

Youth participation in public policy making: A critical analysis of young people's involvement in the National Health Insurance policy submissions using Societal Constitutionalism as a theoretical framework.

by

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A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Social Science: Sociology

in the Department of Sociology at the University of Pretoria Faculty of Humanities

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DECLARATION

I, Naledi Mpanza, declare that this thesis / dissertation / mini-dissertation is my own original work. Where secondary material is used, this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with university requirements.

I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of university policy and implications in this regard.

Naledi Mpanza	10 July 2019	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to officially credit the very actuality of this thesis to the contributors to the Young People's Recommendations on the South African NHI White Paper, whose efforts for social justice and youth are beyond reassuring, but also inspiring. It is beyond comforting to know that young people are represented -and represented well-by dedicated trailblazers with genuine interests for the future of our society. I hope this study has shown you that: your determination has not gone unnoticed and that your tenacity is a beacon of hope for young people who may not even know of your existence.

The entire Sociology department at UP deserves my gratitude, from my fellow colleagues to the staff members. Our dynamic Administrator Rosa; you have been the real ray of sunshine-not me as you always say. Dr Charles and Vangile: thank you for seeing me through the early mornings, late nights and long weekends at various points of this project. I always felt that I could come to you with any concern and for that I am truly greatful.

My supervisors – officially: Prof Catherine Burns for her patience and magical powers to transform crisis into celebration and low-key: My mom, Ntobeko 'Mary' Mpanza, who was my crutch at every point of this process.

Mary, we made it here and even further, for -not only has the past year unveiled to me gems in the field of academia but also the beauty of our relationship. It is primarily through your unshakeable support and love that I have managed to realise this thesis. Thank you for treating my dreams as your own. I pray I can never express in words what that means to me.

I would also like to thank UP for partially funding my studies, and my friends and family for excitedly always asking 'are you done'? Once you read this, I am definitely done.

ACRONYMS

ANC African National Congress

AU African Union

BSM Black Student Movement

DOI Dullah Omar Institute

ELPHASA The Emerging Leaders of the Public Health Association of South Africa)

FMF Fees Must Fall

HPCSA Health Professions Council of South Africa

IPA Interpretive Phenomenological Approach

IT Information Technology

JUPHASA Junior Public Health Association of South Africa

NDOH National Department of Health

NHI National Health Insurance

NHLS National Health Laboratory Service

PHM People's Health Movement

SANBS South African National Blood Service

SANC South African Nursing Council

SRC Student Representative Council

TAC Treatment Action Campaign

UCT University of Cape Town

UHC Universal Health Coverage

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

USKAR University Still Known as Rhodes

WHO World Health Organization

YPR Young People's Recommendations on South Africa's NHI White Paper

ABSTRACT

Youth engagement in public policy is a widely trumpeted notion supported by participatory democracy as espoused in various legislative and policy instrument; however, the interventions associated with this commitment do not easily produce the progress sought. This can be seen in the concerns that continue to be raised regarding youth participation in development. The National Health Insurance (NHI) policy in South Africa is one such development venture with a low youth presence which – although having implications on the social reality of the young people of today and into the future – appears to not include them as key stakeholders in the consultation process.

The aim of this research study is to unpack the participation of young people in public policy making and strengthening in South Africa, with specific reference to the NHI commentary process. To achieve this goal the following key texts and informants were drawn upon: qualitative in-depth interviews with a majority of the 20 contributors to the Young People's Recommendations (YPR) on South Africa's NHI White Paper; and detailed, qualitative document reviews of the Dullah Omar Institute's report titled 'Decision Making on Health in South Africa – What Can We Learn from National Health Insurance (NHI); as well as the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation's report titled 'Socio-Economic Impact Assessment System's Final Impact Assessment (Phase 2): White Paper on NHI'. Triangulating between these sources and other key texts and accounts, the study unveils important influences behind the quality and extent of youth participation in public policy.

This study shows that the absence of young people in the conversation around NHI is not due to a lack of knowledgeable input and effort from young people, but rather a cocktail of influences that have to do with the blatant – but ill-acknowledged – politics within the health policy consultation process. Chapter Four contains the bulk of these voices and my analysis of this activism.

The theory of societal constitutionalism that this study employs assisted in uncovering the reality that these young professionals are capable, knowledgeable, informed, concerned, and resilient – and that they are still determined to act within the space of public health. This finding directly contradicts the perception that the youth are vulnerable people that can only be theorised "upon" and "about", not "with".

