before the concluding summary of this chapter.

## **1.2 Background**

South Africa as seen today has emerged from a painful history of apartheid- based on the idea of segregation of people along racial lines and which sought to advance white minority rule at the expense of the black majority. This was the form of rule in South Africa from 1948 until 1994, the dawn of democracy. This separation of one race from another came with many unjust laws that saw opportunities and resources channelled to one race, the white race, to the demise and exclusion of the other races such as Blacks, Indians and Coloureds within the country.

To illustrate the above the different races were placed in specific geographical locations, with the white neighbourhoods being the suburbs, where services such as roads, quality housing and sanitation were notable characteristics, while the black population was confined to what was called the Bantustans, also known as homelands, characterised by the opposite of the mentioned white suburbs; shacks, overcrowded spaces, lack of roads, overpopulated and generally devoid of any useful resources necessary for any community to flourish. The Bantustans was an idea that was in place to ensure separate development.



The imbalance was not only found in geographical locations. There was also a rather low quality form of education provided by the apartheid government for the black majority called Bantu Education. This form of education was legalised through the Bantu Education Act No 47 of 1953 and further imposed segregation and separate development. Because of its rather limited scope and low levels of quality, Bantu education ensured that “Blacks were not to aspire to certain positions in society and so education for such positions was not deemed necessary” (Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory 2015).

The above statement points to the painful fact that blacks were given a form of education that was not going to be fruitful if one sought to become a part of decision making groups in the society and/or workplace upon the completion of studies, because blacks were seen as operational management workers, they were not equipped with quality education, they were deprived of the opportunity to achieve optimal intellectual prowess. This disregard for the abilities of blacks was not only displayed through legislation, but also through shoddy infrastructure, with dilapidated and under resourced schools, compared to those attended by the white population at the time.

In a historic step against this unjust education policy in the country, the world witnessed a march by the students on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1976. This march of resistance, known as the Soweto Uprising, came about when “the language of Afrikaans alongside English was made compulsory as a medium of instruction in schools in 1974” (South African History Online 2015), and resulted in scores of murders of young, black South African students. This uprising changed the political landscape of the country as more and more young people garnered the strength to fight not only education policies, but the apartheid regime at large.

The significance of this march is still recognised today as it played a decisive role in alerting the apartheid government of the dissatisfaction with the *status quo*, it had “dire consequences for the Apartheid government. Images of the police firing on peacefully demonstrating students led an international revulsion against South Africa as its brutality was exposed. Meanwhile, the weakened and exiled liberation movements received new recruits fleeing political persecution at home giving impetus to the struggle against Apartheid” (South African History Online 2015).

### 1.3 Post-Apartheid South Africa

Eighteen years after the protest march and brutal murder of the students, a democratic country, led by the African National Congress, emerged, and led to the abrupt end of apartheid rule in South Africa. Nelson Mandela became the first black president of South Africa, with unity, reconciliation and reconstruction of the state forming the nucleus of his administration, and the constitution becoming the supreme law governing the state. The strong emphasis on reconciliation, many would argue, led to the peaceful transition to democracy as witnessed.

The constitution was put in place in 1994, to be later amended in 1996, and as the supreme law of the country, protected and guaranteed equal rights, and with the Bill of Rights being arguably the most important feature, new hope was realised, as the country was on its way to correcting imbalances of the past along with decades if not centuries of oppression. It is important to note, however, that the new, democratic government did not inherit a perfect, clean slate from which to govern across all sectors, and the higher education sector in particular.

As expressed by Kuye (2007:3), higher education in the country is slowed by the existence of problems that the country inherited from the previous regime pre-1994; there were legal and policy challenges, along with institutional challenges. After a forty-six year rule (1948-1994) of oppression and unequal distribution of resources, the Nelson Mandela administration had a mammoth task of equalising society across all fronts; economically, politically and socially.

To achieve this equity, one of the core demands would be an educated citizenry. Having been denied quality education for decades because of discriminatory policies, the government had to introduce new, inclusive and effective policies. It is for this reason that the first national policy was the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a socio-economic policy that was to serve the purpose of remedying past imbalances and reconstructing the country after the abysmal state of affairs before 1994.

In explaining the need for this RDP policy framework, ANC (2015) states that the history of colonialism and apartheid has divided the country. "Some of our people enjoy a high standard of living while many do not have even the basics such as homes, jobs, land, medical care and education.

- Our towns and cities are divided. Most whites live in fully developed suburbs while most blacks live in poorly developed townships and shack settlements.
- Our rural areas are divided. There are well-developed white commercial farming areas and impoverished Bantustans.
- In all aspects of our society there is great inequality - in schooling, health, welfare, transport, housing and employment. Some people have all they need while many have nothing at all. We are one of the most unequal countries in the world.
- Our economy has benefited a minority and very large white dominated companies control most of it.
- Our industries have not invested enough money in research, development and training so they are failing to meet the needs of our own people and are unable to survive in world markets.
- Apartheid has made sure that whites have skills while most of our workers are not equipped to keep up with the big changes that are taking place in the world economy.
- Small and medium-sized businesses which are important for developing the economy and creating jobs do not get enough support and struggle to survive."

With the above came radical policies across all sectors of society, and of particular interest to this work are those policies and legislation in the education sector, and higher education in particular.

The ANC-led government took measures to ensure the reconstruction of this sector by, according to Kuye (2007:3),

- Establishing the National Commission on Higher Education in 1996, which produced a report that provided three pillars of higher education with regard to the need for a policy on increased participation.
- The White Paper entitled: Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (1997) that stated participation of South Africans in higher education through massification would produce the desired results regarding transformation of the system of higher education. (This proposal was not accepted)
- The National Plan for Higher Education (1997) that looked to eliminate the vacuum created by the incremental approach to the execution of policies and addresses the absence of regulatory instruments.
- The Higher Education Act, 1997 formalized policy incentives and regulated higher education matters.

All these steps were introduced under the policy framework of the RDP, but as in every changing environment, government kept adopting different policy frameworks with the goal to improve the functioning of society and bring about equality post-apartheid while looking to stabilise and grow the economy. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy framework was introduced in 1996 in order to “attain a growth rate of 6 per cent per annum and job creation of 400 000 per annum by the year 2000, concentrating capacity building on meeting the demands of international competitiveness” (Department of Finance 2015)

Following the GEAR policy was the introduction of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA) in 2005 under the Thabo Mbeki administration, and its primary objectives were to “reduce poverty by 2010, and halving unemployment by 2014 from the 28% in 2004 to 14% by 2012; and also recognised that the policies implemented to address these issues needed to be at the forefront of economic policy decision making” (SA History Online 2015).

The emergence of the Jacob Zuma administration, however, saw the introduction of a new policy framework in 2009, which is still in use today, the New Growth Path (NGP). The NGP, according to the NGP document (2009:2), is a “vision to place jobs and decent work at the centre of economic policy. It sets a target of five million new jobs to be created by 2020. It sets out the key jobs drivers and the priority sectors that we will focus on over the next few years. It is based on strong and sustained, inclusive economic growth and the rebuilding of the productive sectors of the economy.”

#### **1.4 Higher education and training in a democratic South Africa**

To expect a “strong and sustained, inclusive economic growth and the rebuilding of the productive sectors of the economy” with an uneducated and a less skilled citizenry will be preposterous at best. It is for this reason that education has become an important enabler of the envisioned society as expressed in the NGP, and focus had to be thoroughly placed on this important sector. In 2009, a reform of education was announced when President Zuma split the Department of Education into two; Department of Basic Education and the Department of Higher Education and Training.

For the purpose of this work, focus will be on the Department of Higher Education and Training. This Department, led by Dr Blade Nzimande, oversees all tertiary education institutions in the country and has as its vision a “South Africa in which we have a differentiated and fully-inclusive post-school system that allows South Africans to access relevant post-school education and training, in order to fulfil the economic and social goals of participation in an inclusive economy and society” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015).

This Department, however, is expected to perform in line with the demands and expectations of a national blueprint; National Development Plan (NDP).

The NDP is a “launchpad and blueprint for a future economic and socio-economic development strategy for the country” (Zarenda 2013:3). It is an extensive document that looks to improve the lives of South Africans and the overall standard of living and level of development of the country by 2030, mainly by elimination of unemployment, poverty and inequality. The NDP document extensively outlines the plans for each sector of the country, and the goals to be achieved by 2030. It is the result of the National Planning Commission, which consists of 26 experts across the different fields.

The aforementioned experts sat and produced a plan, but the public was also open to make suggestions on the contents. “Building on the diagnostic report [National Planning Commission Diagnostic Report 2011] and subsequent public comment, a draft development plan was released in November 2011 which added four thematic areas – a focus on rural economy, social protection, regional/world affairs and community safety. Extensive consultations and comments on the draft plan were forthcoming and the overall response was, in general, positive. The plan was endorsed by the ruling party at its Mangaung Conference in December 2012 and after being favourably considered by Cabinet, formed the basis of President Jacob Zuma’s State of the Nation address in the opening of Parliament on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2013” (Zarenda 2013:2)

It is important to note, however, that this document is not a national policy, a replacement of the current NGP, but a framework that guides the direction of the country from the time of its adoption until 2030. The NDP is still firmly entrenched in the ideals of the RDP, it is a more advanced version of the demands of the RDP, which since adoption in 1994 was keen on reducing poverty and inequality while reconstructing the state post-apartheid.

The NDP’s implementation started in 2013, and as mentioned above, affects all sectors in society, but for this work, focus will be the progress review of this blueprint on the Department of Higher Education and Training. There needs to be a look at the specifics of the document with regards to this important sector. Problems inherited from apartheid rule still persist, and the NDP acknowledges that, but whether the government and institutions of higher learning are capable of successful implementation forms the basis of this work.

## 1.5 Legal framework of higher education in South Africa

To better and further understand the significance and role of higher education in South Africa, it is necessary to highlight some of the laws behind the function thereof. This section aims to highlight some of those legislations governing higher education in South Africa. It was earlier expressed that South Africa as seen today emanates from the dark ashes of apartheid, subject to discriminatory policies and legislations. The dawn of democracy prompted the development of just laws that will result in equal access to quality education for all, contrary to what the case was during apartheid rule.

It is important to note that the NDP itself does not deviate from these legislations, it is firmly subject to the contents and stipulations of the legislative measures discussed below. The legislations are: the Higher Education Act of 1997, Further Education and Training Colleges Act of 2006, and the National Qualification Framework Act of 2008.

### 1.5.1 Higher Education Act of 1997

This law forms the core of higher education across the country, it is the first point of reference as far as higher education laws are concerned. Signed into law just a year after the supreme law of the land, the constitution, was amended, the Higher Education Act is responsible for advising and the regulation of all activities of all stakeholders involved in the running of higher education institutions across the country.

To elaborate on the above, this Act also seeks (Higher Education Act 1997):

- ✓ to regulate higher education; to provide for the establishment, composition and functions of a Council on Higher Education;
- ✓ to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public higher education institutions; to provide for the appointment and functions of an independent assessor;
- ✓ to provide for the registration of private higher education institutions;
- ✓ to provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in higher education;
- ✓ to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of certain laws; and to provide for matters connected therewith

### *1.5.2 Further Education and Training Colleges Act of 2006*

Higher education in South Africa is not only a reference to universities. Government has provision for further education and training institutions that seek to equip students with technical skills. These institutions play a significant role in ensuring that the question of skills shortage in the country is addressed. Furthermore, these institutions, because of their lower tuition demands and proximity to the communities, tend to have more numbers than those of traditional universities, there are currently twenty-four (24) universities and fifty (50) registered technical and vocational education and training colleges (Council on Higher Education 2015). According to Education (2015), “from 2009, the Department of Higher Education and Training has also been responsible for Further Education and Training (FET) [now known as technical and vocational education and training (TVET)], which covers training supplied from Grades 10 to 12, including career-oriented education and training offered in technological colleges, community colleges and private colleges.”

The significance of this Act therefore remains unquestionable. It is an Act in place to (Further Education and Training Colleges Act 2006):

- ✓ provide for the regulation of further education and training;
- ✓ to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public further education and training colleges;
- ✓ to provide for the employment of staff at public further education and training colleges;
- ✓ to provide for the registration of private further education and training colleges
- ✓ to provide for the promotion of quality in further education and training;
- ✓ to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal or amendment of laws; and
- ✓ to provide for matters connected therewith.”



### *1.5.3 National Qualification Framework Act of 2008*

Although this Act is not directly involved or exclusively used for matters connected to higher education and training in South Africa, it is an important tool that looks to regulate and enforce quality in terms of the output of the institutions upon the conclusion of a learner or student's studies. The National Qualification Framework Act advises on the responsibilities of the Minister, as the political head of the department. This Act becomes helpful as a guiding tool as it is solely focused on how all stakeholders should go about performing their roles, and the accompanying responsibilities.

As its key objectives, the NQF has the following:

- ✓ to create a single integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- ✓ to facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
- ✓ to enhance the quality of education and training;
- ✓ to accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities.

### **1.6 Problem statement**

A problem statement is the expression of what the problem under focus is. It thoroughly describes what the work will address, before the actual discussions and steps are taken to solve the problem. The problem statement can also be seen as an outline of what the author intends to discuss, and will usually enhance the ability not to deviate from the initial idea of undertaking a research project.

Before the core elements of this section are focused on, it is key to state once more that the NDP is not a policy, but a blueprint. The NDP, however, shares one aspect with a policy, they both seek to solve a particular problem. It is for this reason that the following will look at problems with the NDP as similar to the problems faced with public policy in South Africa.

This particular work was chosen because of the need to determine exactly how far the Department of Higher Education and Training and higher education institutions have come in terms of implementing the goals of the NDP. Implementation, especially of policies, in the public sector is in most cases unsuccessful. South Africa has arguably the best Constitution, the National Assembly is frequently tabling policies and legislations that seek to better the country, but implementation in most cases fails. This work and discussion becomes even more interesting once it is taken into account that for the higher education goals as stipulated in the NDP to be realised, government has to work closely with the more knowledgeable partner in the form of South African higher education institutions.

Two “goals” of the NDP as far as higher education and training is concerned have especially aroused the interest that led to this work. Firstly, according to the National Planning Commission (undated), the NDP seeks to “increase graduation rates to more than 25 percent by 2030”. Secondly, the NDP will “produce more than 100 doctoral graduates per million per year by 2030”.

The problem faced here is that as much as the goals and/targets are stipulated, higher education institutions may not have the capacity to meet the demands and expectations. Universities may end up having to take in large numbers of rather “unprepared” students, with the hope that they will finish and pursue postgraduate studies. The word unprepared is used to highlight that the quantity of intakes will not determine the quality of outcome. More needs to be done and considered when looking at these NDP targets.

It is the goal of the NDP to increase the number of PhD graduates, but recent events and statistics show a very low number of undergraduates across the country. Mtshali (2013) reports that, “the graduation rate among undergraduate students in South Africa’s 23 public universities is 15 per cent. The rate for Master’s students is 20 per cent and for doctoral students 12 per cent”. This suggests that for the first goal to be achieved, there will have to be an increase of 10 per cent from the current situation. Establishing how easy this is to attain, and whether the universities have a feasible plan to make it happen

without compromising the quality of education, and what has been put in place thus far to get there, is the key goal of this work.

The second question of increasing the number of doctoral students is heavily dependent on the increased number of graduates. The problems that are attached to the first question will greatly determine whether the doctoral goals are attained. This work will not predict total failure of the realisation of the NDP goals, but will merely look at the progress made thus far on achieving the fairly ambitious targets.

### **1.7 Research objectives**

This section is concerned with what the researcher intends to achieve with this work. The purpose of the study will express the goal of the research project, what the author wants to achieve as a response to the problem stated. The purpose of the study is primarily concerned with the reason behind undertaking a research project, it answers why the researcher decided on this particular topic and can better be described as the “vision” of the researcher as far the research project is concerned.

The policy process starts with the identification of a problem and ends where the deliberations on the best way to solve the problem are evaluated after implementation. However, not all policies succeed in fixing the problem, unintended consequences sometimes prevail after implementation, and those tasked with implementation will know better about the practicality of the policy than those high above the echelon who suggest solutions. The views of those who implement will be beneficial when an overview of the policy is undertaken.

The NDP, as articulated earlier, is a product of extensive consultation with the public, but key to the drafting of this blueprint are the sixteen (16) experts in different fields, but the task of implementation is left for the officials in higher education institutions relevant to the field where the policy will be implemented. Based on the above and the problem statement highlighted earlier, it is the purpose of this study to find out where the final line of stakeholders, those who are there to implement the targets of the NDP, namely the higher education institutions, are in terms of implementation, to determine how the setting of

these targets have altered the strategic plans of these institutions, and how they (universities) plan to deal with any challenges presented by the adoption of the National Development Plan as they go about the task of implementation.

## 1.8 Clarification of concepts

This section serves to clarify prominent concepts that form the nucleus of this work, concepts that appear frequently throughout this research project. It is this section that will help the reader understand what those words mean and their context in relation to this work. The concepts to be clarified below are; Public Administration, National Development Plan, higher education, policy, public policy, policy implementation, policy review, participation, and public sector.

### 1.8.1 Public Administration

Public Administration (written in uppercase) is an academic discipline that trains professionals who will work in the public service. It refers to the study of government and government activities within academic institutions such as the University of Pretoria (e.g. Public Administration 122), with the view to producing an understanding of how government ideally should conduct its business. Public Administration, as defined by Denhardt, Denhardt and Blanc (2014), is concerned with “the management of public programs” across national, provincial and local level of government.

Public Administration is also “a term used to mean the study of selective practice of the tasks associated with the behaviour, conduct and protocol of the affairs of the administrative state” (Kuye 2005:5). This academic discipline should not be mistaken for public administration (lowercase), as the latter refers to the actual, practical work done by officials in the public sector. Public administrators’ “work ranges across the varied interests of government and public affairs, from defence and national security to social welfare and environmental quality, from taxation to financial administration to human resource management” (Denhardt *et al* 2014).

Public Administration can be said to be both an art and a science. It can be argued to be a science as it can be defined, explained and predicted. The definition is provided above,

and all its inherent elements can be clearly defined. The activities taking place within the discipline and field can be explained, mostly based on previous occurrences, leading up the predictions on what the outcome will be if a particular action is taken. It is said to be an art as it involves the need for particular skills to carry it out. Like any other art, it requires skill and understanding to better execute.

### 1.8.2 Public sector

The public sector is the section of society administered by government. It can be contrasted to the private sector; the former looks after the welfare of society and delivers services to the general public, it is a sector that is funded by the public and businesses through taxes and it conducts its functions with no expectations of profit. The private sector, in contrast, is a sector that is profit driven and serves the interests of those in higher echelons of management.

The public sector refers to rule or governance by the elected government on democratic societies, it is a field where the public holds government to account and expects the delivery of public services such as water, housing, infrastructure and the facilitation of social welfare benefits such as grants. "Given that governments are different, and that they may be arranged in various ways as well, they do share common functions, responsibilities and duties in terms of their statehood. It is through the State in particular, and the Public Sector, that government action is articulated and realised" Reddy and Governder (2014:163).

### 1.8.3 National Development Plan

The National Development Plan is the blueprint that seeks to guide the country towards lower levels of poverty and unemployment by 2030. It is a document that extensively covers the *status quo* across all government departments and all three tiers of government, and determines how these elements of government should look and function in 2030.

The document is not a replacement of the current national economic policy, the New Growth Path, it just seeks to highlight the envisaged state of affairs fifteen (15) years from now. Hailed as a liberal blueprint that will improve the lives of the people on the ground

and ensure government effectiveness, the National Development Plan became effective in 2012, introduced by the ruling African National Congress.

#### 1.8.4 Higher education

Higher education refers to the tertiary institutions across the country. This includes universities, Technical Vocational Education and Training colleges, Skills Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and ... and are in place to train and equip the population with skills for various fields after secondary school, they are in place to supply the workforce of the country.

Higher education in South Africa has become a strong role player in the midst of skills shortage, especially in key sectors such as engineering and science. It is a key sector of society overseen by the Department of Higher Education and Training and legislated by the Higher Education Act of 1997.

#### 1.8.5 Policy

A policy is a statement of intent. It is a guideline on how an institution (of government in this instance) intends to go about carrying out its affairs. Reddy and Govender (2014:158) define a policy as a “series of separate or interrelated ideas, proposals, actions, formal programmes with expected outcomes” and it “has a purpose, or may be related to another purpose or targets and may contain tools to evaluate its outcomes.”

A policy comes into existence when a problem is identified, it is a solution to a clearly defined problem. There is a policy process in place for it to be effective, the first step of problem identification has been identified, it is then followed by deliberations on the best possible method to address the problem, before being implemented. Implementation is not the last step; because of changes of the environment and situation, there is a need to

regularly evaluate the policy to see if it is still relevant and effective. In the absence of the latter, the process goes back through to the first (or second) step of the process

### 1.8.6 Public policy

Policy has already been defined as a statement of intent. A public policy, therefore, is a policy that aims to solve a public problem. It is a policy implemented by government as the primary “guardian” of public welfare and interests. A public policy is one that is binding to the general public, it is authoritative and enforceable. With public policy, it is referred to one that applies across society and can, in most cases, have the input of the general public before taking effect.