After detailed analysis of the data from and by youthful people collected for this thesis, the Conclusion of this study shows that it is not a lack of policy that impedes youth participation in policy making and sustenance; it is the marginalising attitudes and ideologies which then influence how the youth are considered in the conversation. This observation highlights the disconnect between policy and practice which can be addressed through interrogating both policy and process, especially through critical engagement with the practised reality.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research project was to assess and understand the experiences of young people in the National Health Insurance (NHI) policy submissions process. The topic was worthy of investigation because this endeavor had and still has implications for public policy making and social change more broadly in our region, and therefore requires dexterity in the fields of health policy and public participation in policy.

The NHI in South Africa – and of course there are many global national health insurance systems to draw on comparatively – is unique in that it is not strictly a health policy but, a public policy as well, that emerged after more than a century of segregated and unequal health systems in the country. This is due to its commitment to a reform in health rooted in social solidarity, which extends its reach beyond health considerations into many other aspects of health inside the social context of South Africa. In other words, the policy aims to transform the very essence of health and health financing as it is currently understood in South Africa today.

Although at the point of compiling this study the National Health Insurance had become a Bill, the study itself engages primarily with the policy in its draft stages as a White Paper- in particular, the experiences of youth in formulating a response for consideration as part of commentary on the policy.

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¹ For a history of health and health systems in South Africa see: Coovadia, *et al* .2009. "The health and health system of South Africa: historical roots of current public health challenges", *The Lancet*, 374 (9692): 817-834; and for an overview of the challenges arising from this that need to be addressed see: Mayosi *et al*. 2012. "Health in South Africa: changes and challenges since 2009" *The Lancet*, 374 (9692): 2029-2043.

1.1 Background to the study

1.1.1 Introduction to the background to the study

The aim of this section is to provide a scholarly analysis relevant to the discussion on the role of young people in public policy as well as health policy in South Africa, and to situate this within relevant international scholarly literature. The discussion will be framed using the theoretical assumptions of societal constitutionalism; which will be discussed in detail, separately, under the section on the theoretical framework.

It is sufficient at this point to note that societal constitutionalism is a critical theory which implores the researcher to explore participation, beyond governmental parameters, to the societal; with an emphasis on the role of the participants and their understanding of their participation (Sciulli, 1992; Teubner, 2012).

In light of the above, the core literature addressed will speak to these contexts. As such, the Constitution of the republic of South Africa, 1996 (now 'The Constitution'), the National Health Insurance Policy White paper (now 'National Health Insurance policy') as well as various peer-reviewed research and other academic sources, will be utilised in informing the foundations of the background to the study.

In order to understand the core curiosities of this project, foregrounding knowledge on youth participation in public policy making needs to be canvassed. This will entail an elaboration on participation as a democratic practice endorsed in a participatory democracy-of which South Africa is; as well as, a highlighting of the critical nature of youth participation in social change and growing democracies. As such, participatory democracy, youth participation as well as youth participation in formal policy process, will be expounded upon. These principles explicitly relate to the ideals of the NHI (as stated in the executive summary of the White paper on NHI) which are to, effectively transform the South African health system; through a unified dedication and commitment to the progressive realisation of the section 27 right of access to health care and the aspiration for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) (NHI White Paper, 2016) using social solidarity as an overarching concept. The National Health Insurance policy of South Africa, as an example of a transformative policy intent on facilitating social change, shall also be briefly explained. Its core principles will be outlined with a brief discussion on the pursuits of Universal Health Coverage (in the form of NHI) as pursued in other countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia and Tanzania – to name only a few. The general politics of health

as well as policy and decision making in health will also be theoretically detailed as a natural pressure point for youth in public policy.

Although each topic of engagement will be dealt with under its own heading, overlapping may occur especially in the re-emphasising mission to show the relevance of each concept to the overall study. Whilst this may occur, a comprehensive resolution should be anticipated in the conclusion of each broad section; where all the concepts shall be brought together in a clear and coherent practice.

1.1.2 The National Health Insurance Policy in South Africa

According to the National Department of Health website, the National Health Insurance (NHI) is:

"a financing system that will make sure that all citizens of South Africa (and legal long-term residents) are provided with essential healthcare, regardless of their employment status and ability to make a direct monetary contribution to the NHI Fund" (NDoH, 2018).