In further explaining the nature public policy, Roux (2002:425) says that, “public policy refers to a proposed course of action of government, or guidelines to follow to reach goals and objectives, and continuously subject to the effects of environmental change and influence.” This points to the fact that a public policy should always be flexible in order to respond to unexpected changes such as political and/or economic ones that may not have been foreseen at the initial stages of the policies.

Reddy and Govender (2014:160) define a public policy as “all formal and publicly known decisions of government that come about through predetermined channels in a particular administration. It is a declaration and implementation of intent.” With the above definition, it is clear that a public policy is a policy that is overseen by the government to advance the needs and interests of its citizenry.

### 1.8.7 Corruption

Corruption is known to be one of the biggest challenges that retards the development of the country, and will feature strongly in this work as an issue that poses a threat to the

success and even existence of the National Development Plan. Three definitions will be looked at before a single one is given by the author is given.

Looking at the definitions it becomes clear that it involves using your powers for benefits one is not entitled to. For one, the Economic and Financial Crimes Act (2004) says that corruption is the “non-violent criminal and illicit activity committed with objectives of earning wealth illegally either individually or in a group or organised manner thereby violating existing legislation governing the economic activities of government and its administration”

The World Bank (1997) also shares a similar definition when it states that “corruption is the misuse or abuse of public office for private gain.” On the other hand, and similar to the first two definitions, the International Monetary Fund defines corruption as the “intentional noncompliance with arm’s length relationship aimed at deriving some advantage at from this behaviour for oneself or related individuals.” (IMF 1998).

Looking at the above definitions, it becomes clear that corruption has selfish and unfair elements that benefit the individual and/or those around them. With that being said, in this work corruption is defined as the selfish, deliberate disruption of a system with laws and process to which you have powers and access to manipulate in order to unduly benefit from that which was meant or intended for other purposes.

## 1.9 **Research Method**

The research methodology chosen for this study is the qualitative method. This method is suitable for this study as it presents the opportunity to deal with voluminous information, as is typical of government documents, which form the nucleus of this work. With its non-restrictive nature, this method enabled the researcher to probe deeper into the state of the country’s education, and provided detailed analysis and recommendations, something that would have been hampered under a quantitative method.

An important part of a research method is the design. This design serves as a guide and blueprint on how the qualitative method will be conducted. This work will be designed by a case study due to the focus of higher education sector and its institution, particularly how they have fared with the implementation of a single document, the National Development Plan of South Africa.



This case study research will be carried out with a correlational study element to bring about an understanding and clearly outline the progress of the NDP on the goals set out for higher education and training. The chosen data gathering technique was documents. This was informed by the fact that the work focuses on government information that has been made publicly accessible and other documented events, particularly those that narrate the state of the higher education sector.

## 1.10 **Structure of the dissertation**

### Chapter 1: Introduction and background

The first chapter of this work will be focused on giving a broad introduction of the topic, it will serve to give an explanation of the role of higher education in South Africa and how it is influenced by the National Development Plan. This will be followed a background, providing a brief history on how the two key points of the discussion (higher education and the NDP) evolved and the interface thereof.

### Chapter 2: Research Methodology

The second chapter highlights the best method used for carrying out this work, how information will be collected to inform our understanding of the topic. The research methodology chapter provides information on elements such as the data collection method, the sample and why a qualitative method is considered ideal for the purpose of this work compared to the qualitative and the mixed methods approaches.

### Chapter 3: Literature Review

This section of the dissertation will discuss work done by other authors on the topic, it is concerned with giving a guideline to the author of this work and builds on the knowledge that is already provided by other scholars. With this chapter, the author is provided with an opportunity to show how this work contributes and differs to present knowledge about the topic under consideration.

### Chapter 4: Introduction to the case study

The fourth chapter provides answers to the reason why this work was undertaken, it will throw light on why the author feels society and the academic fraternity need to look at the impact of the NDP on higher education institutions in South Africa. In short, this chapter seeks to prove the significance of this discussion for the country.

#### Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis

This sector forms the nucleus of the work. It deals directly with the problem statement and gives an actual perspective on the topic with interviews and findings being tabled. It is a key section of the dissertation that will give an account of both the *status quo* and what the situation would look like should things stay as they are. It is in this section where the realities of those tasked with the implementation of the NDP are exposed, and how institutions are coping with the demands and expectations of the national blueprint.

#### Chapter 6: General Conclusions and Recommendations

The sixth chapter comes at the back of the impact of the NDP on higher education being discussed, and will give recommendations on the best way forward to ensure easier implementation of the NDP and future guidelines affecting the higher education sector. It is a section dedicated to provide lessons from which to learn to ensure that the challenges are kept to a minimum when trying to improve this sector in future.

#### 1.11 **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter gave us a clear message that South Africa has arisen from dark ashes of apartheid, which was in place to oppress and limit the black population in society, leading to abysmal injustices at social, political, economic and psychological levels, and these are still problems society faces today. It needed a strong show of resistance and revolt against the apartheid regime to open up opportunities for a better South Africa, and these came mainly with the ruling African National Congress and the youth in Soweto, leading to the democracy as we know it today.

It was highlighted that the new South Africa has put in place, firstly the sovereign constitution that promotes human rights and dignity for all, and national economic policies such as the RDP and NGP to equalise society. The NDP is a blueprint that came to the fore in 2012 and contributes towards the realisation of the national policies as stated. It was also highlighted that implementation, which has been one of the challenges faced by the democratic government, is a problem that needs to be looked into as far the goals of the NDP are concerned.

Of significance as well was how this dissertation will be structured, consisting of six chapters that will in the end inform of the progress made on the achievement of the National Development Plan goals by higher education and training institutions, as governed by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

## **Chapter 2: Research Methodology**

## **Chapter 2: Research Methodology**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Gathering information is an integral part of any research project. For a researcher to be able to get the relevant information and answer the research question, there is a strong need for information, regardless of how this information is sourced or accumulated. This, however, does not mean every method of data collection is suitable for every research project; there needs to be an assessment of which method is suitable for a project of a particular researcher.

The importance of this chapter is that it will serve as a guiding tool as far as carrying out the research is concerned. It is revealed in this chapter how information that is contained was sourced, and the best way to ensure that the right sources relevant to the study are chosen. There is an abundance of information, especially about contentious issues of the day such as the NDP and higher education and may be found in publications, videos, verbally through interviews and other sources. It becomes important to know which mode will best suit this research.

In the social sciences, there are two main research methodologies available to researchers. These methods are unique and their suitability is informed by the kind of information the researcher is looking for. The two methods are qualitative and quantitative research methods and a careful choice between the two is of importance as the wrong method could very well render the entire project tedious and lacking a clear direction to enable a better understanding of what the researcher tries to communicate. Worth taking into account as well is the method of combining both qualitative and quantitative; the mixed method, which will also be briefly alluded to. The qualitative research method was chosen for this study.

This chapter will explain the three methodologies, before discussing in detail the qualitative research method (where the design thereof will be highlighted, along with the method's advantages and disadvantages, and the available data gathering techniques), with the view to explaining why it was deemed a more favourable method for this particular research. The research topic and the research question will be addressed. Also of

importance in this chapter is the discussion of the population and sample selection, ethical considerations and the limitations of this study.

## 2.2 Quantitative research

Quantitative research deals with numerical data, its core focus is numbers. With quantitative research, the researcher is interested in understanding and explaining phenomena through the use of numerically expressed data such as graphs, tables, statistics and scales. In quantitative research the researcher is concerned less about detailed information and contented to provide explanations through quantifying.

Maree and Pietersen (2007:145) eloquently defined quantitative research as “a process that is systematic and objective in its way of using numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe (or population) to generalise the findings to the universe that is being studied.” This explicitly explains that numbers, instead of rich, detailed information, as in qualitative research, form the basis of explaining that which the researcher tries to communicate with interested parties.

Quantitative research methods are designed to ensure objectivity, generalisability, and reliability while its techniques “are concerned with how research participants are selected randomly from the study population in an unbiased manner, the standardised questionnaire or intervention they receive, and the statistical methods used to test predetermined hypotheses regarding the relationships between the specified independent and dependent variables. In quantitative research, the researcher is considered to be external to the subject (an *outsider*), and results are expected to be replicable no matter who conducts the research.” (Webb & Auriacombe 2006:592).

It can thus be concluded that quantitative research is a method that will be useful when the researcher conducts work that can best be explained by the use of numbers, and this numerical information will remain constant if tested by a different body using the same, structured method. Unlike with a qualitative method, a quantitative method is not likely to change as easily should answers to a question be looked at from a different source, since numbers are more likely to remain constant than the opinion and experiences of the sample.

The above, however, should not be misread as that the quantitative method is perfect. The quantitative method has one main disadvantage. Firstly, the excessive use of numbers means there is little room to probe. This is especially a problem in a research project like this one where the “how” question is central. Quantitative research is limiting in this sense and it is for this reason that the qualitative method will be focused on thoroughly.

### **2.3 Qualitative research**

This method of research in simple terms focuses on securing rich information. The idea here is to collect as much descriptive information as possible to enable a better understanding of phenomena that would otherwise have been left unexplained or reduced to numbers if a quantitative method was used. The aim is to get as many perspectives about a matter as possible, which will result in the researcher and those interested in the research having a detailed explanation and understanding of the subject matter.

Before getting to the various definitions of qualitative research, it is important to keep in mind that this research method can be undertaken using various ways, it is not restricted to just one. Snape and Spencer (2003:1) explained this as follows: “it is important to recognise that there is no single, accepted way of doing qualitative research. Indeed, how researchers carry it out depends upon a range of factors including: their beliefs about the nature of the social world and what can be known about it (ontology), the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired (epistemology), the purpose(s) and goals of the research, the characteristics of the research participants, the audience for the research, the funders of the research, and the position and environment of the researchers themselves.”

With the above characteristic of qualitative research in mind, the following sets of definitions were chosen to define this method as they are much closer to the context of this work. These definitions were derived from credible sources that are independent but seem to share similarities with regard to their views on qualitative research.

Nieuwenhuis (2007:50) summed up the above statement by defining qualitative research as “research that attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed or studied.” The definition serves as a reminder that unlike quantitative research, this method will always strive to get as much non-numerical information as possible.

Building on the above definition, Patton and Cochran (2002) stated that “qualitative research is characterised by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis.” This definition proves pertinent in the context of this work because the search is related to a document that seeks to address societal challenges.

Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009), on the other hand showed the importance of this method by stating that “measurements tell us how often or how many people behave in a certain way, so if a research question involves exploring how much or how often something happens, it’s probably appropriate to use quantitative methods. Qualitative research attempts to broaden and/or deepen our understanding of how things came to be the way they are in our social world.”

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) defined it as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices ... turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.”

Qualitative research is also about answering the “why” questions. If the aim is to understand the reasons behind certain events or behaviour, it becomes important to use the qualitative method as it is focused on probing and allows the sample to ramble with little if any disturbance, give an in-depth account of their understanding of that which is under discussion while providing first-hand information as per their experience. It is a method, as explained by Nieuwenhuis (2007:51) that “studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment.”



It is a method that does not place restrictions on both the researcher and the sample as far as communication is concerned. This open, flexible and descriptive nature of this method was best highlighted by Kumar (2014:14) when he said the qualitative approach is “embedded in the philosophy of empiricism, follows an open, flexible and unstructured approach to inquiry; aims to explore diversity rather than quantify; emphasises the description and narration of feelings, perceptions and experiences rather than their measurement; and communicates findings in a descriptive and narrative rather than analytical manner, placing no or less emphasis on generalisations.”

With the various definitions of qualitative research provided above, it has become clear that qualitative research has a unique set of characteristics that separates it from the quantitative approach that will be briefly discussed towards the end of the chapter. The key characteristics of qualitative research are that it seeks to secure rich, detailed information, it answers the “why” questions, it is flexible and allows rambling of the sample.

The broad characteristics of qualitative research were stated by Nieuwenhuis (2007:51), “unlike quantitative methods, qualitative research methodology places little importance on developing statistically valid samples, or on searching for statistical support for hypotheses, or on measuring the size or scope of phenomena. On the contrary, qualitative research focuses on describing and understanding phenomena within their naturally occurring context (called naturalistic context) with the intention of developing an understanding of the meaning(s) imparted by the respondents – a ‘seeing through the eyes of the participants’ – so that the phenomenon can be described in terms of the meaning that they have for the actors or participants”.

## **2.4 Functions of qualitative research**

To further clarify with regard to the qualitative method, it is importance to discuss the broad functions advanced by Ritchie and Lewis. These functions have been identified by these

authors as contextualised, explanatory, evaluative and generative. Each will be explained below.

#### *2.4.1 Contextualisation function*

This function refers to qualitative research's ability to describe the nature of what exists, it gives the form of the said phenomena under consideration. Qualitative research enables us to understand the origins of a given point of focus and where it currently is, it is in place to give a clearer understanding of what is.

Ritchie and Lewis (2013:27) expressed that "contextual research is concerned with identifying what exists in the social world and the way it manifests itself. A major feature of qualitative methods is their facility to describe and display phenomena as experienced by the study population, in fine-tuned detail and in the study participants' own terms."

The above can be achieved through (2013:28):

- Map the range of elements, dimensions, classes or positions within a social phenomenon;
- Display the nature or features of a phenomenon;
- Describe the meaning that people attach to an experience, event, circumstance or other phenomenon; and
- Identify and define typologies.

#### *2.4.2 Explanatory function*

The explanatory function is concerned with proving the reasons for what exists. This function seeks to bring a detailed clarity as to how one step led to another, to bring about understanding of the origins of phenomena as seen in current form. With the explanatory function, qualitative research serves an important role of giving an account as far as the origins and relationship between elements are concerned.

This function “is concerned with why phenomena occur and the forces and influences that drive their occurrence. Because of its facility to examine subjects in depth, qualitative research provides a unique tool for studying what lies behind, or underpins, a decision, attitude, behaviour or other phenomena. It also allows associations that occur in people's thinking or acting - and the meaning these have for people - to be identified; these in turn may indicate some explanatory - even causal – link” (Ritchie and Lewis 2013:28).

#### *2.4.3 Evaluative function*

The evaluative function seeks to determine the effectiveness of what works. Because implementation, especially of policies and programmes, will by nature have unintended consequences, it becomes important to reflect on what is in place to determine whether there is success or failure as far as what was initially intended, leading to the necessary intervention where adverse results seem to have occurred.

“In order to carry out evaluation, information is needed about both processes and outcomes and qualitative research contributes to both. Because of its flexible methods of investigation, qualitative methods are particularly adept at looking at the dynamics of how things operate.” (Ritchie and Lewis 2013:29). This function becomes effective once a detailed plan is in place, in order to know what was initially expected is being achieved, and what lessons can be drawn from the final product to come up with solutions in the present and how best to do things for future reference.

Such information can be used to (Ritchie and Lewis 2013:29):

- Identify the factors that contribute to successful or unsuccessful delivery of a programme, service or intervention;
- Identify the effects of taking part in a programme or initiative on participants and how they occur;
- Examine the nature of the requirements of different groups within the target population;
- Explore a range of organisational aspects surrounding the delivery of a programme, service or intervention; and
- Explore the contexts in which interventions are received and their impact on effectiveness.

#### *2.4.4 Generative function*

“Generative research is concerned with producing new ideas either as a contribution to the development of social theory or to the refinement or stimulus of policy solutions. Because qualitative research seeks to capture emergent concepts and is not overly predetermined in coverage, the potential for original or creative thoughts or suggestions is high. It also allows ideas to be generated through, and then placed in, the 'real' contexts from which they arise.” (Ritchie and Lewis 2013:30).

The ability to generate new knowledge and theories points to qualitative research being a dynamic continuous method that can sustain itself with no possibility of obsolescence. Because of the changing nature of the world of knowledge, this characteristic puts qualitative research at an advantage as a versatile and reliable method of conducting research.

### **2.5 Qualitative research designs**

In qualitative research, like in the other forms of methodologies, there are different types of designs that can be adopted with the view to enabling the correct choice of a data-gathering technique. A research design, or a qualitative one in the context of this study, is essentially a blueprint, it is an outline of how research will be conducted, what is to be done to answer the research questions and the strict procedures, and it also highlights explicitly the process to follow in acquiring the sought information for the purpose of the research.

Kumar (2014:123) expressed that a research design is “a plan through which you decide for yourself and communicate to others your decisions regarding what study design you propose to use, how you will collect information from your respondents, how you will select your respondents, how the information you will collect is to be analysed and how you will

communicate your findings”. It can be understood from this definition that the importance of the research design is immense, it can provide guidance where the researcher loses track, and can be used as a tracker of progress made in conducting research.

Six types of qualitative research design can be found, namely; conceptual studies, action research, grounded theory, historical research, ethnography and case study research.

Conceptual studies in nature are based on secondary sources and engage with the understanding of concepts, the main aim being to add to the existing body of knowledge (Nieuwenhuis 2007:71), while action research is a more practical approach with a focus on challenges and possible solutions faced by people in their social settings. Grounded theory “seeks to develop theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed” (Nieuwenhuis 2007:77), historical research is focused on analysing and making findings about past events, while ethnography is writing about people.

The qualitative research method of key interest to this work is case study research and refers to a point of focus to which the researcher affords attention. It can be in the form of, but not limited to, a person, people, environment, or situation, from which the researcher looks to source information. Mavhivha (2007:155) expresses that a case study “can be a field study or ethnography taking place in a naturalistic setting or in an artificial laboratory setting involving researcher-initiated manipulation or participants, or natural experiments accidental occurrences interrupting the flow of events – that can be studied as if they were experiments.”

Based on the above definition, this work will focus on a document that forms a great part of policy in the Department of Higher Education and Training in South Africa; the NDP. This case study research will be carried out with a correlational study element to bring about an understanding and clearly outline the progress of the NDP on the goals set out for higher education and training. A correlational study seeks to discover or establish the existence of a relationship, association or interdependence between two or more aspects of a situation or phenomena (Kumar 2014:13).

A correlational research, used under the umbrella of a case study in this work, is also advantageous in that it provides the platform for the author to make use of existing literature, the work itself is based on the impact of one element has on another, and it this makes a correlational study method a more suitable option. A correlational research method was therefore chosen before other types such as explanatory, exploratory and the descriptive methods.

As highlighted, implementation of policy has always been a challenge in the South African public service, and the introduction of the NDP as a blueprint is likely to suffer a premature death if the same mind-set in the public sector remains unchanged. So far, however, and fortunately so, government institutions, and the Department of Higher Education and Training in particular, have through various policy readjustments, shown a sense of interest in aligning themselves to the national blueprint, with vision 2030 in mind. With that being said, this work will study and monitor all these new adjustments to existing policies to see and determine the likelihood of success along with that of failure.

## **2.6 Data gathering techniques**

Having determined that a case study method will be used, with key focus on correlation between a blueprint in the form of NDP and Higher Education Act, this section will discuss ways in which data and information will be gathered to paint a holistic picture of the situation as it is, enabling the discovery of what will be. To gather data in qualitative research, it should be kept in mind that this form of research looks for rich, detailed information, and will therefore adopt a technique that accommodates this characteristic.

Data gathering techniques most common in qualitative research are *observation*, *interviewing*, *focus groups* and *documents*. Researchers make a choice of the relevant technique based on the kind of information needed. It is worth noting that one is not inclined to use just one technique, a combination of two or more is also an option that many researchers resort to, as it enables the collection of data in various ways, leading to more information being obtainable.

Observation is conducted by the researcher who is not actively involved in the activities of the sample; it is not a hands-on approach and is merely focused on looking at and judging the behaviour of the sample with the view to understanding phenomenon under study.

Focus groups involves assembling “five to twelve people with the purpose of collecting...data about a group’s perceptions, attitudes and experiences on a defined topic” (Marelli 2013:806).

An interview is a question and answer setup where the interviewer (i.e. researcher) will pose questions to the interviewee (i.e. sample) to learn more about the latter’s understanding of the topic under discussion and their experiences, suggestions, ideas and any other elements that can aid in answering the research question. Interviewing is most commonly used as it is direct communication between the researcher and the sample. The aim of interviews in qualitative research is to obtain a better understanding of a phenomenon through the eyes and first-hand experience of the participant, which can be a valuable source of rich data if used correctly. Interviewing is presented in different ways, it can be open-ended, semi-structured or a structured interview.

Niewenhuis (2007:86) states that open-ended interviews often take “the form of a conversation with the intention that the researcher explores with the participant his or her views”, but the participant is not served with a specific number of questions that are clearly outlined by the researcher. A structured interview involves detailed questions developed in advance, but can inhibit probing if they are overly structured.

For the purpose of this work, documents will be the source of data. Documents, whether primary or secondary, refer to “published and unpublished documents, company reports, e-mail messages, faxes, newspaper articles, or any document that is connected to the investigation”. This serves to inform that data and information to be used in this work is sourced from government documents (i.e. NDP, Higher Education Act, articles and thesis) as the topic itself is focused on government policies.

## **2.7 Qualitative research challenges**

It has already been established that qualitative research is the chosen method for this work, what it is and entails was thoroughly expressed, along with the chosen design and techniques. What has not been highlighted, however, are the inherent challenges of using

this method. It is a method favourable for this work, but it is definitely not perfect. This section will look at some of the flaws in the use of the qualitative research method.

Firstly, this method is time consuming. There normally is no set time limit for the interview, and taking into account that the sample is allowed to ramble, interviews tend to take a lot of time. A lot of time has to be exhausted on each interviewee, who has the benefit of not being interrupted by the interviewer, and will thus cover even those aspects that are not necessarily of importance to the researcher.