This definition is naturally in line with that provided within the NHI policy document itself, with the added consideration of the pooled funds which would be used to actively purchase the services required to realise the NHI in South Africa (NHI white paper, 2017: 8). This economic or fiscal tenor is critical to note as it introduces a conflicting ideology to the principles of NHI. This is especially the case as the White Paper establishes an explicit commitment to Universal Healthcare Coverage (UHC) social solidarity ideology which appears to be in conflict with 'the active purchasing' concept which arguably ushers in capitalistic interest into this domain. Uncannily enough, the World Health Organization (WHO) is the one to be lauded for this capitalistic stance due to their insistence on robust financial mechanisms as critical factors for the successful commencement of projects towards Universal Health Coverage. More specifically, a WHO fact sheet on Universal Health Coverage published in 2016 stated how, "UHC is not just about health financing... [i]t encompasses all components of the health system: health service delivery systems, the health workforce, health facilities and communications networks, health technologies, information systems, quality assurance mechanisms, and governance and legislation", which although offering a caveat in the beginning, in essence underscores 'robust financing structures as key' for strengthening health systems (WHO, 2018). Although practical and logical, the 'robust financial structures' narrative is unfortunately the

thread that has been adopted and projected through contemporary discussion on the NHI especially through the media.

1.1. 3 Media Perceptions of the NHI

News articles in the South African media and abroad feature headlines that emphasise the fiscal efforts associated with the NHI which invariably casts a negative hue on the otherwise noble principle of UHC.

The following are headlines, sourced from Google update on the key word 'NHI':

"NHIA reduces drug reimbursements to balance costs", "How the NHI will change your medical aid contributions", "NHI expenses exceed revenue", "Cabinet may make NHI decision before budget".

These headlines all operate within the financial space save for instances where politics parties are concerned. In that case we get headlines to the effect of 'Ramaphosa reiterates ANC [African National Congress]'s commitment to implementing the NHI'. This shows how, although UHC (and NHI invariably) has been put forward by WHO as 'not just being about health financing', the health landscape, with the help of the media, shows an almost isolated view of NHI and UHC being financial interests to be dealt with primarily in the economic domain.

Although contemporary discussions pointed to a preoccupation with the financial implications of NHI; Harris et al. (2011: 119) cautioned against this by stating that, achieving health reform in pursuit of universal health coverage requires a consideration of the accessibility of services for the entire population as well as the discernment of the differential needs of the disadvantaged groups as opposed to financing reform alone. Unfortunately, these headlines, and not the convictions of Harris et al. (2011), are the point of entry for lay citizens, the bulk of which constitute the youth in South Africa especially. These headlines also show the sway of the NHI conversation to the economic sphere which inherently restricts- perhaps excludes – many people who will be affected by the policy once in practice. The recognition of this exclusivity within the NHI policy conversation indicates a political charge and neo-liberal paradigm within the NHI discourse.

1.1.4Politics and Neo-liberalism in South African Health policy

The neoliberal stance and political influences in health policy are not particularly foreign to the South African landscape. The 2009 Lancet series' 'The health and health system of South Africa: historical roots of current public health challenges', better known as the '2009 Lancet Report', is an academic compilation, by prominent scholars in the field of health research in South Africa, which provides an in-depth assessment of the South African health system, with due consideration of the political and neo-liberal factors and barriers.

The widely cited report provided key messages as recommendations for addressing health challenges in South Africa (Coovadia, et al., 2009). The publication also heralded a new health policy in the country - the NHI, with the efforts and energies of various health economists and professionals within the public health domain. The key messages in this *The Lancet* edition offer context to this research study, which starts with tracing the historical roots of the health burdens and challenges under which the South African health system is framed. The key messages touch on important aspects of, not only health reform in addressing the wide disparities in health but also, the democratic element that needs to inform this process; as seen in their use of the term 'the will of the people' (Coovadia, et al., 2009: 817). In light of the stark unfortunate reality of our health system in crisis, the authors proposed an engagement with the matter through a scope, exceeding that of health alone but, extending to the concepts of participatory democracy, equality in structures and programme planning as well as innovation and leadership (as seen in the above key messages). Their key messages and the overall report are understood to have been a call to action for the government to initiate a radical transformation of South Africa's health care system –a point explored further in the next section of this study (Mayosi, et al., 2012: 2036). Although the notion of the NHI functions on noble ideology, in South Africa it is common knowledge that the promulgation of the NHI has been an endeavor primarily driven by the African National Congress (ANC) - the ruling party with a majority in government, which has fostered scepticism and concerns about the very notion as a political tool to garner votes in the upcoming 2019 elections. The very nature of this observation highlights the intersection between health and politics. South Africans (and well-read global public health scholars) are not want to perhaps the greatest intersection between health and politics when Thabo Mbeki, former president of South Africa (and the ANC) in his bid to cleanse South Africa of international aid burdens, carelessly denounced AIDS as not contributing to the deaths related to HIV in the late 90s and early 2000's (Mbali, 2002 cited in Johnson, 2005:325; Johnson, 2005: 310-317, 352).