Secondly, the qualitative method is based on the personal experience of the sample. This means that the results of qualitative research cannot be easily generalised to the population as a whole, as is normally the case with quantitative research. What one man in a given community considers a misfortune, can be taken for a blessing by another in the same area. It is for this reason that many a scholar will doubt the use of this method.

Thirdly, data collection and synchronisation thereof will always prove troublesome. Because of the number of people and available information under consideration, bringing data together and seeking a uniform stance on phenomena is likely to pose problems for the researcher; the responses are different, and sometimes contrasting, personal experiences and people perceive situations differently.

The fourth challenge of qualitative research is closely linked to the third. There is the possibility of the researcher being biased. This bias will not be intentional at all times, but naturally, as people we sometimes see what we choose to, we are sometimes faced with confirmation bias; where we also pick out elements that support our own views and beliefs around phenomena. This challenge is especially likely to occur when the observation technique is used.

## **2.8 Mixed method research**

A mixed method research is the combination of both the qualitative and quantitative methods of research. It is a method considered to be progressive in that it carries the



advantages and (to a certain extent) disadvantages of both methods discussed above and therefore does not restrict the researcher as is normally the case when using either one of the two prominent methods.

According to Ivankova, Creswell and Clark (2007:), “a mixed method approach can be used to address different research problems” as they consider it “helpful in gaining in-depth understanding of some trends and patterns, generating and testing theories, developing new measurement instruments, studying diverse perspectives or understanding the relationship between variables.”

To further understand the significance and relevance of a mixed method research, Ivankova (2007:261) provides four main reasons for combining quantitative and qualitative methods within one study:

1. Explain or elaborate on quantitative results with subsequent qualitative data;
2. Use qualitative data to develop a new measurement instrument or theory that is subsequently tested;
3. Compare quantitative and qualitative data sets to produce well-validated conclusions; and
4. Enhance a study with a supplemental data set, either quantitative or qualitative.

From the above, the author of this work communicated the three research methods and thoroughly described the qualitative method, as the chosen method for this work. It was clarified that the methods differ significantly and although they are all equally important, the qualitative method was deemed more favourable to help answer the research question satisfactorily.

## **2.9 Why the research method was chosen**

Of the three research methods, qualitative was chosen, for three particular reasons. This work wishes to get rich, descriptive information. The qualitative research method, of the three, is the one that exclusively caters for this element; as stated earlier, it allows the

participants to ramble and express themselves freely, whether this is done verbally in cases of interviews or through journal and newspaper articles.

Secondly, also linked to the highlighted nature of qualitative research, the researcher will be using government documents in the form of policies and Acts to make sense of the proposed actions by higher education institutions. Government documents are by nature cumbersome and thoroughly detailed, it is a lot of information in most cases, non-numerical.

Lastly, the qualitative research method does not require extensive skills to perfect, which is one of the key demands of quantitative research. Quantitative research is conducted by very few in the social sciences precisely because it has higher skill requirements than the qualitative approach. The latter, for example, merely demands communication skills for the purpose of conducting research, but with the quantitative method, there is a need to understand (thoroughly) the use of numeric tools such as graphs, compilations of statistics and the drawing up of scales.

## **2.10 Sampling**

Sampling refers to choosing the population to be used by the researcher in pursuit of providing answers for the research question. It is almost impossible to include everyone in the community of interest to the researcher to take part in the research, it is for this reason that the section of the population, known as a sample is chosen from which the results will be generalised.

The sampling of the population can be done in two ways; probability and non-probability sampling. Under the former method, as Maree and Pietersen (2007:172) described, the use of an objective mechanism is utilized in the process of choosing the sample, and the process should be free of human and subjective interference as “each element has a known, non-zero probability of being selected. Also, the selection of elements is completely random.”

For the purpose of this work, a non-probability sampling method will be used. Non-probability means that each element has an unknown, zero probability of being selected. For the purpose of this work, because there will be no interviews, a single document is under focus, the NDP.

The non-probability sample contains four types of sampling, namely convenience sampling, which is used when the sample is easy for the researcher to reach and the location is convenient. It is the quickest method available and demands less effort in terms of time and money to make use of. The second type is quota sampling which demands that the researcher “identify categories of people that need to be in the sample and the required number (quota) in these categories. Sampling is then done by means of, for example, convenience sampling, until the quotas have been reached” (Maree and Pietersen 2007:177).

The third method is snowball sampling, where the researcher initially makes contact with one person within the field of interest, who will then lead the researcher to other people who could have knowledge of the phenomenon under focus. This means that one person leads the researcher to another, and the list of participants grows as the second person is also asked to help track down people in the field.

The last type of non-probability sampling is called the purposive sampling, and it is one that the researcher deems ideal for this work. Purposive sampling takes place where the researcher wants a specific criteria, and uses it to select participants, it is carried out “with a specific purpose in mind” (Maree & Pietersen 2007:178).

The choice of a national government department in the form of the Department of Higher Education and Training is because this Department is the one tasked specifically with coming up with strategies to enforce a link between the higher education institutions and the NDP, they can better explain how they can align policies of their institution to the demands of the NDP. An official at the lower level can only follow orders to implement, and although they might have knowledge of the policies, the researcher prefers to have a look

at those documents produced at strategic meetings and discussions on how the alignment should come about.

The second sample of this work is the University of Pretoria. This sample was selected to enable the author to analyse how the policies at the Department of Higher Education and Training are implemented. Issues of probing will be on how the orders from the Department are being implemented, what the targets are, what has been done so far, challenges faced and if the University documents indicate that the imposed expectations are realistic will be exploited by the researcher through published material of the university.

### **2.11 Research topic**

The research topic for this work is as follows;

*The National Development Plan of South Africa on higher education: a progress review.*

This topic was selected to help determine the intent of stakeholders with regard to the realisation of a South African higher education and training sector envisioned in the document. Without a doubt, and despite numerous criticisms of the NDP by key players such as COSATU, the NDP contains a South Africa worth looking forward to residing and taking pride in, but like many other government plans, there will always be the possibility of failure to implement. This work will, through this topic, give a strong indication on the intent by those responsible for implementation to take us to an “ideal” South African higher education by 2030.

### **2.12 Research question**

The research question of this work is as follows;

*To what extent has there been progress on the implementation of the NDP in the higher education and training sector?*

This research question is focused solely on determining what progress has been made by all the relevant stakeholders in ensuring that the goals of the NDP are realised. It is a question that will assist in the discovery of the pace of implementation, the readiness and,

ultimately, the likelihood of success by the higher education institutions to help government make South Africa a better place for all.

### **2.13 Research objectives**

- This research will, in the end, make apparent the progress made as far as the implementation of the NDP on higher education is concerned.
- It is through this work where the commitment and will of all stakeholders will be revealed. It is the objective of this research to find out what measures have been put in place so far to ensure that the NDP does not become another great idea that remains unimplemented.
- To highlight how institutions of higher learning have had to change their own ways of operation to accommodate the demands of government. This objective gains significance when it is taken into account the wave of transformation and calls thereof. The successful implementation brought by the NDP will go a long way in transforming higher education, something that has been called for since the emergence of a democratic state in 1994.

### **2.14 Data analysis**

To understand the meaning of this section of the chapter, it is important to define data analysis as “usually based on an interpretive philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. Phrased differently, it tries to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon” (Niewenhuis 2007:99). From the above, it can be said that data analysis follows a particular pattern, there is a given procedure in place to help make sense of all the qualitative data in place.

To be more specific, as the above definition is broad, the research will apply content analysis in trying to make sense and conclude on the enormous data available on the topic of focus. Content analysis is focused on identifying and summarising the content of the message, which in this context, will be the documents detailing implementation of NDP goals by government and the higher education institution(s).

Niewenhuis (2007:101) defined content analysis as “the analysis of such things as books, brochures, written documents, transcripts, news reports and visual media”. This method of analysis is deemed more favourable as it allows for analysing the primary source of data of this work; documents. Only after seeing whether implementation plans are in place, through official university documents, can the researcher be in a better position to make an informed analysis on the readiness and extent to implement the goals of the NDP.

Qualitative data is sourced through various means such as interviews, observation, questionnaires and documents. The latter method has been chosen for this work precisely because of the extensive availability of written and published data on the both higher education and the National Development Plan.

In analysing data, the goals of the NDP, taking into account that it is divided into four phases, will be taken to cognisance, to see what should have been implemented at this point in time. Following this, the University of Pretoria’s Vision 2025 will be thoroughly analysed to see how aligned it is to the goals of the NDP, and what has been put in place so far in reaching for the goals of the vision. A juxtaposition of both the NDP and the University of Pretoria’s Vision 2025 will help shed light on the progress, leading to a better understanding on how one of the leading institutions is prepared to meet government halfway in transforming the higher education sector.

## **2.15 Ethical considerations**

Unethical behaviour in this research is one element that is not promoted and will therefore not be tampered with. The author of this work will make phone calls and pursue electronic means of communication to locate information on how to get hold of some key documents, and those who will share this information (to be referred to as sources henceforth) will be made aware of the intentions of this work and therefore participate with full consent. They will be made aware from the start what the research is about and the kind of information the researcher is looking for and they therefore share information willingly and will not get into any sort of distress for doing so.

All questions asked by the researcher do not infringe on the right to privacy and do not pose a risk to the safety of the sources. Whatever information is deemed confidential by the source will not be probed by the researcher and the former is allowed to refuse to

answer any question and/or withdraw from the conversation altogether at any point if they wish to do so. Lastly, the confidentiality of the participants (i.e. the sources) is guaranteed, if they do not wish to have their names published in this work.

## **2.16 Limitations of the study**

While conducting this research certain obstacles were encountered. They were not big enough to prevent the researcher to continue the work but were obstacles nonetheless. Firstly, getting information, literature in particular, was problematic. Many world-renowned experts such as Professor Jerry O. Kuye have written articles on either the NDP itself, or the state of higher education in South Africa, but information on the implications of the NDP on higher education was not as readily and widely available. The researcher just had to find ways to link up the two (literature on the NDP and one on higher education), and use the separate information on the two aspects to make coherent text.

Of importance to emphasise about this work is that it constitutes a longitudinal study. The data of this work can always be revisited after a certain period, and ideally in 2030 to determine whether what was contained here proved true, whether the NDP was a success and if there is any need to advise on the lessons learnt. Being a longitudinal study, the author hopes that upon revision of this document, the contents would be not be too far from the point of accuracy.

The second limitation of the study is the time period. The NDP was adopted in 2013, implementation is still at its fairly early stages, that is why the researcher would only consider the state of affairs and all that has taken place from 2013 until 2016. This is likely to give a premature view of events as the blueprint is only expected to be fully completed

by the year 2030. Three years is not enough to transform any country, this should be taken into account, but action should have started in preparation for full implementation, which is precisely what this work wants to discover.

Thirdly, the researcher saw it as ideal to rather conduct interviews as that will bring more substance to what is being reported about the review, but securing interviews with high ranking officials of higher education institutions and government was problematic and would have been a costly exercise. Management level personnel are busy, often with tight schedules, and securing their time only to have cancellations delayed the completion of this work and exhausted the already limited funds. This led to the exclusive use of documents and publications of institutions as the primary source of information.

Lastly, it should be noted that this work is focused on higher education only as far as the period between 1994 when a democratic government came to power, and 2016 when this work was completed. What happened prior to 1994 greatly influences the structure, successes and challenges faced in the country today, and the tertiary education sector in particular, but will not be discussed in this work. The diagram below seeks to express where South Africa comes from, and where it currently is in terms of the NDP. From the diagram it becomes clear that this work is only limited to the stated period (1994-2016) and all crucial activities that took place within it.





## 2.17 Conclusion

To conclude, this work highlighted the research method to be undertaken in looking to answer the research question. The three types of research, namely, quantitative, qualitative and mixed method, were discussed. Detailed description of the methods were provided but qualitative research was chosen for various reasons, including that it offers probing and will therefore easily help answer the “how” questions.

A research design as defined as a blueprint was discussed, detailing of this qualitative research will be carried out, with attention to data gathering techniques, and documents in particular, being alluded to. It was highlighted that documents are the most convenient tools to gather information, printed and published, is in abundance and will make it easier to make sense of what already exists.

The different types of sampling were discussed, and it was highlighted that higher education institutions will be the core focus as they are the ones tasked with implementing the goals of the NDP.

Following the research topic was the question: “To what extent has there been progress on the implementation of the goals of the NDP?” This is a guide in determining the steps taken to this point to ensure that the NDP becomes a reality. It is the objective of this work, as highlighted, to get to the bottom of this, to measure the will of all parties involved in the implementation of the goals of the NDP.

To ensure the integrity and honesty in this work, a declaration was accommodated, committing to following all research principles and protecting any information considered confidential. The work concluded with stating the limitations of the study, such as the short period of study when conducting the work. The following chapters will build on the above, as the extent of progress is uncovered.

## **Chapter 3: Literature review**

## **Chapter 3: Literature review**

### **3.1 Introduction**

A great part of a researcher's project is complemented by existing knowledge. Knowing what other scholars have said about the author's topic assists in the avoidance of duplication, it also helps to measure the level of existing knowledge on the topic, ultimately giving direction and significance to the researcher's work. To review existing knowledge does not only serve to improve the quality of a research project, but enhances the understanding of the researcher about the research topic itself.

It becomes important to review existing knowledge for many other reasons, including that it provides an opportunity to add onto what is already known, which in most cases deepens the understanding of phenomena under consideration for external stakeholders such as fellow scholars and future students, who will then either critique or build onto the author's production.

This section of the research, the literature review, takes into account all the information available that is relevant to the research topic, which, in this context, is the National Development Plan of South Africa on higher education: a progress review. The challenge faced by the researcher was acquiring works that deal with the NDP on higher education, but that does not render this chapter insignificant; scholarly works discussing the NDP separately from higher education (and vice versa) will be taken into account.

The NDP has been defined as a blueprint in place to tackle poverty, inequality and unemployment. It is a plan by the national government that can only be achieved through close cooperation with all key stakeholders in society such as the private sector, trade unions, NGOs and institutions of higher learning among others. In clarifying the nature of the NDP, compared to policies in the public sector, Higher Education South Africa (2012) states that: "the Plan does not take the form of a usual White or Green Paper in that it does not concentrate on the details of policy making for this or that sector. What it does is present a 'nation-building vision' for 2030, and to present high-level recommendations for how to get there in each sector. This nation-building vision is premised on a 'development paradigm', which targets inequality reduction through growth."

It is, however, concerning that implementation of policies and programmes in South Africa, particularly in the public sector, that has been a challenge. The NDP carries arguably the most envious ideals, and successful implementation thereof will put South Africa among the highest ranking countries in terms of clean governance, economic growth, innovation and knowledge production among a myriad of other ideals.

In this chapter, the significance of the monitoring and evaluation process is thoroughly discussed, as it is only through implementation measures that the author can determine the progress made towards the realisation of the goals of the NDP, with reference to higher education. To review the progress means looking at what has been done from the point of adoption to this day by the relevant stakeholders to achieve the 2030 targets of the NDP, and in this context, the key stakeholders in implementation in the higher education sector (i.e. universities).

Implementation of policies is one of the elements of importance in public administration, especially in modern society, and South Africa in particular, where there has been a lot of political talk and promises, where the economy is not stable, the gap between the rich and the poor widens daily, service delivery protests are a norm and unemployment has reached unacceptable levels. Public administrators in the public sector now have to go back to basics and redeem themselves in the eyes of the citizens by delivering services, which are well defined in the NDP document.

It becomes important to ensure that implementation in the overall context of public administration is monitored and evaluated, in order to understand where failure may have occurred in the implementation of all previous plans and programmes. Public administration is broad and contains functions, and these will be discussed, with the view to determining where it fits in as far as the NDP and higher education are concerned.

One of the key challenges of this work was the location of those scholarly works focused solely on the NDP and higher education, and thus it became imperative to consider what has been said and published about the NDP separately from higher education, especially by world-renowned scholars such as Kuye. This approach proved fruitful, as making a connection of separate but relevant discussions led to the discovery of key facts and consensus on both the plan and the higher education sector.

To provide an outline of the remainder of this chapter; the author will first discuss the relevance of this study to public administration, giving context to the latter. The generic functions of public administration will be discussed, followed by policy, which will detail the process thereof. This will be followed by intensive discussion of the key policy step for the purpose of this work; monitoring and evaluation, before a conclusion is made.

### **3.2 Monitoring and evaluation and Public administration**

The best way to review the progress made as far as adopting the National Development Plan in the higher education sector is by monitoring and evaluating the actual implementation that has taken place so far. However, determining implementation will demand a proper understanding of what monitoring and evaluation is, what it entails and the process thereof. It is important to mention that monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation is carried out by individuals with thorough knowledge of the project under consideration.

In the public sector, these individuals tasked with implementation are known as public officials, they operate within public administration in the national, provincial and local spheres of government. The following will shed more light on what public administration is, its functions and where it contains monitoring and evaluation, this will further make it clear as to how the topic at hand interfaces with public administration.

### **3.3 What is public administration?**

Public administration is the study of practical government activities, it is focused on those activities that occur in all three spheres (national, provincial and local) of government with the aim to satisfy the needs of the public. Public administration, in lowercase, is focused on those processes that are involved in the governance of state affairs, giving clarity and explanation on how these should be conducted, what each institution is tasked with and how policies and legislations come into existence.

Public administration is what government does on a daily basis. It is all those activities taking place in the public sector institutions to the benefit of the citizens. Shafritz, Russel, Borick and Hyde (2016:6) made it clearer and exemplified it simply as an activity where you find “a White House chef preparing the menu of a state dinner for a visiting chief of state, a Department of Agriculture inspector examining beef at a slaughterhouse, and a Food and Drug Administration scientist determining the number of rodent hairs that food processors can safely and legally leave in chocolate, popcorn and peanut butter.”

It is also doing collectively that which cannot be done individually (Shafritz 2016:10). Serving a community and ensuring that their needs are met can hardly be achieved by an individual, there has to be a great number of people focusing on the different issues such as the provision of roads, lights, making of law, implementing policies and managing the public purse. Public administration is a process where a group of people within a country pay taxes to the government to ensure effective delivery of services.

### **3.4 Generic administration functions**

The primary role of the state is the provision of services to its citizens, such as defence and basic necessities like housing and sanitation. How these services are provided, when and to whom is public administration at play. However, there are certain functions that form the nucleus of administration, these six generic functions (policy making, organising, financing, staffing, methods/procedures and control) will be discussed below as the pursuit of a clearer understanding of public administration continues.

#### *3.4.1 Policy making*

Policy is a statement of intent. It is a process that comes into existence after a particular problem is identified and a solution is needed. The making of public policy is normally undertaken by national institutions such as parliament, but it is not the only source that proposes policies, there are other significant role-players that bring the need for a policy such as family, churches, trade unions and institutions of learning.

In making a policy, there is a certain process to be followed. The policy making has a cyclical nature (see figure 1 below), it starts with the identification of a problem, planning, resource allocation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The following section will give a brief overview of each step to ensure a thorough understanding. It should be noted that this process is continuous, the step highlighted as the last (monitoring and evaluation) can lead to the identification of a new problem, as “sometimes policy will have unintended consequences because of uncertainty or impacts on unknown phenomena” (Thornhill, Van Dijk and Ile 2014:167), which will necessitate for all other steps to take place again in order to provide the solution.



*Figure 1: The policy making process*

*Problem identification* refers to that stage where a public problem is brought to the attention of government. This means that for a policy to be considered worthy of discussion, it must result from a particular problem facing the public, this problem can be introduced by any stakeholder in society; the community itself, a church, interest group, professional body or trade union. Once the problem is deemed urgent and necessary, only then can it be given attention and discussed by those with power (i.e. parliament).

With regards to the second step, *planning*, it is worth noting that problems in society are endless and competing for the first spot on the agenda. These policies are categorised and attended to in terms of their urgency, and in the planning process it is where urgent ones are firstly attended to, and ways on how to solve the problems are proposed. This deliberation and debate on how a problem will be solved is extensive and will result in the adoption of the best solution.

As with any task that needs completion, the need for resources is essential. You cannot have an idea and expect it to succeed if you do not have pertinent and sufficient resources to bring it to life. *Resource allocation*, as the third step, means that financial, human, technological and any other resource are put in place to implement the suggestions that came from the planning phase.

Fourthly, *implementation* takes place. Gumede (2011:167) defined implementation as “the action or a combination of actions taken to carry out the agreed policy objective or programme.” This is to say that all the previous steps are now brought to actual existence, it is the transformation of ideas into action, intangible to the tangible.

The *monitoring and evaluation* step is the action of determining whether the intended goals have been reached; it is a target versus the outcome process. It was said that although this appears to be the last step, it is not always like that. This phase might reveal missed targets, or discover unintended consequences, and that will serve as a problem identification that needs the other steps to be repeated in solving the newly discovered challenge(s). This step of the policy making process will be discussed extensively later on in the chapter.

The discussion above, and the process in particular, is by no means the only available policy process. There are other ways to look at the making of public policy. Also of importance for the reader to know is that the steps in this policy process do not always follow each other in the same order, there can be a situation where two steps take place simultaneously, or one step is left out completely. For the context of this work, however, the reader is encouraged to closely follow this structure as it will make easier the comprehension of the remaining sections of this chapter and beyond.



### *3.4.2 Organising*

For any project to work, be it in government, private sector, household or church, there needs to be an element of organisation as to who has to carry out which task, otherwise failure to implement will follow as there will be ambiguity and confusion. Organising, according to Thornhill (2012:166), “consists of classifying and grouping functions as well as allocating the groups of functions to institutions and workers in an orderly pattern so that everything the workers do, is aimed at achieving predetermined objectives”.

This clearly highlights that for a project to succeed, each individual or unit within the broader organisation should have a specific task that they will individually perform, with the view to helping the organisation reach its goals and objectives. For the goals of the NDP to be achieved, each sector and department has a role to play, and in this context, the Department of Higher Education and Training is responsible for implementation, working closely with academic institutions.

### *3.4.3 Financing*

An organisation can have the best of ideas and intentions, but without financial muscle the ideas and intentions will remain theoretical. There is a need to pay for basic resources, human and physical, and failure to do so will lead to dissatisfaction as no one would be happy to carry out a task without remuneration, unless the person is a volunteer and knew from the onset that there would be no payment for their service.

Government departments need to be financed for their functions to be carried out. In the public sector, parliament listens for budget votes and approval for these executive institutions to obtain those funds. In looking to reduce misappropriation and ensure an element of control, all departments in all spheres of government abide by the Public Financial Management Act (PFMA), to ensure that since the money belongs to the public, having been obtained through taxes, government officials do not use these funds for personal gain.

#### *3.4.4 Staffing*

Staffing refers to the human resource aspect of the organisation. Human resource is a key part of any organisation as people are needed to physically execute or operate the machinery that performs tasks to achieve the goals of the organisation. For every position, an individual with a specific set of skills, expertise and capabilities is needed, and it is the role of staffing to ensure that this person is placed in the right post.

Cloete and Thornhill (2012:227) reiterated the significance of this function by highlighting that government operates on a large scale with many functions, and that “because so many functions are involved, it is necessary to employ officials with diverse qualifications and varied experience in the central personnel institutions (offices) of these large public institutions and in parastatal institutions such as state corporations and universities.”

Staffing does not only involve the placement of individuals in certain posts; it also refers to the recruitment, training and induction of the said officials, it also puts in place measures to ensure continued learning and development of individuals once they have been placed in particular posts. The significance of staffing on merit becomes increasingly important in South Africa where cadre deployment that has largely been practiced since 1994 is being done away with for the adoption of private sector principles of governance.

#### *3.4.5 Methods/procedures*

Rationality is important in carrying out any task. The reduction of ambiguity and confusion in the workplace benefits the organisation in saving time, costs and conflict. Methods are those stated processes needed for a particular task or activity to be executed, it refers to the outline or blueprint on how to go from one point to another while performing your duties.

To ensure an understanding of functions, “there must be appropriate procedures for each of the diverse staffing functions. Because the rights of individual officials are involved, it is essential that work procedures be rationalised and put in writing – a necessity realised many years ago when legislation dealing with personnel matters was passed” (Cloete and Thornhill 2012:228).

### *3.4.6 Control*

Control refers to measures put in place to ensure successful execution of tasks and responsibilities by politicians and bureaucrats. Because government uses public funds to deliver services, it is important to ensure that those funds are used responsibly and for the benefit of the citizens, as opposed to the funds going into the pockets of those put in power.

Putting weight on the above, Cloete and Thornhill (2012:270) stated that “exercising control in the public sector can have only one objective, namely to ensure that the authorities give account in public for every activity they perform or neglect to perform, so that all citizens can see exactly what is being done or not being done to further their individual or collective interests.”

Of importance is to note that control can be formal or informal. Formal control refers to the use of documents and processes such as auditing and written reports, while in the informal sense supervision by a senior official on a junior one within the organisation can be applied. Control will be significant in the implementation of the NDP with regard to higher education to ensure that higher education institutions take active steps to implement, they do not neglect their part on ensuring government reaches the stipulated goals.

## **3.5 Monitoring and evaluation**

This section of the chapter is particularly important as it contains the main tools we can use to measure the effectiveness of implementation. Monitoring and evaluation involve a step-by-step focus on how the ideals as stipulated in the planning phase of any project are going, to guard and determine whether what was planned is what is taking place during implementation - if not, why not? Are the resources still adequate? Are there any new potential problems detected and how will they be dealt with?

It is in this section of the chapter where a theoretical background will be laid to aid in reviewing the progress made by higher education institutions in the implementation of the National Development Plan. Once this blueprint section is highlighted, the discussions will be used in practical terms to help answer the research question

To understand the concept of monitoring and evaluation, it is important to define it, and it will be done by looking at both terms separately. This will contextualise the meaning of the terms to enable easier comprehension going forward, as the two terms (i.e. monitoring and evaluation) form the nucleus of all the discussions that will follow in the sections the next three chapters of the work.

### **3.6 What is monitoring?**

According to the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2014), monitoring “involves collecting, analysing and reporting data on inputs, activities and outputs in a manner that effectively tracks and measures the coordination of services and resources to achieve the desired outcomes. It aims to provide managers, decision-makers and other stakeholders with a framework that guides regular feedback on progress in implementation.”

In attesting and reaffirming the above definition, Ijeoma (2014:11) states that monitoring is a “continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an on-going development intervention with indicators on the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.”

The above is to say that the significance of monitoring is to provide a step-by-step oversight on each element that is involved in the implementation of a project. It is an effective tool that guides the decision making of managers or senior officials in government to counter any problems that make it difficult for the realities to be in line with the desired outcome(s). The need for continuous monitoring is essential as “it is very easy for programme drift to set in, for public officials to carry out different activities from those originally envisaged (or even not all), or for the programme to reach clients other than those originally intended” (Hogwood and Gunn 1984:220).

It is also important to note that for successful monitoring to take place, there needs to be a consideration and accommodation of certain principles. Ijeoma (2014:65) referred to eleven (11) core principles that are to be followed in the monitoring of a project or policy, namely; understand costs (monitoring and reporting has a cost in time and money), start early (discuss monitoring and reporting at an early stage), specify requirements (the scale of reporting requirements should be specified), justify needs (be able to justify why you need each piece of information), communicate early (provide clear forms, using simple language), give feedback (it helps people to learn), explain the importance of reporting (it ensures that public funds are properly spent and have an impact), identify useful information (promotes constructive discussion to agree on realistic monitoring and reporting requirements), meet deadlines, co-ordinate (ensure relevant people are involved in collecting information) and to suggest using existing systems.



*Figure 2: Principles of monitoring*

It has been said repeatedly that governments across the world are moving towards private sector principles of governance, as influenced by the doctrine of New Public Management, and this means that efficiency and effectiveness, along with time and money, have necessitated the need to be more responsible in carrying out government services. Government projects need to take into account the scarcity of resources while

implementing programmes, and to ensure that this expectation is met, there needs to be an effective monitoring system from the planning phase until implementation is done.

The Department of Higher Education and Training needs to work closely with institutions of higher learning, be aware of their (universities) strategic plans, provide support where needed, be in place to influence law making to ensure compliance, and render support where challenges are met in the successful implementation of the goals of the National Development Plan. This is the kind of monitoring that is needed and it clearly affects and needs all stakeholders not only to comply but to coordinate.

South Africa is a country with three spheres of government. The layers mean that there is a longer vertical line of communication in place, unlike in a unitary system, and this is likely to increase the period of response to problems as bottlenecks are firmly in place. Based on the status quo, where protests are the order of the day in society, there needs to be less delays on delivery, which can be achieved through close monitoring of activities and progress. Monitoring ensures speedier response to problems, because once a firm monitoring system is in place, problems can be easily detected and dealt with as problems are identified.

To put the above in the context of higher education, the NDP seeks to have more students getting into the higher education system, and obstacles such as funding for this large number that is expected may hamper the successful implementation of the Plan. It was witnessed in 2015 when students protested against the rising fees that keeping check of any development is vital; government acted swiftly with the president announcing a halt in the increase. The aftermath, however, is that government has to find money to pay for the costs. This has a direct impact on the NDP in that financial resources – which are scarce in the current economic climate - have to be channelled towards this loss and that of ensuring that those who are incoming can be catered for through the National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

In the monitoring process, such realities are taken into account, they are reported on and a solution on how to bring back the project into the right track are discussed. The monitoring process enables stakeholders to deal with problems as they come, and as soon as they are detected. Projects and programmes, both in the public and private sectors, are never

perfect, in fact, anomalies are a given and a failure to monitor the process for such is likely to lead to failure of the project entirely.

The above explanation of what monitoring entails could easily seem narrow and too simple, but it is important to send a reminder that “monitoring is not just about information collection. It requires decisions about what action will be taken if performance deviates unduly from what is desired. Thus, monitoring is about control and the exercise of power” (Hogwood and Gunn 1984:221).

The concept and process of monitoring is closely linked to evaluation in the policy making process. These two concepts are linked and interdependent, but do not mean the same thing, they can be conducted separately during the policy process and the following section will better clarify the significance of evaluation and how it links up with monitoring.

### **3.7 What is evaluation?**

There can be no better way to express the significance of monitoring than referring to the words of Hogwood and Gunn (1984:219) where they said “if we lived in a world of complete certainty and perfect administration there would be no need for evaluation; having selected the best option and put it into operation we would know in advance what its effects would be. However, we rarely have such certainty. Our understanding of many issues, especially social problems, is imperfect, or even contested. Our understanding of how government intervention will work and what its effects will be is therefore also limited.”

Evaluation is an element in the policy process that seeks to explain in detail as to how a certain outcome came to existence. With monitoring identifying an outcome or event, the evaluation gives a detailed account on the identified outcome; how it came about, how to solve it, its chances of occurrence in future and how to prevent the problem should it present itself again. Evaluation, based on the above, answers the “how” that derives from the identification in the monitoring process.

It is clear from the provided definition that while monitoring is descriptive in nature, evaluation is concerned with the causality aspect (Ijeoma 2014:90). In a more specific and practical definition, in the National Evaluation Policy Framework, The Presidency (2011) defined evaluation as “the systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on

public policies, programmes, projects, functions and organisations to assess issues such as relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency), value for money, impact and sustainability and recommend ways forward.”

Evaluation is futuristic in nature, it is concerned with keeping a record of all those trends identified in the implementation of a policy or programme and will use that knowledge as guidance in the planning phase of future policies, projects or programmes. The significance of evaluation is exemplified by its ability to explain what would normally have been just a signal of a problem, as is done in the monitoring, without a deeper understanding of causality.

Roux (2005) shares the following three main characteristics of evaluation:

- ❖ Value focus: evaluation focuses on the value of policies and not the collection of information about policies;
- ❖ Fact-value interdependence: evaluation should be based on facts, but also incorporate value judgements; and
- ❖ Present and past orientation: whereas policy recommendations are prospective in nature and occur before actions have been taken, evaluation is retrospective and occurs after actions have been taken.

Of importance to policy makers as far as evaluation is concerned is that the concept is not just a one-way method. There are six (6) types of evaluation that should be considered. These types can and should be considered at the different stages of the policy implementation step, and will be discussed below. The six types are; diagnosis, design evaluation, implementation evaluation, impact evaluation, economic evaluation and the evaluation synthesis.

### *3.7.1 Diagnosis evaluation*

This type of evaluation is normally the first form and the most frequently used. The diagnosis evaluation details the *status quo* of the project or policy, shedding light on the current problems and any other challenge before intervention is conducted. Once this is known, along with the intervention method and processes, a theory of change is developed.



Ijeoma (2014:96) explained that a diagnostic evaluation “identifies what is already known about the issue at hand, the problems and opportunities to be addressed, causes and consequences, including those that the intervention is unlikely to deliver, and the likely effectiveness of policy options.”

The diagnosis evaluation involves benchmarking. It looks at the current status and then documents the changes experienced after the intervention has taken place. This method makes it easy to develop an understanding of problems, and these lessons become effective and are used in future projects, should similar problems present themselves again.

### *3.7.2 Design evaluation*

The design evaluation is focused on questioning the rationale behind the occurrence of processes and events. It is a method that determines the “why” of a series of developments in a given stage of a policy or programme, looking at all the different elements involved, such as the effect of intervention on the overall outcome and performance of a policy.

In explaining the design evaluation, Ijeoma (2014:96) refers to it as “used to analyse the theory of change, inner logic and consistency of a programme, either before a programme starts, or during implementation to see whether the theory of change appears to be working.”

The above is to say the policy process is not fixed and is highly subject to external influence. If an intervention is effected, for example, it still is not the only factor to take into account but other matters as well such as the economic climate of the time and the changes it introduces. In looking to determine why the University of Pretoria is more committed to the implementation of the NDP compared to any other tertiary institution, the Department of Higher Education and Training can look at elements such as the university’s financial standing, the close working relationship between the two parties (government and

the university, and any other logical reason that supports the emerging trend or occurrence.

### *3.7.3 Implementation evaluation*

The implementation evaluation, which is of particular importance for this work, is a type of evaluation that compares the ideal to reality as far as the policy is concerned. The implementation evaluation compares what was initially planned and envisioned when the drafting of a policy took place, and determines whether it is what is taking place on the ground as the process to make a plan practicable comes into effect.

To evaluate the implementation means looking at “activities, outputs, and outcomes, use of resources and causal links” (Ijeoma 2014:96) of the policy and therefore enables a comparison of theory and practice, leading to the ability to reinforce in the case of slacking in the attainment of policy objects. The importance of this evolution is that it clarifies what needs to be done by pointing out what it is that is not done correctly.

The National Development Plan has specific targets about when certain goals should be achieved, and through this stipulation, the stakeholders (institutions of higher learning) will be monitored based on how far they have come in helping the Department realise its objectives. This determination will lead to the realisation of obstacles obstructing the successful implementation of the NDP and identifying those obstacles will make it easier to find solutions that may aid in the remaining path of implementation.

### *3.7.4 Impact evaluation*

To identify and explain any change that occurs after a particular intervention, there is a need for an impact evaluation. An impact evaluation refers to looking closer at change and

seeking for an element to which you can attribute the change; it seeks to explain in detail what an intervention has done in the outcome of the overall policy process.

It serves the purpose of informing Ijeoma (2014:96) “high-level officials on the extent to which an intervention should be continued or not, and if there are any potential modifications needed” to further strengthen what has been deemed necessary as an intervention to improve the chances of a successful policy.

Should the Department of Higher Education and Training see fit to increase the funding of students from the previously disadvantaged groups, for example, the number of graduates is likely to be high, which will give a boost to the ideals enshrined in the NDP, and it will therefore mean that the successful achievement of the NDP can partially be attributed to government funding of deserving students in the previously disadvantaged group.

### *3.7.5 Economic evaluation*

The economic evaluation of a policy means looking at financial implications of pursuing the said policy; it seeks to determine whether what is being pursued, the manner in which it is pursued, is financially sound and rewarding. This method of evaluation is simply concerned with whether money is being utilised effectively, whether there is value for money in the current methods being adopted in the pursuit of policy goals.

What the economic evaluation has as its nucleus is a logical and systematic comparison of alternative methods of operation. It is an evaluation method that advocates for going for the cheapest possible alternative without compromising the quality of the end product. The economic evaluation method is based on a cost-benefit analysis.

“By a standard definition, an economic evaluation is a comparative analysis of alternative courses of action in terms of both their costs and consequences. The object of comparison is usually another intervention, but it can also be a constructed model of best practice or standard performance” (Ijeoma 2014:101).

Determining the best alternative method, especially using the cost-benefit analysis, also carries its challenges because (Hogwood and Gunn 1984:233) “one of the major problems

with the cost-benefit analysis as an aid to decision making is that its calculations depend on assumptions about future events”, and it is not always accurate to predict outcomes using a method heavily reliant on assumptions.

What makes this type of evaluation even more relevant is that it can be used at any stage as it is flexible. Policies are not static. Things change. It is essential to look at the fact that the financial climate can change at any time and the best method to pursue the goals of the policy is one that will be ideal under the changed environment.

### *3.7.6 Evaluation synthesis*

An evaluation synthesis refers to reading and assessing existing theories and experiences on a given topic and gathering as much understanding as possible, in preparation for the undertaking of a similar action. It is a process that enables broader understanding and has the advantage of being based on what has already been detailed about phenomena, what can be taken from across the reported lessons and experiences, and be able to combine the different views to make one informative body of work based on numerous experiences.

## **3.8 Public administration and monitoring and evaluation interface**

Having separately discussed monitoring and evaluation, it is important and easy to conclude that why they are often linked. Monitoring is done constantly in the policy lifecycle; it identifies the existence of certain issues and events, while the evaluation aspect gives an explanation as to how the said issues and events came to exist. While monitoring merely points out, evaluation provides the “why” part of the discussion.

The two interlinked concepts are relevant to the study of public administration in that they are important tools in ensuring the successful implementation of public policies and processes. It the public officials that make use of these tools, failure to effectively incorporate monitoring and evaluation into the public policy process is likely to lead to failed service delivery, and will also reflect badly with abysmal consequences to the public purse.

Wasteful expenditure is not acceptable in the public sector, which in recent times has moved towards private sector principles in the delivery of services to the citizens. This has highly necessitated the need to monitor every step of the policy process and be able to document lessons learnt for the purpose of future projects. It is therefore almost impossible in this highly cost-conscious government to exclude all necessary measures that enable the successful implementation of public policy with quality and cost effectiveness in mind.

Having previously contextualised monitoring and evaluation in the field of public administration, and discussed the theories behind monitoring and evaluation, as they followed the identification of generic functions of administration, it becomes essential to consider what scholars and stakeholders such as professional bodies have had to say about the NDP and higher education in South Africa.

### **3.9 Challenges facing successful the implementation of the NDP**

It is important to note that the NDP and the successful implementation thereof, is highly dependent on role-players such as the Department of Higher Education and Training, the institutions of higher learning and other organisational bodies such as the Higher Education of South Africa (HESA).

The latter organisation, HESA, in its response to the NDP stated that: “from a broad developmental perspective the main problem that education presents to the achievement of sustained development and virtuous growth is one of inefficiency and, related to this, a less than optimal rate of expansion. The principal cause of inefficiencies is seen as weak capacity, and most of the recommendations and targets are directed at dealing with inferred weaknesses especially in the human capital of the education system. What the Plan has in mind here, and what it discusses at great length, is the poor capacity of teachers and principals, although poor capacity of higher education lecturing staff is given some attention” (HESA 2012).

Not only does the above response tackle realities on the ground, it also takes a closer look of the challenges faced by the government in the implementation of the NDP highlighting

problems that derive from the basic education sector but have an immense influence on what takes place in higher education. Failure to take into account such challenges will be short sighted and lead to unfair expectations of higher educations.

Of importance for HESA as an organisational body with specific focus on the developments within the higher education sector, was also contained in the official response to the NDP as a fair look and expectations of universities, as some had always been categorised under the previously disadvantaged groups, and expecting them to be on equal footing with “elite” universities in the country is bound to pose challenges in the long-term attainment of the goals of the Plan.

The HESA (2012) office recommends that the Plan should adopt the following key principles as pre-conditions for a differentiated higher education system:

- ❖ The country needs the entire spectrum of institutions for socio-economic development. As a country, we cannot afford to focus on one or two research-intensive universities at the expense of the further development of expertise and capacity at other institutions;
- ❖ The social justice and equity agendas need to be addressed by the whole system. HE institutions should not be pulling in different directions. There is now an opportunity for the development of an agreed upon approach and for steering to take place from within the sector;
- ❖ A national plan should be developed in tandem with the discussion on differentiation. Meaningful differentiation will need serious coordination;
- ❖ Clarity is needed on the unit of analysis. Differentiation cannot be viewed from the perspective of institutional differentiation only; and
- ❖ Differentiation does not have to be a zero sum.

To further highlight this important point, HESA (2012) expressed that, “South African universities vary hugely in terms of the shape of their knowledge production. The big differences in scientific field profiles of the different universities is clearly a function of institutions’ histories (e.g. having a medical school or faculty of theology) and institutional missions (research-intensive universities versus teaching-focused universities and former technikons). These differences mean that the same benchmarks cannot be realistically set for all faculties [and all institutions].”

The above recommendations by HESA and Mouton's assertion expose one of the flaws of the NDP as being overly ambitious and not taken into full account the realities of the country with a strong background of unequal treatment, and thus development, of the institutions of higher learning in the country. For the NDP to succeed, there has to be strong focus on equipping all tertiary institutions with the relevant resources and capacity to deliver the results that will in the end bring to life the expectations of the NDP.

Kuye (2007:3) shares the same sentiments with regard to the consideration of the South Africa history when he pointed out that higher education in the country is slowed by the existence of problems that the country inherited from the previous regime pre-1994; where there were legal and policy challenges, along with institutional challenges. After a 46-year rule (1948-1994) of oppression and unequal distribution of resources, the Nelson Mandela administration had a mammoth task of equalising society across all fronts; economically, politically and socially.

In expressing views about the state of affairs in the higher education sector, Mammadalizade (2012:8) highlighted that: "even though the South African higher education system is successful in terms of research outputs, innovation and postgraduate degrees, on the undergraduate level only 15% of students complete their degrees within the prescribed three years; and 50% of students drop out of universities before they complete their studies (reasons include financial challenges, inadequate primary education, language challenges and failure in their studies)."

With the above in mind, it is further proof that the NDP has a long way to go, that the realities on the ground may prove difficult to secure the successful implementation of the National Development Plan. For the NDP to succeed in rendering an ideal state in the higher education sector, there needs to be serious consideration of the steps involved before a learner becomes a student.