1.1.5 Politics within health policy

This intersection between politics and health naturally bleeds into the politics of health policy as well. In her widely cited study, 'Pathways to the Use of Health Services Research in Policy', Marsha Gold (2009) expounded upon the political realities that influence the up-take of research in the application or formulation of health policy. Some of her findings included the skills of the individual researcher as a factor for research use in policy. Gold (2009:1116)'s study also found that, the "[s]ocial and/or political climate, incentives and mandates, interorganisational norm-setting and networks [as well as] environmental stability", are also important factors that influence the use of research for policy decisions.

In conversation with her, Blendon and Steelfisher (2009) offered a commentary on understanding the political realities underpinning decision-making in health policy. The authors used Gold (2009) as a launch pad for their argument that, health policy decision-making entails various political aspects that need to be taken into consideration when research is undertaken in the field. More specifically, the authors argued that,

"knowledge of political forces, including voters, interest groups, congressional committee, and the media, can help researchers select topics with the potential for policy leverage and present scientifically valid findings that are also relevant to key decision makers" (Blendon and Steelfisher, 2009: 8).

Although this project does not assume political theoretical assumptions *per se*, the consideration of the political factors that influence decision-making in health policy (and ultimately policy makers), are invaluable in developing sound knowledge on the discourse at hand. Even though their discussion acts as a caveat for researchers conducting research in the field, the same cautions could be used to flag the various interests that influence the formation of public health policy.

Also related to the politics of health, is the political nature of health promotion of which, scholars Bambra, Fox and Scott-Samuel (2005) argued is a field rarely engaged with in research or policy. Bambra et al. (2005) explicitly argued that health is political and therefore, decision making about -and around- health, will be political as well. The overarching logic for this is the

fact that, "health is political because power is exercised over it as part of a wider economic, social and political system [the reform of which] requires political awareness and political struggle" (Bambra, et al., 2005: 187-188). This is especially true for South Africa because of the inequality of apartheid as well as the failures of the state which have much bearing on the social reality of the citizens of today.

More elaborately, Bambra et al. (205: 187-188) argued that, health is political in so far as it is a commodity, susceptible to political intervention (and therefore political action); as seen with all resources in neo-liberal economies like South Africa. Despite the stark reality of this, awareness of the political struggle becomes more insipid in health policy due to the nature of the composition of decision-making bodies being so aligned with party politics and not so much with the general public.

Take for instance the government report titled *NHI Implementation: Institutions, bodies and commissions that must be established* which details the composition of the committees as suggested in the implementation of the NHI. One such committee in the report, with the proposed name of 'National Tertiary Health Services Committee', details the following:

"a) Core membership of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Health: Relevant Senior Official (at a DDG level) of National Department of Health

Four Relevant Senior Official (at a DDG level) of Provincial Departments of Health without Central Hospitals, nominated by the National Health Council.

- iii. All Central Hospital Chief Executive Officers
- b) One Relevant Senior Official (at a DDG level) from the National Treasury nominated by the Minister of Finance
- i. One Relevant Senior Official (at a DDG level) from the Department of Higher Education and Training nominated by the Minister of Higher Education and Training
- c) Representative from the Council of Deans of Health Science Faculties, Dental and Medical Faculties:
- i. Representative from the Professional Councils (HPCSA, SANC, PCSA)
- d) In addition, the Minister will appoint one (1) representative of each group because of their special knowledge of matters following a call for nominations published in the Government Gazette:
- i. Colleges of Medicine;
- ii. Private Hospital groups;

Professional societies;

NHLS and SANBS The Minister of Health will appoint a Chair and Deputy Chair from the above list of Members" (NDoH, 2018: 4).