In extending the scope of challenges in the higher education sector of South Africa, Akor (2008) shares that "the policy objectives of the government's intervention in higher education will not be (fully) realised if the negative implications of the intervention measures, such as insufficient funding,, the bankrupting of universities, alignment of

institutional cultures, infringements on institutional autonomy and academic freedom are not adequately addressed in partnership with the management of higher educational institutions and their governance structures.”

The *status quo* in the higher education sector is nothing new. The challenges faced today such as the fees protests and general collapse of race relations among students were reported as far back as 2008 by a scholar who made it clear that “the system of higher education is further confronted with the challenge of redressing past inequalities, meeting pressing national needs and responding to new realities and opportunities...For instance, there is evidence of resistance to change; ideological differences persist and the level of social interaction among students of different races is minimal” (Akor 2008).

As earlier expressed, the state of affairs in most if not all sectors of South Africa is highly influenced by the country’s apartheid history. Moving away from the ashes of apartheid, there has been the prevalence of (Akor 2008):

- large scale corruption in many of the universities, especially the historically black universities;
- crises of governance in some institutions with the collapse of councils;
- malpractices of university management;
- entertainment of students' organisations and their student leaders in higher educational institutions committees, and their display of unusual wealth and status;
- loss of huge sums in unpaid students fees;
- institutions using up substantial amounts of their accumulated reserves, both justifiably and unjustifiably to raise the salaries of underpaid administrative personnel, and to accommodate needy students;
- increase in the influence of students and their representative bodies at such institutions as the University of Durban Westville (now part of the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal);



- expectations by a number of historically disadvantaged institutions such as the University of the Western Cape, that the National Government help them out of their financial difficulties on the basis of being historically disadvantaged.

What cannot be ignored as well is the repeated calls for transformation of institutions of higher learning in South Africa. The NDP will be confronted by this fact, which was in full display as students protested for the removal of Cecil John Rhodes' statue at the University of Cape Town in 2015. This narration points to the fact of refusal and resistance to transformation in South African universities.

“The need to transform the higher education sector is seen as urgent not only by the government of the Republic of South Africa, but also by various relevant stakeholders. This appears to be moving very slowly, while the prospect of achieving a substantial level of transformation in the next few years appears to be slim.” (Akor 2008).

Bringing about an ideal sector of higher learning will require fundamental steps, as building a “successful” higher education on the foundation of thorny issues (i.e. lack of transformation) will only serve to cover the challenges temporarily, until they come back to destroy the entire project again from the ground up. This is what is to be learned from the views of the noted scholars as they give an account of what is currently on the ground while the NDP is going through the early stages of implementation.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

The key and common point from all the above scholars and HESA is that South Africa comes from a difficult past, the apartheid legacy still echoes in the lives of many and in the institutions of our society, including the higher education institutions. It is very important to move forward through government intervention, but there will have to be greater consideration of this past, as it is likely to influence great and progressive plans such as the NDP.

This work started off highlighting the importance of public administration and discussed all the functions of administration that are essential in ensuring a successful operation of any public institution. It was highlighted that these functions are all necessary as in most cases leaving out one may lead to being unable to perform another.

Public administration, which refers to what government does, has in it the key function of policy making. Through policy making there was detailed discussion of the policy process, which contains monitoring and evaluation as one of the steps to be used in the policy process.

It became apparent that monitoring is not the same as evaluation, and this distinction was expressed through looking at both terms (monitoring and evaluation) separately. Monitoring was defined as a continuous step in the policy aimed at identifying any challenges to the successful implementation of policy.

Evaluation was presented as different in that it deals with detailed explanations of why and how things happen in the policy process. If through monitoring something is detected that prevents or delays implementation it becomes the role of evaluation to give detailed information about this identified problem and come up with solutions.

The different types of evaluation were named as diagnostic, design, implementation, economic, impact and synthesis. These types are very important but it was said that the implementation method was the one central to this work as it seeks to determine how far a policy is from the actual target, where the overall implementation is still in line with the initial goals, and so forth.

Following the extensive discussion and the theories behind monitoring and evaluation, the concept was contextualised in the overall picture of the realm of public administration. It was important to show where monitoring and evaluation are seated within the field, and it was said that they find a home in the policy process, which is one of the key functions of administration in the public sector.

Prominent figures in the scholarly world such as Kuye were quoted as explaining the difficult past the country has had, and this fact was used to help paint a picture of the kind of environment in which the NDP will be implemented. The HESA also pointed to the need to consider some of the pressing elements that are likely to hamper the successful implementation of the NDP if left untreated.

The above in no way aimed to undermine or downplay the great plans the NDP has for the country's higher education, in fact, all that was said was important to ensure that all potential challenges to the implementation of this progress Plan are known and dealt with. A look at what scholars have to say about higher education, complemented by what the general consensus is about the NDP itself was crucial in bringing together a balanced literature review. It was said that work that exclusively focuses on the NDP on higher education was scarce and that is why an alternative method was chosen; to bring together what was said about the two separately.

With all the theory that has been discussed so far from the start of this work, it is now time to move to the practical affairs of the work, to discuss the realities instead of theoretical explanations of what is happening. Chapter Four introduces the case study.

## **Chapter 4: Introduction to the case study**

## **Chapter 4: Introduction to the case study**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The success or failure of a nation is heavily reliant on its focus on education. If a country is concerned with reducing poverty, inequality and unemployment, a firm education system from the first grade of basic education to the last lecture in an institution of higher learning is a non-negotiable necessity. A country needs more than just good policies and a handful of highbrows in high positions to flourish, it needs an educated citizenry that can help government to formulate policies and cooperate in their implementation.

At an individual level, education expands horizons to see and perceive the world in a different way and can make a meaningful contribution to society. An educated person can think, can plan, and make better decisions and be in charge of destiny. One is an individual who does not wait for government to provide social grants, one is entrepreneurial minded and one who looks for solutions in society and does not contribute to the problems. An educated individual knows that, as the great Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela said, education is the most potent weapon that can be used to change the world.

The South African government, led by the African National Congress (ANC), recognises that South Africa is facing a terrible case of the triple threat; unemployment, poverty and equality. In recognising this, the government acknowledges that resources in the modern world need to be used carefully, spending on temporary measures to alleviate the aforementioned challenges with the use of social grants is not going to help in the long run, it does not liberate the poor people of South Africa from the chains of poverty, preposterous levels of inequality and the abysmal rates of unemployment.

In dealing with this, the ANC-led government is looking strongly at education as a certain tool that can bring about a permanent solution. It can bring about liberation not only economically but mentally as well to the poor people of the county. It is for this reason that a lot of expenditure of the national budget is directed towards education in the country.

The Department of Higher Education and Training is tasked with ensuring that matters relating to higher education in the country are regulated, that government policy reaches institutions of higher learning, most of which are not directly government owned. The DHET, led by Dr Blade Nzimande, is under the policies of the New Growth Path (NGP) and wishes to ensure that the National Development Plan (NDP) is successfully implemented. The latter is a blueprint that will ensure that the former is successfully implemented.

This chapter will shed light on what a case study is, to ensure that the practical discussions that will take place are contextualised and there is an understanding as to why they are structured the way they are. Following the explanation of a case study, there will be a brief overview of the NGP as the national policy framework, policies governing higher education will be listed and explained thereafter, before getting to the crux of the work in the form of the contents of the NDP as far as higher education is concerned.

#### **4.2 Importance of a case study**

A case study is important as it enables the tracking or monitoring of a particular phenomenon with the view to creating an understanding over the said event or phenomenon. Through a case study, it becomes easier to clearly highlight the relation between two elements, such as the effect they have on each other and determine what needs to be done to move from one point (i.e. *status quo*) to the next (i.e. idealised state).

There are several definitions by scholars on what a case study is. These will be provided and a common factor highlighted, to create a uniform definition for the purpose of this work. It has previously been said that a case study “can be a field study or ethnography taking place in a naturalistic setting or in an artificial laboratory setting involving researcher-initiated manipulation or participants, or natural experiments accidental occurrences interrupting the flow of events – that can be studied as if they were experiments” (Mavhivha 2007:155).

Yin (2003:13) informs that a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.”

Other scholars, such as Baxter and Jack (2008), define a case study as “an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not seen through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood.”

Furthermore, a case study can be defined as “a story about something unique, special, or interesting—stories can be about individuals, organizations, processes, programs, neighbourhoods, institutions, and even events. The case study gives the story behind the result by capturing what happened to bring it about, and can be a good opportunity to highlight a project’s success, or to bring attention to a particular challenge or difficulty in a project” (Neale, Thapa & Boyce 2006:3).

Lastly, Creswell (2002:61) defines a case study as “a problem to be studied, which will reveal an in-depth understanding of a “case” or bounded system, which involves understanding an event, activity, process, or one or more individuals.”

The above definitions vary but possess a common feature that makes the case study method suitable for this work. The definitions point to a case study as being an approach that seeks to determine phenomena and provide a juxtaposition of the phenomena’s ideals against the realistic situation on the ground, this is to say; a case study becomes helpful in providing details of the implementation of the policy against the planning phase.

This definition is relevant to this work precisely because it points to a need to determine how idealism is advanced in a real life context; that is to say that through this study there will be a clear realisation as to how far, up to this point, has there been progress in the implementation of the National Development Plan’s goals in the higher education sector.

It is from this that this work will explore what is happening in terms of implementation, what has happened to this point, and what still needs to be done to ensure the realisation of the goals of the NDP in the institutions of higher learning in South Africa. A case study will be important as it will also afford the author with the option to make recommendations where obstacles seem to be experienced by the relevant department and other stakeholders.

### **4.3 New Growth Path**

The NGP is a national policy framework that was introduced by the Jacob Zuma administration when it took over in 2009, following the Thabo Mbeki administration under the ruling African National Congress party. This framework came at the back of several others such as the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) and the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA). All these frameworks were different and had unique approaches, but they have commonly placed the need to eradicate poverty, unemployment and inequality as the most important goal.

What is of interest as well about these frameworks is that they came at different times in the history of South Africa where the triple threat was always there, but the economic, technological and to an extent, the political climate were constantly changing. For example, the transition from apartheid to a democratic country meant that there was an urgent need to firstly reconstruct the state and all its machinery to function in a more inclusive manner, while in 1998 there came the need to start looking at improving the country's economy.

As the national policy framework, the NGP informs all other plans and strategies the government puts in place. These plans and strategies should all seek to address the contents of the NGP as it is a fairly broad framework. It is for this reason that the plan of focus in the work, the National Development Plan, was said not to be a substitute of the NGP, but merely a blueprint that directs the nation towards some of the ideals that were expressed in the NGP.

Once more, it is for this reason that the work will first discuss the overlaying policy programme that directs the NDP before discussing the plan itself. The NDP, as will be later highlighted, places high value on education as a tool to see the country and its poor people out of the difficulties of unemployment, inequality and poverty. The NGP, overall seeks to create five million jobs by 2020 and bring the unemployment rate down to 15 per cent.



Introducing the NGP in 2009, President Zuma said that “the creation of decent work will be at the centre of our economic policies and will influence our investment attraction and job creation initiatives. In line with our undertakings, we have to forge ahead to promote a more inclusive economy” (Department of Economic Development 2010).

From the above it becomes clear that this framework was put in place to improve the economic situation of citizens who are battling with the aforementioned triple threats.

In further alluding to the triple threat in the NGP, the President went on to say that “there is growing consensus that creating decent work, reducing inequality and defeating poverty can only happen through a new growth path founded on the restructuring of the South African economy to improve its performance in terms of labour absorption as well as the composition and rate of growth” (Department of Economic Development 2010).

To bring it closer to the need for the development of the NDP, former Economic Development minister, Ebrahim Patel, expressed that the NGP calls for the need to “lay out a dynamic vision for how we can collectively achieve a more developed, democratic, cohesive and equitable economy and society over the medium term, in the context of sustained growth” (Department of Economic Development 2010).

The Minister of Department of Economic Development further contextualised the need for the NDP by stating that “the work done for the New Growth Path indicates that our goal of growing employment by five million new jobs over the coming decade is achievable. It cannot, however, be achieved with only a single policy instrument.” (Department of Economic Development 2010).

With the foundation of the national economic programme outlined, and taking into account the fact that this prosperity cannot be achieved through a single policy instrument, it becomes imperative to briefly look at the policies of higher education and the key stakeholders in place to achieve an ideal higher education in the country.

#### **4.4 Higher education policies**

The dawn of democracy in South Africa in 1994 saw a large number of laws and policies being introduced to cater for the general population of the country, shedding those discriminatory policies that sought to advance the interests of the minority at the expense of the majority, consistent with the ideology of the apartheid government at the time.

Under the ANC government, there has been strong focus on creating an educated citizenry to meet the developmental goals of the state; and it is for this reason that the NDP also invests strong emphasis on the importance of education, and higher education in particular. The following policies are currently in place to guide higher education in the country; Higher Education Act, White Paper for Post-School education and Training, Language Policy for Higher Education, Further Education and Training Colleges Act, and the National Qualifications Act.

##### *4.4.1 Higher Education Act*

The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 is a national Act that is an umbrella and oversees all other laws and policies that guide the activities in the higher education sector of the country. The Act is in place (Higher Education Act 1997);

To regulate higher education; to provide for the establishment, composition and functions of a Council on Higher Education; to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public higher education institutions; to provide for the appointment and functions of an independent assessor; to provide for the registration of private higher education institutions; to provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in higher education; to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of certain laws; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

Preamble. –

WHEREAS IT IS DESIRABLE TO -

ESTABLISH a single co-ordinated higher education system which promotes co-operative governance and provides for programme-based higher education;

RESTRUCTURE AND TRANSFORM programmes and institutions to respond better to the human resource and economic and development needs of the Republic;

REDRESS past discrimination and ensure representivity and equal access;

PROVIDE optimal opportunities for learning and the creation of knowledge;

PROMOTE the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom;

RESPECT freedom of religion, belief and opinion;

RESPECT and encourage democracy, academic freedom, freedom of speech and expression, creativity, scholarship and research;

PURSUE excellence, promote the full realisation of the potential of every student and employee, tolerance of ideas and appreciation of diversity;

RESPOND to the needs of the Republic and of the communities served by the institutions;

CONTRIBUTE to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, in keeping with international standards of academic quality;

AND WHEREAS IT IS DESIRABLE for higher education institutions to enjoy freedom and autonomy in their relationship with the State within the context of public accountability and the national need for advanced skills and scientific knowledge.

#### *4.4.2 White Paper for Post-School education and Training*

This White Paper is focused on giving guidance to all public tertiary institutions recognised by the national DHET, with the view to ensuring important social aspects such as equality and inclusivity. The White Paper “sets out policies to guide the DHET and the institutions for which it is responsible in order to contribute to building a developmental state with a vibrant democracy and a flourishing economy. It sets out a vision for:

- A post-school system that can assist in building a fair, equitable, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa;
- A single, coordinated post-school education and training system;
- Expanded access, improved quality and increased diversity of provision;
- A stronger and more cooperative relationship between education and training institutions and the workplace; and
- a post-school education and training system that is responsive to the needs of individual citizens and of employers in both public and private sectors, as well as broader societal and developmental objectives” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2013).

#### *4.4.3 Language Policy for Higher Education*

It should be kept in mind that South Africa carries a painful history as far as the use of language across all professional and academic sectors, a struggle many students and learners lost their lives over. A democratic dispensation had to recognise all eleven (11) languages and declare them official, in a bid to introduce social justice and equality, something that was lacking under the apartheid regime where Afrikaans was the primary language along with English, at the expense of the African indigenous languages.

It is against this background that this policy framework for language in higher education addresses the following issues (Education Ministry 2002):

- Language of instruction;
- The future of South African languages as fields of academic study and research;
- The study of foreign languages; and
- The promotion of multilingualism in the institutional policies and practices of institutions of higher education.

Of importance as far as this policy was concerned, was alluded to by the then Ministry of Education (2002) where it stated that “the Ministry is committed to the development and study of South African languages and literature, including the Khoi, Nama and San languages and would like to encourage institutions to develop and enhance these fields of study. In a country of diversity, knowledge of languages and literature offers access to and understanding of different cultures which not only enhances communication and tolerance, but also positively enriches and extends our horizons. As part of the process of building South African languages and literature, institutions will be encouraged to pay particular attention to curriculum development in these fields of study.”

#### *4.4.4 Further Education and Training Colleges Act 16 of 2006*

FET colleges are an important stakeholder in the production of a productive citizenry. These institutions are mainly more practical than universities, but have a crucial role to play in closing the gap of a few skilled workers in critical fields such as artisans and engineers. These institutions are closer to the communities where the people, and those who were previously disadvantaged in particular, reside. They help with easier and more affordable access to the post-school sector.

This Act is in place;

“To provide for the regulation of further education and training; to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public further education and training colleges; to provide for the employment of staff at public further education and training colleges; to provide for the registration of private further education and training colleges; to provide for the promotion of quality in further education and training; to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal or amendment of laws; and to provide for matters connected therewith.”

The Act aims to achieve this with the idea to;

- ESTABLISH a national co-ordinated further education and training system; which
- PROMOTES co-operative governance and provides for programme-based vocational and occupational training;
- RESTRUCTURE AND TRANSFORM programmes and colleges to respond better to the human resource, economic and development needs of the Republic;
- REDRESS past discrimination and ensure representivity and equal access;
- ENSURE access to further education and training and the workplace by persons;
- who have been marginalised in the past, such as women, the disabled and the disadvantaged;
- PROVIDE optimal opportunities for learning, the creation of knowledge and the development of intermediate to high level skills in keeping with international standards of academic and technical quality;
- PROMOTE the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom;
- ADVANCE strategic priorities determined by national policy objectives at all levels of governance and management within the further education and training sector;
- RESPECT and encourage democracy and foster a collegial culture which promotes fundamental human rights and creates an appropriate environment for teaching and learning; and
- PURSUE excellence, and promote the full realisation of the potential of every student and member of staff, the tolerance of ideas and appreciation of diversity.

#### *4.4.5 National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008*

The National Qualifications Framework Act is concerned with the provision of the National Qualification Framework, to provide for the responsibilities of the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labour, to provide for the South African Qualifications Authority, to provide for the Quality Council, to provide for the transitional arrangements, to repeal the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995, and to provide for matters connected therewith.

What this Act aimed to achieve and its role is expressed in the preamble;

“Whereas the advancement and recognition of learning is an essential attribute of a free and democratic nation and a prerequisite for the development and wellbeing of its citizens;

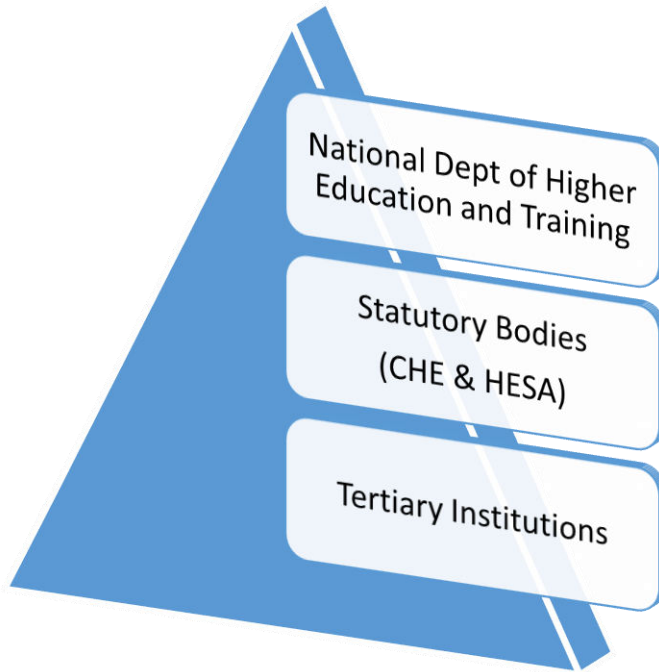
Whereas the National Qualification Framework has been developed and implemented in terms of the South African Qualifications Act, 1995;

Whereas the National Qualification Framework has won wide acceptance as the principal document through which national education and qualifications are recognised and quality assured; and

Whereas a review of the implementation of the National Qualification Framework has necessitated changes in the governance and organisation of the framework so that it may be more effectively and efficiently realised.” (National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008)

### **4.5 Stakeholders**

This section serves to indicate some of the key role players in the sector of higher education and training, stakeholders relied on to see to the implementation of the NDP in this sector. The graph below highlights all three, before a brief description of each is made.



#### *4.5.1 Department of Higher Education and Training*

Government is a large machinery, and the need for an entity dedicated to a specialised focus on a particular sector is non-negotiable. As for the higher education sector, there is the national government oversight through the national Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). This Department is responsible for the implementation and overseeing of higher education affairs at a national level, to implement the policies of the party of the day, working hand in hand with the institutions of higher education.

The DHET seeks to “develop capable, well-educated, skilled citizens who are able to compete in a sustainable, diversified and knowledge-intensive international economy, which meets the development goals of our country”, and this will be achieved through “reducing the skills bottlenecks, especially in priority and scarce skills areas, improving low participation rates in the post-school system, correcting distributions in the shape, size, and distribution of access to post-school education and training and improving the quality and efficiency in the system, its sub-systems and institutions” (DHET 2016).

This stakeholder is therefore strongly involved in ensuring that institutions of higher learning will play their part in helping government realise the goals of the National Development Plan, it is in place not only to communicate government policies to the institutions, but to encourage and monitor implementation of these policies



Supporting the DHET are the statutory bodies that are in place to ensure that all actors, in this context, the DHET and the institutions of higher learning follow the law and set rules. These bodies have the authority to instil these laws and are constantly monitoring the activities of all actors to ensure compliance. They also serve the role of giving guidance and the introduction of new ideas in the specific field.

#### *4.5.2 Council on Higher Education*

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) is an important statutory body that is primarily concerned with overseeing the smooth running of relations and understanding between the national government and tertiary institutions. According to the Council on Higher Education (2016), the functions of the CHE include the following:

- To provide advice to the Minister of Higher Education and Training on request or on its own initiative, on all aspects of higher education policy.
- To develop and implement a system of quality assurance for higher education, including programme accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion and capacity development, standards development and the implementation of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF).
- To monitor and report on the state of the higher education system, including assessing whether, how, to what extent and with what consequences the vision, policy goals and objectives for higher education are being realised.
- To contribute to the development of higher education through intellectual engagement with key national and systemic issues, including international trends, producing publications, holding conferences and conducting research to inform and contribute to addressing the short and long-term challenges facing higher education.
- The CHE has executive responsibility for quality assurance and promotion and discharges this responsibility through the establishment of a permanent committee (as required by the Higher Education Act), the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).

#### *4.5.3 Universities South Africa*

Formerly known as Higher Education South Africa, the Universities South Africa plays an active role in overseeing higher education affairs in South Africa. Much like the CHE, this statutory body serves as an important source of information as far as the affairs and policies in the higher education sector are concerned and it also plays an important advisory role.

The purpose of this body is to ensure that (Universities South Africa 2016):

- Quality teaching takes place in our institutions;
- Adequate resources are allocated to universities;
- Deserving students gain access to our universities regardless of their social, cultural and economic background;
- Universities contribute significantly to the socio-economic and cultural development of South Africa;
- The Higher Education policy is evidence-based, informed by research of the highest quality;
- Our university sector is sufficiently internationalised to benefit from a mobile global student and academic talent pool; and
- South Africa understands the value of universities in the economy.

#### *4.5.4 Institutions of higher learning*

The last key stakeholders are the universities and colleges, but for the purpose of this work, only the former will be afforded attention. This actor is the more hands on stakeholder because that is where the academic activity takes place; it is the main subject and tool where implementation takes place. South Africa has twenty-six universities, and they all have a significant role to play in ensuring the goals of the NDP are realised.

“Universities are the dominant producers of new knowledge, and they critique information and find new local and global applications for existing knowledge. Universities also set norms and standards, determine the curriculum, languages, and knowledge, ethics and philosophy underpinning a nation’s knowledge capital” (NDP 2012).

It is noteworthy that these institutions have their unique strategic goals and do not enjoy the same capacity and historical background, factors that have a direct impact on productivity and outcomes. These institutions, despite their autonomous nature, are of importance in helping government to realise its targets as stipulated in the NDP.

Institutions of higher learning face a myriad challenges, and recently, particularly towards the end of 2015, faced fresh challenges through the protests for tuition fees to be reduced, and later followed by the demand for free education, which is still ongoing, the insourcing of staff and the change in language policy.

The problems mentioned above are not only impeding the strategic plans of the universities, but have seen the involvement of all stakeholders highlighted earlier in this section. Government had to deal with finding funds to close the financial gap created by the reduction or freezing of tuition fee hikes, while universities, faced with relooking at their respective budgets had to deal with the nightmare of spending on security some the reconstruction of vandalised infrastructure.

The DHET (2013) made reference to these challenges, stating that “the institutional landscape is still reminiscent of apartheid, with disadvantaged institutions, especially those in rural areas of the former Bantustans, still disadvantaged in terms of infrastructure, teaching facilities and staffing. Black students at formerly whites-only institutions have often been victims of racism, and female students have been victims of patriarchal practices and sexual harassment. Poorer students have to fit in with systems that were designed for students from relatively privileged backgrounds.” These challenges have had an impact on the dates set on the NDP, as will be explained later

#### **4.6 The National Development Plan**

The previous sections have detailed all important elements that will be taken into account to make a success of the National Development Plan, it becomes essential now to look at the Plan itself as up to this point the discussion has not detailed the contents in full. This section will provide a detailed expression of exactly where the NDP comes from and what it says the country’s higher education system should look like.

### *Evolution of the NDP*

The NDP was previously defined as a blueprint that guides South Africa towards the eradication of poverty, unemployment and the alleviation of inequality. It is a Plan that calls on the various stakeholders such as the government, the private sector, NGOs, the civil society and unions to come together and rally behind the transformation of South Africa to become a top one among the global forces.

To graphically display the road travelled to get to the implementation of the NDP, it should be noted that the diagram below is focused only on the period from 1994 to 2016.



*Figure 4: Evolution of the NDP*

It has been previously expressed that South Africa had to undergo massive reform after apartheid, and one of the basic changes had to start at government administration level. To ensure a more inclusive education sector, the Department of Education was created and the goal was to align to the ideals enshrined in the Constitution of the country and the RDP where there will be equal access to quality education. This Ministry was to oversee the affairs of basic and tertiary education across the country, and had a lot on its hands

trying to accommodate those who were already accustomed to quality education and the majority who were for long subjected to an education of a lesser quality.

However, what transpired was that having a central department to cater for such an important department, given the country's history and its idealised future, proved to be a slow process as far as governance was concerned. The country had to focus on both basic and higher education, both equally important and highly dependent on each other to produce an educated citizenry.

This flaw was discovered in 2009 when the Jacob Zuma administration came to power, succeeding Mr Thabo Mbeki. To curb the aforementioned challenge of the Ministry of Education, President Zuma felt that because of the importance of this sector, there needed to be specialised focus on both departments to ensure efficiency and a quicker response rate to challenges and the production of ideas; this led to a policy split that saw the emergence of two departments – the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

This termination of operating as one department has seen the DHET headed by Dr. Blade Nzimande, and Minister Angie Motshekga heading the DBE. Following this split into two departments in 2009, was the ruling party's National Conference that took place in Mangaung, Free State. This policy conference of the ruling ANC party is where policies are formulated and decided on, and the National Development Plan took a central place as the leading policy meant to chart the way forward for a government determined to eradicate poverty, unemployment and inequality in the country.

The NDP recognises that “the performance of existing institutions ranges from world-class to mediocre. Continuous quality improvement is needed as the system expands at a moderate pace. A major challenge is that poor school education increases the cost of producing graduates, and a relatively small number of black students graduate from universities. Increasing participation and graduation rates, with the option of a four-year university degree, combined with bridging courses and more support for universities to help black students from disadvantaged backgrounds, is likely to yield higher returns.” (National Planning Commission 2012).

This plan focuses on all sectors of society, and this work focuses solely on the goals of the NDP as far as the sector of higher education in South Africa is concerned. The section below emphasises what those goals are along with the targets.

#### **4.7 The goals of the NDP on higher education**

The NDP recognises that education is an important tool that can see the country out of its present challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. It is for this reason that one of the opening statements of the document highlight that “education, training and innovation are central to South Africa’s long-term development. The latter are core elements in the process of eliminating poverty and reducing inequality, and the foundation of an equal society. Education empowers people to define their identity, take control of their lives, raise healthy families, take part confidently in developing a just society, and play an effective role in the politics and governance of their communities” (National Planning Commission 2012).

With that basic importance of education in mind, the NDP also wished to see South Africa and its people equally and meaningfully engaging in the economy. All of these can be achieved, but only if the population is able to equally access quality tertiary education. In addition, this can only occur if there is a population that is determined to subject itself to the difficult and long process of acquiring a degree, a population willing to invest everything in education before all else.

The goals of the NDP on higher education are as follows;

- ❖ Increase university science and mathematics entrants to 450 000
- ❖ Increase graduation rates to more than twenty-five per cent (25%) by 2030
- ❖ Increase participation rates to more than thirty per cent (30%)
- ❖ Produce more than one-hundred (100) doctoral graduates per million per year by 2030

The above targets are of significant focus in this work, and not only are they ambitious, they seem to have government believing they are achievable if all stakeholders (i.e. government, institutions of higher learning, unions, research institutes and so forth) play an active role as a united force with the sole interest to benefit the country. These targets will

need to be briefly discussed as per the contents of the NDP document to enhance an understanding and advance clarity.

#### 4.7.1 Increase university science and mathematics entrants to 450 000

“By 2030, science and mathematics should be revitalised through the increased number of school leavers who are eligible to study science and mathematics-based subjects at university. The number of people embarking on careers in science and technology should be at least three times the current levels” (National Planning Commission 2012)

Increasing the number of entrants into institutions of higher learning is not the sole focus, these entrants should play a part in increasing the number of those students doing science and mathematics. The higher the number of students in these fields, the likelier it will become to have a powerful strategic force. The previous statement in no way diminishes the role of other fields such as social sciences, it merely points to the need to increase the country’s presence in strategic fields and curb the lack of skills in the said fields.

#### 4.7.2 Increase graduation rates to more than twenty-five per cent (25%) by 2030

“Achieving a 25 per cent graduation rate will require an increase in the number of graduates from the combined total of 167 469 for private and public higher education institutions to a combined total of 425 000 by 2030. As part of this target, the number of science, technology, engineering and mathematics graduates should increase significantly” (National Planning Commission 2012).

The above expectation by government takes into account that although many people get into higher education, they not all are able to complete their studies for various reasons such as a lack of funds, inability to meet the pass requirements, pregnancy and many other reasons. It also addresses the previous goal of increasing mathematics and science entrants, as the core focus for any country with the vision to meet developmental goals.

#### 4.7.3 Increase participation rates to more than thirty per cent (30%)

“Enrolments in the higher education sector including private higher education will need to increase to 1 620 000, from 950 000 in 2010. This is a 70 per cent increase. The planned new universities in Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape and the new medical school in Limpopo will contribute to the expansion of capacity in the higher education sector” (National Planning Commission 2012).

With government increasing the budget for higher education every year, and the NDP calling for strong involvement of the public sector in helping to steer the country towards a greener pasture, there is a larger number of learners who can be given bursaries after completing basic education. This will then mean participation rates are on the increase and will need the expansion of capacity, hence the addition of the three higher education institutions mentioned above.

#### 4.7.4 Produce more than one- hundred (100) doctoral graduates per million per year by 2030

“South Africa produces 28 PhD graduates per million per year. This is very low by international standards. In comparison the University of Sao Paulo has 90 000 students and produces 2 400 PhD graduates per year. To achieve the target of 100 PhD graduates per million per year, South Africa needs more than 5 000 PhD graduates per year against the figure of 1 420 in 2010. If South Africa is to be a leading inventor, most of these doctorates should be in science, engineering, technology and mathematics.” (National Planning Commission 2012).

It was mentioned from the beginning that the NDP looks to place South Africa among the best countries in the world, ensuring that, through the well-equipped graduates, the country can compete shoulder to shoulder with global giants such as China and the USA in terms of production, innovation and general knowledge. The current number of PhD graduates is dismal, even compared to a less gigantic country such as Brazil, as indicated in the stats above.

South Africa needs to do more to encourage the pursuit of doctoral degrees by students, these students need to be enticed whichever way necessary in order to have the



commitment and interest to further their studies beyond undergraduate level. The following statement also indicates that for there to be a larger number of PhDs in the country, you also need equally more accomplished staff in the institutions of higher learning, who will be able to supervise a large number of prospective PhD graduates. More staff with PhDs will mean that there is enough capacity to ensure every student is afforded the necessary attention, making sure quality is not compromised;

“South Africa needs to increase the percentage of PhD qualified staff within the higher education sector, from the current 34 per cent level to over 75 per cent over 20 years; double the number of graduates, postgraduates and first-rate scientists and increase the number of African and women postgraduates, especially PhDs to improve research and innovation capacity and normalise staff demographics. A learning and research environment needs to be created that is welcoming to all, eliminating all forms of discrimination and other intolerances within the system.” (National Planning Commission 2012).

#### **4.8 The policy proposals**

In order to achieve the bold plans highlighted in the previous section, the NDP provided the necessary steps. These plans are as bold as the targets and rely heavily on the need for cooperation between government, private sector, universities and professional bodies. The NDP document still emphasises the need to focus on mathematics, science, engineering and technology as important fields that will enhance the capacity of the country to become innovative.

The proposed steps are to;

- ❖ *Improve systems for skills planning and shaping the production of skills*
- ❖ *Develop a diverse range of providers of further education and training*
- ❖ *Enhance the innovative capacity of the nation*
- ❖ *Address the decline of humanities*
- ❖ *Enhance the entrepreneurial capability of the nation*
- ❖ *Coordinate and steer a differentiated system*
- ❖ *Build an enabling and high quality differentiated system*
- ❖ *Fund an enabling, high quality differentiated system*

#### 4.8.1 Improve system for skills planning and shaping the production of skills

For the NDP targets to be realised, there needs to be focus on enhancing the capacity of those institutions that are tasked with providing skills. The first and most important step would be to identify all the skills that are needed, and focus on those through measures such as the allocation of funds. The DHE has compiled a list of critical skills that are needed in the country, and these have been referred to often enough in this work – mathematics, engineering and technology.

According to the National Planning Commission (2012), to improve systems for skills planning and shaping the production of skills “the education and training system should be able to respond to the skills needs that are identified. This requires an improved capacity, drawing on both private and public providers of trainers. It should include a focus on building relationships with workplaces, and the development of both training curricula and skilled trainers.”

In making the above practicable, the NDP suggests the following as central steps (National Planning Commission 2012);

- ❖ Establish a national skills planning system to conduct labour market research and produce different skills scenarios, which should inform training providers. It is important to understand the country’s long-term human resource needs.
- ❖ Develop the capacity of the levy-grant institutions. The scope of the Sector Education and Training Authorities must be refined to remove overlaps in government institutions.
- ❖ Training for start-ups and emerging businesses, rural development, adult basic education and training, and community development should be supported by money

from the National Skills Fund and managed by the relevant departments or agencies, such as the Small Enterprise Development Agency, Kha Ri Gude and the National Youth Development Agency.

- ❖ Increase linkages between post-school education and workplaces building on the commitments in the Skills Accord
- ❖ Increase funding modalities and systems
- ❖ Increase access to career guidance and placement services

#### 4.8.2 Develop a diverse range of providers of further education and training

To ensure that a large number of students finishing basic education will be accommodated, there needs to be a large pull of providers of tertiary education, and further education and training in particular. Not all learners who complete Grade 12 will be eligible for university enrolment, but these are still important and have a role to play in moving the country towards the realisation of the goals of the NDP.

Government, as stated previously, cannot achieve these goals alone, it is for this reason that the private sector is needed, and it is only through this cooperation that success will be possible. Those institutions that are already in place need to be improved and they also need to build onto their existing strength in order to contribute meaningfully to the idea of a diverse post-school system that is central to the goals of the NDP.

The above was pointed to by the National Planning Commission (2012) as follows;

“A one-size-fits-all approach is inappropriate at this point. Not all institutions can or should offer all types of training. We propose a highly differentiated system. A careful analysis is needed of all further education and training colleges, as well as the stronger public adult learning centres and colleges that fall under departments other than the DHET. Placing unrealistic expectations on these institutions will only make it harder for them to perform. Howsoever, some do have the capacity to expand and diversify.”

#### 4.8.3 Enhance the innovative capacity of the nation

A nation that does not recognise the need for innovation, and does not put measures in place for this enhancement, will live a life of perpetual following and never really play a

significant role in contributing something worthy of recognition to the global world, it is a nation that will always rely on imports, something that will surely harm the economy whether through short- or long- term alliances.

To achieve innovation so often referred to, South Africa needs a strong focus on enhancing its innovation capacity. A sure platform for this lies in the production of brilliant minds at the country's institutions of higher learning. Universities have an immense role to play in this regard as a polisher of the talent that comes through from mostly incapacitated backgrounds, where schools simply did not have the resources, human or otherwise, to encourage and nurture the raw ideas displayed by future leaders of the country.

According to the National Planning Commission (2012), the science and innovation system in the country is relatively small but now caters for a wider base racially. What has been an obstacle so far is building the base of science, technology, innovation and skilled human resources.

Acknowledging the challenges of not having a stable human resource skills set in nurturing the potential for innovative ideas that come through from as early as the schooling system and how this transition from basic to higher education should work, the National Planning Commission (2012) states that "school teachers, as well as staff and programmes in Dinaledi schools, should be evaluated to ensure they have adequate knowledge of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Higher education institutions should extend the length of their science, technology, engineering and mathematics degrees to four years, and redesign the first year of the course to make it more accessible."

In the event that there are not enough skills set in the current staff, consideration will be given to highly skilled individuals from outside the country, especially those within the African borders. To ensure the capture of this skilled African group, "immigration laws should be relaxed... [and] one way of doing this is to grant seven-year work permits to all graduates from foreign countries" (National Planning Commission 2012).

#### 4.8.4 Address the decline of Humanities

Every country has a unique part of its history that it can share with the world, this history informs its present, and because of this being present the country becomes known for a particular story that it shares. South Africa is no different. The history of this country, and the miracle that arose from it, is one of the elements that gives a country an identity and a story to sell to the world, it is this story that gives South Africa an advantage, because it is unique from the start and how it is faring today.

This strategy proposed in the Humanities does not only refer to the history of the country, it speaks to other elements such as ‘our emerging identity, languages, ethics, morality, indigenous systems, struggle for liberation, Codesa, constitution, the creation of a non-sexist and non-racial society, and the discovery of humankind” (National Planning Commission 2012), which we ought to protect and preserve through the enhancement of capacity in producing high-level expertise in each of these areas of the Humanities.

#### 4.8.5 Enhance the entrepreneurial capability of the nation

A country of perpetual consumers will always follow trends and never have the capacity to produce, meaning the country’s funds will always be going out instead of coming into South African shores. That kind of a system is uncharacteristic of an ambitious country that seeks to compete with and be considered as one the leading players in the international community. There needs to be strong focus on creating entrepreneurial minds in order to avoid such a negative state of affairs.

Instilling an entrepreneurial mind-set is an inseparable element of the innovative society that seeks to be achieved in 2030. In the NDP document, the National Planning Commission (2012) states that to achieve this, “courses should be designed, introduced and taught to promote and instil a culture of entrepreneurship in society. In this way, entrepreneurship complements the innovation system.”

#### 4.8.6 Coordinate and steer a differentiated system

South Africa comes from a difficult past of deliberately orchestrated inequality and oppression, this system meant that resources were not equally shared as the white community received superior treatment compared to the black majority of the country. This principle also applied to schools and universities, with traditionally white institutions being

better resourced compared to those of the “Bantu.” The legacy of this structure is still prevalent today, although looking to wear off with time.

Universities are unequal in a sense that there are arguably world-class ones and those that are deprived, and this means that capacity is not the same, whether to accommodate students or simply to reach academic excellence. However, each of them enjoys unique strengths that the South African government is looking to make use of to help the country reach its NDP goals. The NDP calls for the enhancement of capacity, with the focus on the strength of the respective university to and find ways to develop them where they are lacking.

According to the NDP, “within the next five years, ways need to be found of building on these different strengths to develop a differentiated system that allows all universities to build on their own areas of strength and respond to the needs identified. Government and higher education institutions will need to reach formal and binding agreements on the principles that guide and underpin the coordination and funding of this differentiated system.” (National Planning Commission 2012).

#### *4.8.7 Build an enabling and high quality differentiated system*

The production of ideas and all else that is necessary for the attainment of developmental goals will be futile if they are average; there needs to be an elements of excellence. Average ideas do not win recognition, and trying to nurture talent that will bring ideas without emphasising excellence will be futile. Ideas should be generated, and they should be nothing short of excellent.

Striving for excellence will also require capacitation, it is going to require more institutions like the Innovation Hub, there needs to be a substantial sum of money dedicated for this particular project. Excellent ideas need to be encouraged and rewarded, world class engineers and mathematicians are an undeniable necessity if there are any dreams of becoming a force in the international arena.

This importance was emphasised in the NDP document; “South Africa needs to strengthen research excellence through performance-based grants. More weight should be given to building departments, and centres or networks of excellence. Given that performance-based grants can entrench historical advantage and disadvantage, capacity-building grants should be provided with clear targets for improvement at five-year intervals.” (National Planning Commission 2012).

#### 4.8.8 Fund an enabling, high quality differentiated system

None of the previously mentioned interventions will be attained without the availability of funds. There needs to be a relook into how much money goes into the different universities, there should be funding that will assist the institutions of higher learning to either enhance their capacity as mentioned or develop themselves. The need for a differentiated system calls for recognition of the needs of respective universities and allocating funds to ensure an intervention.

However, having beautiful universities with the best facilities will be pointless if the students are facing difficulties like a lack of funding to even register at these institutions. There needs to be serious consideration of such factors and this should be achieved by ensuring an efficient National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), and the involvement of the private sector in awarding bursaries to deserving students. Furthermore, (National Planning Commission 2012), “consideration should be given to extending the NSFAS to qualifying students in not-for-profit registered private colleges as an incentive for private sector expansion. When resources allow, access to financial aid and bank loans could be extended to students qualifying for other registered private colleges.”