Although the variety in professional bodies is commendable, the concentration of seniority in the power structure of these committees cannot be ignored either -- it is blatant and visible. The inevitable argument for this would be the correlation between seniority and years of experience, however this does not explain how various interests are represented but not those of young people as is the case with promulgations that trumpet their involvement in development. Even the NHI Commission which proposes a broader and more inclusive plurality still offers but one improbable yet tentatively realistic area where young people may have the opportunity to have a seat at the table (NDoH, 2018: 22). This would be under 'civil society stakeholders' umbrella, which the document proposes to include by way of nomination. Although normatively opening the space for young people, this approach is unlikely to be the avenue that young people use to gain a foot in the door of NHI conversation, purely because of the general incorporation of the youth within and under civil society groups and professional associations. This is not to mention the politics and perceptions of young people within these very organisations which are more likely to hinder the concerns of young people being voiced in spaces of policy implementation.

1.1.6 The politics of health

The political nature of health policy is not very far from the political reality of health itself (Bambra, et al., 2005: 187). In other words, the factors and ideologies that prevent some from having access to spaces on health policy broadly have the same bearing on how some people lack access to basic health services. In their underlining these and other political aspects of health, Bambra et al. (2005:187) also highlighted the United Nations' 1948 declaration of the right to 'a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing', which although heavily criticised on various grounds ranging from the definitional to the substantial, remains widely cited (Huber et al., 2011; Baumrin, 2002 cited in Rhodes, et al., 2002).

Although more than half a century has passed since the 1948 declaration of health and wellbeing, South Africa is but one example of how this has not necessarily resulted in equitable health realities. As such, the reality that the health disparities that exist in South Africa are as a result of our turbulent racial past proves to be in line with the argument made by Bambra et al. (2005) that health is indeed political. In fact, this connection between politics and history in health by Bambra et al. (2005) makes for the argument that research on the South African health landscape that does not touch on the social, political and economic injustices informed by our history, can scantily be trusted. This is because the residue of the racial policies that facilitated unequal access to healthcare, amongst other things, remain pervasive and inform the various burdens under which our country suffers from today.

Although the vast political aspects of health are rarely engaged with, evidence of its existence need to be fully understood before the politics of youth engagement can be fully elaborated upon. This is especially important in South Africa, where academics have laboured over the critical assessment of our flailing healthcare system with due consideration of the fact that, "South Africa's apartheid past still shapes health, service, and resources inequities" (Harris, et al., 2011:104).

1.1.7 Ideologies underpinning health inequality

In conversation with the 2009 *The Lancet Series*, the 2012 *The Lancet Series* titled '*Health in South Africa: change and challenges since 2009*' also traverses the context and influences of the South African health care system. Although featuring one contributor, Hoosen Coovadia from the former report, the 2012 edition has a different tone to that of the 2009 *The Lancet*, report in that it extends the difficulties of the South African health care system beyond its historical foundations. The key differences include (broadly), an introduction to the NHI policy and its' history as well as, the specific changes in the public health landscape; which included, a change in leadership (specifically the appointment of Dr Aaron Mostsoaledi as the Minister of Health) as well as the large-scale roll out of antiretroviral treatment (Mayosi, et al., 2012).

The changes mentioned are important for the context of this study as they underline the context in which all public policy process is operating within-that of a dire South African health system plagued by historical inequalities as well as the extended practice of policies and practices that encourage limited access; based on the grounds of race, gender and age (Coovadia, et al., 2009: 817). These limitations- political, economic and social - remain in our society even today, perhaps in more implicit ways that may not always be intended. The unintended effects may be as a result of the ideologies and practices known for their tacit yet immense on society. Alex van den Heever in his published work over a decade has extended the discussion on health inequality beyond the context of racial segregation in health, by focusing on the stark yet tenuously theorised neo-liberal approach adopted by the South African government towards the end of apartheid. Every inquiry regarding the South African healthcare context will mention the racial inequalities yet it is seldom mentioned how this neo-liberal approach would also foster the inequalities now well documented even today, van den Heever particularly observed how, "[this] process of deregulating and privatizing health care... [had] little insight into consequences for equity, efficiency and access and the policies of a future democratic government" (van den Heever, 1998: 281). His discussion incorporates the inequity prone within the two health systems (the private and the public) and how having equal budgets but servicing two completely different populations and ultimately demographics exposes various issues. He tackled this issue of heath inequality with a closer look at the very structures which foster eminent racial divides in these health systems. The extension of this conversation makes for a broader engagement compelling the comprehension of the complexities involved -at leastin the South African context. In 2016 Mpanza, in her Master's thesis on 'Factors that influence medical scheme insured consumers to co-pay for prescription medicines at private community pharmacies in Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa' held that,