### **4.9 Conclusion**

The beginning of this chapter saw a discussion on the importance of a case study, which was said to enable a careful study of phenomena, how different elements relate to each other and what can be anticipated. It is through a case study that this work is making apparent what the NDP aims to achieve, and will later highlight the impediments in a bid to realise successful implementation.

Of importance as well was the discussion on NGP, which is the current national policy that seeks to guide South Africa to a more prosperous state. The NGP, as highlighted, was not replaced with the focus of this study, the NDP, but the latter merely seeks to build on the ideals of the NGP. Everything and said in the NDP, is in one or other way in line with the core principles of the NGP.

Furthermore, the achievement of the goals of the NDP can only be realised when all stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, come together, under the rules and laws governing higher education. It was expressed that this work is only limited to the dawn of democracy, and this led to a look at the evolution of the NDP – from what it seeks to achieve, to how it will be done.

From all that has been said in this crucial section of the work, it has become clear that South Africa has travelled a long and painful road to be where it is today, and although challenges still persist, one thing is clear; the future looks bright, provided the goals of the NDP are achieved. They do sound ambitious, but all that is needed to make a success of this country is cooperation, commitment and hard work from all stakeholders.



## **Chapter 5: Findings and analysis**

## **Chapter 5: Findings and analysis**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Much has been said about the NDP, from what it is, how it came to exist, to what it seeks to achieve and how. It can be said once more to be a progress plan that seeks to make South Africa become a global giant, to become a prosperous nation with reduced levels of inequality, unemployment and poverty by the year 2030. It is indeed an ambitious blueprint, with chances of success or failure heavily reliant on the willingness of all stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to the implementation process.

The NDP has placed strong emphasis on education as an imperative tool that will see the country towards a greener pasture, with a learned citizenry, citizens that can access the doors of higher education institutions with limited hindrance. Of importance, as repeatedly alluded to in the ninth chapter of the blueprint, is a focus on critical skills such as mathematics, engineering and IT, and the enhancement of the culture of innovation across the nation and in students of tertiary education in particular.

Achieving the above is not impossible, especially in a relatively well-resourced country such as South Africa. There is a strong possibility of success, there is adequate political will to drive this crucial agenda, and there is a great number of young minds pouring into the higher education sector at present. The plan outlines in simple terms how it aims to achieve these goals, all that is needed is to have universities and other stakeholders such as communities (a community that does not allow a child to simply drop out of school with no pressing reasons is a community that has a role to play in achieving the goals of the NDP) to play their part.

It is, however, unfortunate that there has been a series of unforeseen threats to the realisation of an innovative South Africa by 2030, events that shook the very core of South African universities and called upon the government and these universities to introspect and engage their respective policies towards the end of 2015. The first events, namely the #FeesMustFall movement and the call for free education took away and halted (temporarily or not) the focus on the exclusive elements of the NDP, to a focus on the demands of the students. While the third factor, political instability, puts the survival of the NDP under threat and the last factor is the focus on the looming ANC succession race.

## 5.2 Background

With South Africa being a twenty-two- year-old democratic country in 2016, the country will be expected to still not have completely dealt with its challenges that emanated from decades of apartheid rule that ensured white people were favoured politically, economically and otherwise, over the black majority and other groups such as Indians and coloured people in the country.

During the times of oppression, from colonisation to apartheid, came the establishment of tertiary institutions, which mostly had students from the white communities and very few black ones. The naming, funding model, location and even curricula of these institutions strongly favoured the privileged minority while the majority were either too poor to have access to the institutions or simply did not get sufficient preparation at basic education level as a result of the sub-standard Bantu education put in place by the apartheid government to service non-whites.

With the democratic government post-1994 having tried to forge ahead with an equal society, wherein everyone will have equal access to opportunities such as university enrolment, too much focus was placed on ensuring that the African child gets to enter the doors of tertiary institutions, that the black child can study to become a doctor, an engineer or a lawyer, a much more respected field than what was envisaged for the African child as only being good enough to serve the white master, to know no place of income beyond the suburban kitchens and gardens under apartheid rule.

In all fairness, government has to a certain extent managed to ensure that young people from the previously disadvantaged groups get access to higher education. There is a large number of black graduates today compared to pre-1994, and this is partly because of government intervention through important policy decisions that have seen funding being availed for students with financial challenges, and making sure that post academic qualifications, students are afforded the opportunity to get skills and work experience through internships in all government departments.

The challenges faced by students in tertiary institutions, however, remain largely rooted in the historical imbalances, they also come from the general society in which these students were brought up. Issues such as tuition fees, language used in these institutions, surviving beyond the first year of study, and the call for free education have threatened the successful implementation of the National Development Plan. How government, together with all stakeholders, and tertiary institutions in particular, will handle these issues without compromising the goals of the NDP remains an issue of interest to many, as there was still a solution to be found for most of these student demands by August 2016.

### **5.3 Fees Must Fall**

The Fees Must Fall movement refers to a protest by students who were against tuition fee increments proposed by universities across South Africa. Institutions of higher learning took the decision to increase fees for various reasons, but of importance and probably the main reasons were the weakening rand and the general costs of operating a university, one of the most expensive institutions to run.

The protests started at Wits University in October 2015, when the management of the school announced that there will be a 10.5% increase in tuition, which the Wits Chief Financial Officer Linda Jarvis alluded to the “increase in the cost of library books, journals and research equipment; making provisions for inflation and salary increases for academics to ensure they retained critical talent” (Quintal 2015).

Jarvis further said that with subsidy challenges of the government, “the net effect is that we have to make up our income to cover our expenditure in order to remain sustainable. If we do not do so, we put the quality of our academic project at risk.” (Quintal 2015). These were the arguments from the university’s standpoint and although legitimate, they seemed inconsiderate and unfair, from the student’s point of view.

Riana Geldenhuys, the media liaison officer at the University of Cape Town (UCT) shared the same sentiments about the university being expensive to run, stating that at UCT, “close to 65% of costs are associated with highly qualified and experienced staff, while a further major cost is the provision and maintenance of the university’s estate. Costs also include a wide range of support services such as libraries, laboratories, transport, security,

counselling and healthcare services, in addition to the cross-subsidisation of financially disadvantaged students.” (Makoni 2014).

It goes without saying that running any organisation is difficult under the current economic climate, but what seemed to be problematic was that the university’s solution neglected the fact that students are also living under the same economic climate. There was a need to have all three parties (students, the university and government) to sit down and consider all angles in this seemingly “one must die” problem.

From the students’ perspective, they needed to have “reasonable” amounts that will go into the university’s coffers, the university had a responsibility towards its staff and students by providing the best working environment that would benefit the academic life of the students. Dugmore (2015:12) raised this plight of the students by stating that “many students and their families are stretched beyond their limits. Undergraduate students need to find about R40 000 to R50 000 a year, excluding living costs, to attend university in this country, where fewer than 100 000 South Africans earn more than R1-million a year.”

Government, on the other hand, had a responsibility towards the previously disadvantaged students that it has pushed to be in these institutions, and also provide subsidies to the university. It had to ensure that students had access to quality higher education, something that would require highly qualified lecturers to achieve, as stipulated in the NDP. No one was to come out unscathed, which is where it all broke loose; other students from small and major universities such as the University of Pretoria and Stellenbosch followed the trend and took to the streets in protest.

In trying to deal with a situation that saw students getting arrested, some campus buildings being vandalised, and no academic activity taking place across the country, the government, led by President Jacob Zuma, held a meeting with student leaders and heads of universities at the Union Buildings, Pretoria, to talk through the challenges. These talks proved fruitful as the president pronounced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2015 that there will be no fee increment for the year 2016. This was victory for the students on the day, and a sigh of relief for many as there was to be the commencement of lectures.

This victory, however, was not permanent. It meant that for a particular year, there would be no fee increment, it was not to say fees would not increase at some point. Government had to find ways to make up for the shortfall, since lack of increment meant no extra money would be going into university coffers. There was a need to ensure that professional staff is still paid, the books, journals and other equipment can still be procured, suppliers are paid and general maintenance continues. It had to be business as usual.

The decision to freeze fee increment led to an inevitable path a year later, September 2016, when there had to be a tuition fee hike across universities and the Minister of Higher Education and Training announced on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September that there would be a fee increment of up 8% for students whose household income is beyond R600 000 per annum. This was the decision that seemed sensible, a move that meant to see the poor (i.e. those with less than R600 000 per year household income) not paying for tuition hikes, but as things turned out, it still was not an acceptable solution.

Students took to the streets once more, they objected to this solution. Protests became the order of the day again across institutions of higher learning in South Africa; vandalism, arrests, class disruptions and campus shutdown came to be. Universities, such as the University of Pretoria, faced with the possibility of delayed exams like the previous year, resorted to conducting the academic programme online because there seemed to be no end of protests and disruptions in sight.

The main problem of the students was an issue that has for years been preached from the podiums of political rallies, something that the students believe government can actually afford, a measure that many experts have tried to clarify, although through different sides of the fence; free education!

## 5.4 Free education

While the Fees Must Fall movement was antagonising the increase of fees, as it was believed by the students that university is expensive as it is and will only serve to exclude the poor if costs keep rising, there have always been murmurs calling for free education. The call for fees to fall was always just a more short-term cry, it was reactionary to what was proposed by institutions of higher learning, but the call for free education has always been an umbrella call by not only students but politicians such as the now leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters, Julius Malema. Students are united in calling for free education but differ on the scope, with some calling for free education for the poor while others demand free education for all.

The call for free education directly speaks to giving the poorest of the poor an opportunity to access the gates of higher learning, it is a call that seems to be growing with time, with the students arguing that “charging fees is against the spirit of the Freedom Charter of 1955, which was a political aspiration expressed 60 years ago along with other demands such as the ending of apartheid, and health and housing.” (Langa, Wangenge-Ouma, Jungblut and Cloete 2016).

The students deeply felt that free education is possible, they wanted government to deliver on free education as had been stated in one of the most important documents that guided South Africa out of apartheid, and the deviation from what had been promised in this Freedom Charter, along with other socio-economic challenges faced by the poor, there was indeed a need to make financing one less obstacle for the poor who are searching for a better life, using the powerful tool of education.

However, government was in agreement with the students, they (government) believed that academically deserving but financially challenged students should in fact be afforded the opportunity to study without being stopped by their financial background, and strongly disagreed with the notion that the country was deviating and abandoning the principles of the Freedom Charter. It is government's view that the Freedom Charter had been misinterpreted, along with the constitutional stipulations on higher education and funding.

The Deputy Director-General: University Education in the Department of Higher Education and Training, Dr Diane Parker, expressed the common mistake in the interpretation of free education that is mentioned in the Freedom Charter, highlighting that;

“...basic education is a fundamental right, while further education (i.e. higher education and technical and vocational education and training) must be made progressively available and accessible. What does this mean? To be ‘available’ means the system must grow to provide sufficient spaces for study. ‘Accessible’ means it should be affordable: individuals should not be denied access on the basis of financial need.” (Parker 2015).

This is where the issue lies, the DHT insists that indeed they have stuck to the principles of the Freedom Charter, which never promised free higher education, but has made sure that the academically deserving students from poor backgrounds are getting assistance from government through the National Student Fund Aid Scheme, but has in certain cases run short of funds for this Aid because “the funds available, although substantially increased, have not kept up with demand, given increasing numbers of school leavers with university entrance qualifications.” (Parker 2015).

Caught in the middle are the universities, who have a responsibility towards meeting their own Strategic Plans and targets, paying staff, keeping the donors satisfied enough not to withhold funding, and the general commencement of lectures. Instead of carrying on with its business, a typical university during this time had to protect its infrastructure against vandalism and arson attacks, and they therefore spent money on beefing up security to protect the infrastructure, staff and non-striking students.

It is worth noting that the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, where the student receives education and training with a view towards a specific range of jobs, employment or entrepreneurial possibilities, also have come across challenges with finances, listed by the South African Further Education and Training Student Association as (Govender 2017):

- the question of unqualified lecturers;
- inadequate funding for students from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS);
- late payment of allowances for accommodation and transport; and



- the lengthy delay in the issuing of certificates for courses completed.

By mid-October 2016, the protests were still on-going, with key student leaders having been arrested, heightened levels of violence with burning of university property being the norm, students being shot at, government maintaining its commitment to free education, with a Commission of Inquiry established to determine the feasibility of free higher education still holding hearings, and universities resembling police academies, shut down and offering lessons online. That was the *status quo*, with no final decision on free education yet, with more uncertainty as to when the protests will come to an end, how examinations will go and how all this will impact intake for 2017.

## 5.5 Political uncertainty

The survival of the NDP itself highly depends on the existence and well-being of the ruling ANC party, as the organisation that came up with the idea of and introduced the NDP. The NDP came into existence because it is derived from the NGP, as mentioned previously, a national policy that was introduced by the ANC. With the political winds seemingly blowing a new direction, questions are bound to be raised on the survival of policies and programmes introduced by the current administration.

### 5.5.1 Loss of votes

It is not a secret that the ruling ANC has been losing support nationally, as indicated by a decline in votes (see table below). The ANC is bleeding support as a result of numerous factors such as internal squabbling, real or perceived corruption, neglecting the electorate, arrogance and other factors which are not the focus of this work. These issues have threatened and shaken the very core of the liberation movement and seem to indicate a possible coalition government with the rapidly rising Democratic Alliance party which has increased its black constituency.

Year	ANC	DA
2004	69.69%	12.37%
2009	65.90%	16.66%
2014	62.15%	22.23%

The national elections of 2004 saw the ANC amassing an impressive 69.69% of the votes, a sign of great confidence in the party by the electorate. Since then, however, the ANC has been bleeding support, receiving 65.90% of the vote in 2009, and experiencing a further dip in 2014 when they got a less impressive 62.15% of the vote. This should call for alarm bells within the party, especially since it lost the three key metros (Tshwane, Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela Bay) in the August 2016 local government elections, which are now under the DA, to which we now turn.

The rise of the Democratic Alliance in the political space of South Africa is posing a major threat to the ANC's rule. The DA, always being painted a white party by its detractors, seems to have made solid inroads into the black voters' pool. It is this increase in the black electorate possibly caused by a call for the reinforcement and implementation of the ideals of the Rainbow Nation, where people of different races can coexist and get access to opportunities on merit, disregarding the skin colour and the introduction of young, educated blacks such as Lindiwe Mazibuko and Mmusi Maimane, that has seen the DA going from strength to strength.

The national election results of 2004 indicate that the DA was voted for by a mere 12% of the electorate, and slightly improved to 16.66% in 2009, before breaking into the 20% bracket for the first time in the 2014 general elections, receiving 22.23% of the vote.

Although it can be argued that the ANC is not bleeding extensively enough, as it stood at over 60% and the DA just in the 20%, you can only ignore this loss at your own peril, especially as there have been other issues that have come into play to weaken the ANC, such as the EFF and even ANC members calling for the president to step down. Any person with thinking capacity can and should be wary of the dwindling support, it is not guaranteed to be lost bit by bit as it has been the case, but it definitely showing signs worthy of concern for those ruling party.

Having mentioned the challenges that face the ANC, it creates a sense of political instability, it says that the NDP, as with many other plans and policies in place because of the ANC, is under threat, it could be scrapped and replaced with something different, something that might see new goals, strategies, focus points and stakeholders that do not feature in the NDP. Even without the prolonged explanation, it just does not sound likely to

see the DA, or any other party, wanting to use the brainchild of the ANC, should the latter go on to lose elections.

The second point that puts the NDP under threat is the need to stabilise the ANC, as necessitated by the loss of support alluded to earlier. The stability of the ANC highly depends on getting rid of arrogance, perceived or otherwise, and listening not only to the current and lost voters, but its Tripartite Alliance partners (South African Communist Party and COSATU). This step will restore trust and communication among the stakeholders who have kept the ANC in power from 1994.

COSATU, a trade union, has been vocal against some key aspects of the NDP, making it clear that they do not support the plan. The union stated in their discussion document that “the big picture projections and vision of the Plan is based on dubious statistics and assumptions, and problematic strategies and goals, which leave the highly unequal structure of our economy, and the economic marginalisation of the majority, essentially intact, with some tinkering around the edges. This is not a vision therefore which we can embrace with any enthusiasm” (COSATU 2013).

With a defeat as heavy as the one witnessed in the recent local elections, and factionalism at its peak in the ANC, everyone who has been with the party needs to have faith in the ANC again, the ANC must seek to redeem itself in the eyes of its constituents and the world, and might have to give into some of the demands by its allies such as the SACP, including the capitulation of the National Development Plan.

#### *5.5.2 ANC succession race*

The ANC prides itself in promoting an upholding democratic principles in its governance. Consultation and involvement of its members goes as far down as branch level to determine national leadership, known as the national executive committee or loosely, the “Top Six”, which consists of the President, Deputy President, Secretary-general, Treasurer, Deputy-treasurer and National Chairperson. This is the highest level of leadership and since dawn of democracy, the president of the party has also been the president of the country.

The ANC was established in 1912 and was known to have black professionals among its members who were seeking the freedom and emancipation of blacks oppressed in their own land. Founded by John Langalibalele Dube, Sol Plaatjie and Pixley ka Isaka Seme, the current ruling political party of South Africa holds elective conferences every four years to elect its leadership, and as previously mentioned, the head of the party, since 1994, went on to become the country's First Citizen.

The elective conferences are used to determine the policies that will guide government actions and programmes, and, closely contested in many cases, the slate with the most appealing plans and policies, through a voting process by all branches, gets to ascend to power and advance its agenda through government. A policy conference, in short, is the coming together of all members of the party, guided by their words, to elect national leadership that will best represent and implement the policies of the party members at both party level and in government.

This policy conference is a make or break for old and new policies because it is in this conference where old policies are evaluated to determine whether they had been implemented successfully or not, whether there is further action needed to edit parts of it and even evaluate their impact, measuring intended goals versus the actual achievement.

On the other hand, the conference also provides a stage for new policies to be introduced through a series of spirited debate and discussion over their possible consequences, and as had been mentioned, those policies with support and general acceptance will prevail and become national policy for the party and a drive for government. This process, in the spirit of transparency and allowing room for thorough research for those with input, involves the release of policy documents to the public months prior to the resumption of the conference.

The National Development Plan, as the main focus of this work, also went through this transparent stage before it became a national blueprint in 2012 in the Mangaung Policy Conference, and will also face the reality of being scrapped out or kept until 2030. The former, however, is what is of core concern for the author. And how this could come about will need a brief look into the ANC Polokwane Conference of the year 2007, because this is where the brutality of the political game was truly experienced since the ANC took over the administration of the country in 1994.

After having been dismissed by then president Thabo Mbeki in 2005 for corruption and rape accusations, current president Jacob Zuma found himself having to undergo court cases to defend himself. This led to one of the most controversial trials the country had seen as it involved a deputy president of the leading party and country, and saw Mr Zuma being replaced by Phumzile Malmbo-Ngcuka. Despite the predicament, Jacob Zuma enjoyed large support driven by sympathy, from the structures of the ANC and the Alliance partners.

It was this support that would later prove fruitful and see the accused become president of the ANC. The rape case was dismissed while the Scorpions, an organised crime investigation organisation of the country (later replaced by The Hawks), abandoned charges against Zuma on the basis of spy types proving political meddling of the investigation by its top officials largely seen to be in the Mbeki camp, tainting and compromising the independence and credibility of the organisation and the investigation itself.

These legal decisions vindicated those in the Zuma camp and suddenly, Mr Mbeki became public enemy number one for his apparent use of state resources for political point settling, giving Mr Zuma a hand not only legally but politically, as the party went on to recall Mbeki, who decided to rather resign as the country's number one citizen. This perfectly paved the way for a Zuma era in political and state power.

What this meant, in the policy context, was that Mbeki's policy frameworks such as the AsgiSA were replaced by Zuma's NGP, which remains in place today, under which the NDP functions. It is through the above that it becomes evident that political power within the ANC can greatly determine the success and/or failure of plans, policies and programmes that drive government action, and it is through this realisation that there is concern over the future of the NDP.

By early 2016, the June to July 2017 policy conference and the December 2017 elective conference of the ANC, which will effectively mark the end of the Zuma era, there were two much-talked about candidates to replace Zuma; tycoon Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa and the former African Union Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. These individuals are both vastly experienced in the politics of the country and will both undoubtedly present strong cases, and maybe preferred policies, to contest this position.

Cyril Ramaphosa played a key and active role in the formulation of the NDP document, and one would think he will most likely prefer to keep the policy and see it through to the set 2030, but in the game of politics, nothing can be said with absolute certainty. It should be kept in mind that the NDP is not his framework, he took part based on instruction, and could very well have ideas of his own when he is in a position of power, he could feel that with the growing gap between the rich and poor, and the dissatisfaction of alliance partners with the blueprint, there is another model to be used instead of the NDP and phase it out.

The same case exists for the second contender, Nkosaza Dlamini-Zuma. As it is, she is associated with and said to be on the side of President Zuma, who has come out to say in the media that there is no rule in the ANC for the deputy president to automatically become president. Frankly, the Zuma surname is tarnished in the political world, and if she does get to assume power, would try as much as possible to prove her independence and this could be through the introduction of her own policies while discontinuing existing ones, including the NDP.

Over and above, the reality is that there is more talk now of radical approaches to turn the fortunes of South Africans, and this call, although mostly prompted by opposition calls and the EFF in particular, might have the next president coming up with a tougher and not as liberal framework as the NDP. The people on the ground seem to be tired of the slow progress in their lives, they are tired of corruption, and they are tired of vague pro-rich policies, and will be looking to hear who, for example, will give them the land, and as things stand, the ANC is desperate for the approval of its lost voters, and only a brave leader with more daring policies will make the party great again.

## **5.6 Analysis**

The NDP is a great vision to have for South Africa, it paints a picture of an ambitious government that believes in taking the country forward with the help of all involved, from the street vendor to a professor in his office, it firmly believes that working together, we can do and achieve more, to make South Africa the best it can be, and for this to happen, there needs to be a strong focus on education, there needs to be more doctors, engineers and scientists who can help come up with innovative ideas to tackle unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The above, however ideal, will not happen when there seem to be serious challenges standing in the way of successful execution and realisation of the goals of the NDP, aimed to be achieved by the year 2030. The situation on the country is very volatile, government was caught unprepared by the fierce protests of students from 2015 until 2016, scenes reminiscent of the 1976 youth vs. policy (state) have been a constant feature, making government run around looking for funding to cover the frozen-fee increment in 2015.

By getting the question of fees being too high for the poor on the national agenda, students successfully removed the focus of government from an obsession with implementation of the NDP to listening and reprioritising the budget, something that will certainly have an effect on all supporting plans of the NDP. This step will definitely delay the progress and process of implementation and will leave the government wondering not about how to get closer to implementation, but how best to fund the current demands of the students.

Government seems to be caught in a difficult position; the NDP would like to have more students, particularly from poor backgrounds gaining access to university, but the problem then becomes affordability of subsidising this large number of new learners who enrol in the universities.

It seems as though government may have expended universities to foot the bill, hence pushing learners into tertiary education yet reducing state subsidy amounts to the universities; how exactly were these students going to be catered for? Who was supposed to ensure that they do not feel the effects of being poor at university? It is almost as if government placed high hopes on miracles than actually putting in strong measures to accommodate the poor. It is only logical that when the number of entrants increases, funding should also increase, yet the government increased entrance and reduced subsidies. This has contributed to the chaos.

The closest thing to what was a miracle in many people's minds was the loss of votes by the ANC. This particular situation has placed the existence and survival of the NDP in a very difficult position, it faces an overhaul. Where the DA governs as in Pretoria, already changes are being effected, and that is only at the local sphere, meaning the national government, should it fall to the DA as a result of the continued decline of the once mighty ANC, will see the NDP packed away to quietly gather dust.

What is evident as well from the discussions in the previous sections of this chapter is that the NDP was just not mindful of the plight of the poor; it almost looks like a plan that was made without first considering fixing historical challenges because mentioning something and actually acting on it are two different things. Government produced a beautifully ambitious document that said nothing about the present. The NDP does say that we have challenges presently, but does not refer to free higher education, something that has sprung from being murmurs to active protests.

It is still possible to achieve the goals of the NDP, but very likely to leave the economy extremely strained, it is going to take commitment from business, tax payers, university funders and government itself to work together because they all stand to lose when students take to the street. In working towards achieving the goals of the NDP on higher education, money has to be available, students need to also define themselves and their goals, stating clearly whether it is free education for all or the poor that they want, in order to be able to sit around with all stakeholders with a single and defined position in mind.

As things stand, government is claiming the lack of financial resources, students and universities too, none wants to give up their side of the debate, and that will only lead to further class and other academic disruptions, ultimately the achievement of the goals of the NDP. Universities need to be given support to ensure that they carry out the kind of education envisaged in the NDP, they need to have quality staff to give quality education, but how will they retain this qualified staff when money is not made available?

Government is the main role-player here that can bring about order and restore focus to the NDP targets. Only through solutions on how to fund this great number of poor and deserving students can the country return to being calm. Arresting and shooting at students will only leave a bad picture of a democratic government, rather introduce an element of leadership, call the students and give them a reason not to doubt that you understand their struggle, show leadership, something that is clearly lacking.



## 5.7 Conclusion

Every government action has a consequence, unintended or otherwise. The NDP has been put in place to chart the way forward for South Africa to become a global giant, enable the country to compete on equal basis with the standards of education as accepted globally. It is, however, important to note that with twenty-two years of democracy under its belt, the country still faces challenges inherited from apartheid rule.

These challenges have resulted in unemployment, inequality and poverty thriving in the society and these have spilled onto the various sectors of society, including higher education. Because of the financial challenges that have been experienced mostly by the black majority, entrance into institutions of higher learning has not always been easy, tertiary education has always been considered too expensive by the poor and for the poor.

This historical grievance has appeared in the most unexpected fashion, with students refusing to allow the increase in fees in 2015, stating that tuition was unaffordable as it was and an increase will further serve to exclude the poor from attaining quality tertiary education. This was agreed to by government, as President Zuma froze the fee hike for the year 2016, ensuring that no student will be paying extra while setting up a commission of inquiry into the feasibility of free education.

History repeated itself in 2016 when it was time for universities that highlighted the expensive nature of running their environment, stating journal costs, salaries required to keep highly skilled staff among other reasons as necessitating the increase in tuition fee. Students would have none of it, and this time, they added the demand for free education, although there was no clear view as to whether they want free education for all or only for the benefit of the poor.

This resulted in class disruptions, student arrests, vandalism and total campus shutdown across the country. By late October 2016, having realised that the students would not capitulate, universities such as the University of Pretoria adopted a correspondence method of conducting business, where most activities would be conducted online while negotiations continued.

What was also mentioned in this chapter was that the successful implementation of the NDP is under threat; the above challenges (calls for fees to fall and free education) were not discussing the threat not only to the realisation of NDP goals on higher education, but the uncertainty of the Plan instead. The rise of the DA amid loss of support of the ANC introduced a possible situation where the NDP can be replaced by a different plan, should ANC lose power altogether at the national level. The rise of the DA was shown in numbers and it was said that this should not be ignored, because the internal problems of the ANC seem to be a perfect campaign tool for the opposition.

The internal fighting does not only mean within the ANC, but in the tripartite alliance as well. The ANC has its back against the wall, and will most likely need to listen to those who still express dissatisfaction without leaving the party or alliance, such as the equally troubled COSATU. The trade union is against the NDP, and with the next policy conference in 2017, they could once again voice their dislike of the Plan, only this time through threats.

The NDP, particularly its chapter nine, is under threat, the focus is no longer on the implementation, serious factors that have called government to sit down and listen, may have delayed the process, and with no certain assurance from the students that they will settle for increases for the rich and none for the poor, instead of free education, the country might still experience problems in the higher education sector, problems that will delay or even disable any chance of meeting all targets by 2030.

## **Chapter 6: General Conclusions and Recommendations**

## **Chapter 6: General Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Introduction**

From the previous chapters it is clear that the NDP is a potential game changer, a blueprint with a strong vision for the country, and if successfully implemented, will put South Africa among the most innovative, educated and progressive countries in the world with reduced levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

By placing education as a catalyst for a “better” South Africa, the NDP demands for all role players to make a meaningful contribution in the realisation of the year 2030 goals alluded to in the blueprint. There is no shortcut as far as this realisation of the goals of the NDP, and there is no other way than through the aforementioned cooperation, leading to the realisation of a key element of the NDP; unity and mutual agreement to put the country first today, in order to ascertain a better tomorrow for generations to come.

Not to romanticise the NDP to the extreme, but it is indeed the best document the country could have come up with as unlike many, it details not only what the country should achieve, but also how, the *status quo*, present and future challenges. This has therefore made it a workable and practical document, with little if any vagueness on how to go about improving South Africa. All that is needed, is a united front to ensure successful implementation.

With the above being said, this work has also shown that there are a few key challenges that could stand in the way of successful implementation, and while all three were not anticipated, they seem to have shaken the very core of the tertiary education sector and government. The four challenges were stated in the previous chapter as;

- Fees Must Fall movement
- Free Education
- Political instability
- ANC succession race

The following section will provide a brief recap of each factor, before highlighting the possible solutions in the form of recommendations to ensure that the challenges do not hinder the attainment of the goals of the NDP.

## **6.2 Fees Must Fall**

It was earlier stated that the Fees Must Fall protests arose as a result of university students across the country refused to accept tuition fee hikes by institutions of higher education. Having started at Wits University in 2015, these protests saw students bringing the country to a standstill, along with the academic programme in their respective universities.

While the students complained that the hike was to ensure that most face exclusion on the basis of a lack of finance, universities deemed the hikes necessary, citing the rising costs of running a university, which includes books, subscriptions, printing and salaries of highly skilled and qualified staff that will ensure the provision of quality education, which ironically features strongly in the NDP. Government was simply there in the middle, with a responsibility to universities (subsidies) and students (bursaries).

The President of the country, Jacob Zuma, halted the increase in fees for the year 2016, easing all the tension and conflict, ensuring that lectures and exams continued for the remainder of the year. It was only a matter of time before another hike was introduced for 2017, and again, protests ensued accompanied by vandalism and burning of infrastructure. Once again, government intervened and this time announced that there will be an increase of 8% for those with a R600 000pa household income.

### **6.2.1 Recommendations**

***Narrative: the demands of the students to have fees reduced caused instability in the tertiary education sector and saw government having to relook at its policy and approach to its involvement in the sector. These protests caught both government and institutions of higher learning by surprise, and this will continue should there be no decisive action in addressing the demands of the students.***

1. *The government does not seem to have had an open channel of communication with the students; they seem to have dealt only with universities. The need to have engagements with students more often, not only in times of crisis as witnessed, is undoubtedly vital. Had this communication channel been open, the students would have been engaged first hand by the government to highlight any challenges that have resulted in government reducing its subsidies to institutions of higher learning, the students would also have used government as their first stop when the dissatisfaction of fees being increased came to light. It is undeniable that the protests saw a clear divide and distance between government and those to whom it grants loans for study purposes.*

2. *It would also be helpful for government to reduce the power of universities to determine the percentage increase of tuition on a yearly basis. Government should have a more hands-on role in the determination of fee hikes to protect against possible unscrupulous tendencies of universities, as these high fees may in the end only serve to exclude the poorest of the poor from accessing tertiary education in the country.*

3. *One of the biggest consequences of these protests that has seriously impacted budgeting is the burning and vandalism of infrastructure across campuses. Government needs to put in place special courts that will deal with related cases, to ensure quicker service of justice, with guilty parties receiving heavy punishment because as much as there needs to be a good relationship between government and students, there also needs to be respect for our infrastructure. Additionally, except for being a deterrent, such a measure will help assist confirm or contrast suggestions that most of these protests were hijacked by external forces who were merely opportunists and perpetuated this violence for different reasons.*

4. *Since government is obliged to cater for the poor at university level, and the number of enrolments by the poor seem to be on the increase, the quality of education at basic education level needs to improve, starting with increasing the pass mark from 30% to 50%. It makes better sense to rather invest in those students that academically deserve it, putting more focus on quality than quantity. A student that did not pass convincingly in Grade 12 is most likely to repeat the first year of study because of the challenging curricula at tertiary level, and as per the demands of the much talked about Freedom Charter, academically deserving students will not be left behind, and they will be prioritised. Government also needs stronger and closer monitoring of students' academic life, beyond just making funds available and demanding results at the end of the year.*

5. *Measures should also be put in place to combat fraudulent activities carried out by some students who are economical with the truth as far as their financial background is concerned in order to secure NSFAS, and this then results in students undeserving of aid using this funding for matters outside the academic requirements, leaving deserving students without help. There should be a thorough screening of applicants for financial aid. Much money will therefore be saved.*

6. *The NDP seems to rely on the kindness of the private sector to offer bursaries and scholarships to the less fortunate and academically deserving. Desperate times call for desperate measures, and the reality is that government is clearly financially challenged as far as helping students in tertiary education is concerned. There should be legislative measures put in place to assist in having the compliance of companies in helping to educate the poor, the same way legislation such as BBBEE was introduced to help guide private business to employ the previously oppressed. Let there be legislative intervention to help this sought after cooperation of all stakeholders in society to help the country achieve its NDP goals by 2030.*

### **6.3 Free education**

Free education has been an umbrella term and mostly overlapped with and came into the spotlight with Fees Must Fall. It is a call for fee-free tertiary education with two different arguments: one part is for everyone to receive free education, while the other argument is for the poor alone to get free education. This debate has a longer lifespan than the Fees Must Fall argument mentioned in the previous section.

It is the view of the students that government in actual fact can afford to grant free education to the students, and that the political party in power, through the bedrock of the country's existence, the Freedom Charter, made this promise before South Africa even attained freedom from colonial and apartheid rule. The students believe that measures can be put in place to subsidise these students and ensure that no one gets excluded from tertiary education on the basis of financial lack.

Government, however, feels that the Freedom Charter has been misunderstood on the question of free education. As highlighted previously, the Freedom Charter actually means free basic education and as far as higher education, scholarships, loans and bursaries will be made available to deserving students, as is the case with the NSFAS, to make sure that students do not get deprived of tertiary education as a result of being poor.

The important part of this is that President Jacob Zuma established a commission of inquiry to look into the feasibility of free education in South Africa, and by the end of 2016 the commission was still underway with its work. The establishment of this commission was indeed a great sign towards the realisation and implementation of free education as per student demands.



### 6.3.1 Recommendations

***Narrative: The students in universities and colleges have called for free education to be implemented. Most of these plights are informed by what has been revealed in this work to be a miscomprehension of certain stipulations of the Freedom Charter, and this division among those who advocate free education is on whether free education should be for all or not, while the government takes the stance that the former is more plausible and potentially feasible.***

***1. Government needs to put in place stronger measures to fight corruption as it has played a big role not only in delaying service delivery as a whole but making it sound preposterous to find money that will fund free education. It is no secret that the Auditor-General Reports never paints a beautiful picture of the state of our country. Billions are lost through corruption and maladministration and there seem to be little accountability or deterring measures in place to avoid a repetition, or at least reduce the amount of wasteful expenditure.***

***2. The political challenges of the ruling party should find a political if not legal solution because they hamper logical steps that will assist in coming up with a solution to this topic. The exclusion of the Minister of Finance Pravin Gordhan from the commission does not make sense; the Minister is in a better position to contribute since he is in charge of the state purse, and because he is excluded, due to political conflict, it makes it difficult to understand exactly who will best be consulted to speak for the state.***

**3. This work has highlighted that the government has reduced its subsidies to universities in recent years. For a government that never misses an opportunity to highlight the value of education, it is amazing that university funding would be reduced. The number of poor students from the previously disadvantaged backgrounds who go into the tertiary sector increases each year, so how exactly does it make sense to reduce funding? Who should cater for these students? More funding should be made available for universities.**

**4. Our public officials earn enormous salaries. Salary cuts are necessary because as a public official, you should not expect to be rich from holding a position of public service, the needs of the people should come first and as it is now, the people need free education and it is an insult to their face to spend millions on overseas trips and beautiful houses then come back to say there is no money for them to study.**

**5. Collaboration and consultation should take place with countries such as Germany where there is Free Education to better understanding of the most effective model of implementation, without compromising the quality of education given in our institutions of higher learning. It would be most helpful if these parties are called to the commission currently underway.**

#### **6.4 Political instability**

The decline of ANC votes over the years was highlighted as threatening the existence of the NDP, because should the ANC lose power, the incoming government will most likely come up with its own policies and programmes to suit what they promised the voters in the run up to the elections. As it is, not all parties are in support of the NDP, and some agreeing with this blueprint but only to a certain extent.

The ANC in the last local government elections (2016) lost three key municipal metros: Johannesburg, Tshwane and Nelson Mandela Bay. This was a first in the history of the democratic country and certainly sent shivers down the spine of many, particularly those in the ANC who are constantly preaching that the liberation movement will be in power forever.

If the downward trend in votes continues, we will see the ANC losing power at national level and that would be very difficult to keep ANC policies, such as the NDP, in place. Government policies have been unsuccessful in the past and this time, it will not be the result of a replacement of one ANC administration with another, but a complete and new change of political party power. This section is not to advise on how to keep the ANC in power out of support, but only for the survival of the NDP itself.

#### **6.4.1 Recommendations**

**Narrative: The ANC is losing its grip on power, as displayed by the loss of the three municipal metros in the 2016 local government elections. This loss can extend to national level and would mean that the new government might do away with all ANC policies and programmes, including the NDP.**

***1. The moral fibre of the ANC has declined in the eyes of the masses, they seem to see the ANC as self-serving, a shadow of its former self. It is time for the ANC to restore its dignity and the faith of the people by acting strongly against corruption, because the only way to prove that you are not corrupt is by taking stronger action against corruption and corrupt individuals. As things stand, there are policies and laws in place to combat corruption, but they clearly have not yielded fruits as the perception of the party being corrupt refuses to fade.***

***2. There should be quicker implementation of the NDP. Nothing stops the party from calling for a review of the timelines of the NDP, and this power will not only to serve its implementation, but also show a seriousness about moving the country forward, an intent that is not overly evident in the eyes of the citizens so far.***

**3. Stronger relations should be formed with smaller parties in the country, to make sure that should there be a situation that calls for coalitions, the ANC will have options and avoid being pushed out of power as evidenced by the loss of municipalities through EFF and DA coalitions.**

**4. Innovative ideas to solve the problems facing our people should be introduced. The over reliance on historic achievements is a strategy that seems to be wearing thin in a climate where those born after 1994 are voting. Those people are not as emotional about politics as their older family members; they demand solutions to today's problems without reminding them of how they came to have the freedom to demand such solutions.**

### **6.5 ANC succession race**

It was highlighted that succession battles introduce mass uncertainty and it will not only be within the ANC, but the outcome of this policy conference will have an impact on the country's direction as a whole; the activities and decisions within that conference will reverberate right on your doorstep and will be felt across the world even by the next generation of South Africans, that is how powerful this succession race is.

To recap, the succession conference takes place in December 2017 and it is where policies are made while others are tossed out for various reasons such as ineffectiveness and new leadership, and the fate of the NDP is also subject to the decisions taken there. The battle, as in early 2017, was set to be between deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa and Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, and these two experienced campaigners might or might not keep the blueprint for political and other reasons.

### **6.5.1 Recommendations**

**Narrative:** The need for a change of leadership in the ANC has always been in place due to the democratic nature of the party. With the 2007 elective conference having led to the removal of Thabo Mbeki in favour of President Zuma, the ANC approaches another elective conference in December 2017, and will see new leadership that will introduce new programmes and policies, putting the existence of the NDP in doubt.

*1. Whoever comes into power should focus more on enhancing elements of the NDP should there be a need, instead of totally throwing it out the window. It is a progressive document that seems to have the best interests of the country at its core.*

*2. The ANC should try by all means to avoid a bloody contest of the magnitude of the Polokwane conference that split the party into two for the sake of preserving support and making unity and cooperation a strong possibility. This smooth battle will allow for strong discussions should those in support of the NDP find themselves on the losing side.*

### **6.6 Conclusion**

It is clear from all the chapters above that the NDP is a very crucial and sound document that carries the nation's hope for a better tomorrow, it will, if successfully implemented, take South Africa where all hoped it would be when Nelson Mandela stepped out of prison gates in 1991, the kind of hope that has so far been a distant reality as the country became ravaged with massive unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The NDP calls for all sectors of society to come together and make sure that through science, mathematics, IT and engineering, we become a liberated country, we become exporters of knowledge, and we become a learned citizenry that can define its own destiny. It is a document that is full of ambition and hope for this country, a document through which we can overcome the difficulty of imagining a South Africa we can all proudly call home again.

Introducing and providing a background for this work saw first and foremost an indication of policy implementation being a challenge in the country. It was mentioned in the chapter that there are many good ideas and policies in this country that should be guiding us, but implementation has always been a difficult step to take, and for the NDP to succeed, there is hope that lessons will be learnt from the failure of previous and all policies that sounded good on paper but never came to life.

Following the introduction and background was a discussion on the research methodology that was to be taken for the purpose of this work. The research method deemed more suitable was the qualitative method, it was chosen because it offered the researcher access to rich information, and it allowed the researcher to use voluminous government documents and legislations. There were no interviews conducted as government documents became the core resources needed to carry out this work. Of note as well was the research question that guided every other chapter that followed; to what extent has there been progress in the implementation of the NDP on higher education in South Africa?

Chapter Three was the literature review. This section was looked at to determine what had been said and done on this particular topic, what information exists and how to build on it. This chapter focused heavily on monitoring and evaluation, as the steps that guided this work, the actions of this work. After defining these contents separately and eventually bringing them together, the researcher explored public administration and where it meets these two concepts, and it was said that the two concepts interface with public administration as the latter has a policy focus.

The fourth chapter was an introduction to the case study, providing a deeper understanding of what the focus of the work (i.e. NDP on higher education) is. The first step was to offer an explanation on what a case study is and why it is important. The chapter further displayed the evolution of policies that resulted in the NDP as it is known today, the role-players needed to ensure successful implementation and the goals of this document.

What was revealed in the findings and analysis chapter was that as much as the NDP is likely to better South Africa, it was threatened by unexpected protests in the tertiary education sector, with students demanding free education and the freezing of fee hikes as education was deemed too expensive for an average black child. What also threatened the realisation of the NDP was the loss of votes by the ANC, and should they lose at national level, the NDP itself might be wiped off the agenda. Possible solutions include the involvement of the Treasury in the commission as discussions around fees continue, and the eradication of poverty to ensure the integrity of the public purse.

The National Development Plan will be implemented, but challenges such as corruption and sporadic ones like university protests, will dwarf the success of this Plan; it will not bring the expected success by 2030.

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