"It does seem as though medical schemes were first introduced to provide South African consumers diversity in accessibility to healthcare whilst protecting them from out of pocket payments, however something must have changed along the way because insured patients started paying more out of pocket in addition to the mandatory monthly contributions".

Mpanza's insights expand the outlook on health inequality by showing the reality of the failure of **both** the private and public health sector in South Africa.

The politically charged nature of health and health policy should caution us against the idolatry (idolising) of a particular viewpoint in aiding comprehension and solutions. As such, this different paradigm should be understood as an addition to the lenses that can be used to expand on the variables that influence what remains a system wrought with gross inequalities. Even though van den Heever's analysis of the Green Paper on the National Health Insurance policy argues that corruption in the state sector, including health is a factor contributing to the challenges at hand, and the evidence he produces is both empirically rich and apposite. To bolster his argument, he makes reference to Gupta et al (2000) in stating that,

"...improvements in indicators of health care and education services do not necessarily require higher public spending. It is equally, if not more, important to institute transparent procurement procedures and enhance financial accountability of public spending. ... it is likely that a reduced level of corruption in the provision of services would help improve their quality." (cited in van den Heever, 1998: 31).

The paradigm from which van den Heever operates should again caution us against a resolute conviction about his view because he backs his argument really well but still uses tentative language to bring it across to his reader- which raises some doubt. In understanding argument that inherently inequitable static systems and corruption, constitute part of the blockages in the drain of health care; young people can quite rightly be reckoned as instrumental in unclogging these blockages –primarily because of their tenacity and tendency to challenge issues within their societies (Mengistu, 2006).

These blockages include Neo-liberalism which can be seen as one other ideology largely recognised for the shortfalls of health in South Africa especially in the 'Post-Mbeki era', where globalisation and capitalism featured in many a study that sought to make sense of the Mbeki presidency's response to the HIV pandemic (Johnson, 2005; Cohen, 2000; Scheckels, 2004).

Former Director-General of Health Professor Olive Shisana's inputs in this regard have also included these concerns —more specifically-of commercial interests superseding the primacy of public health access especially in relation to access to medicines (Shisana and Zungu-Dirwayi, 2003 cited in Johnson, 2005: 323). The neo-liberal framework does not affect only health or health policy; we see that environmental policy, and decision-making in education, is also replete with it — more notably through the global warming discourse and the transformation of higher education project respectively (Cock, 2007; Huber et al.2011, Shiva, 2002; Acker and Wagner, 2014; Booysen et. al, 2010; Naicker, 2016: 55-60). As is the tendency with neo-liberalism, exclusions and restrictions are the order of the day as the greater good and future of societies is compromised for economic prosperity.

Ideologies such as neo-liberalism are not the only threats to policy and policy formulation, perceptions about who should be prioritised and included in the framework of policy making also feed into how policy is constructed. In South Africa, all policy normatively seeks a due process mandate from the SA Constitution; which is the highest authority in the land. This is also where the principle of participatory democracy (and therefore public participation in policy) can be sought.

1.1.8 The legal frameworks that enable and propagate for participatory democracy and youth participation

1.1.8.1 Introduction: Participatory democracy

The Constitution of South Africa points to participatory democracy as one of the cornerstones of our democracy. The judiciary through case law has reiterated this principle in policy making and decision—making discourse through emphasising the wider interpretations of the 'meaningful participation' of all citizens in policy formulation. Young people are not excluded from this discourse in any explicit way; as already mentioned above, their discrimination is not sanctioned on any grounds. In fact, their right to provide input, and impact decisions about the society they live in, is included in various policy instruments as well as national, regional and international decision making bodies such as the European Union and the African Union. The AU specifically endorses the right of young people to be consolidated as part of processes of development in its mandate, which can also be understood as an effort in transformative constitutionalism due to the change required in order to incorporate young people in the discourse (AU, 2018; South African Institute of International Affairs, 2018).

In his address on Transformative Constitutionalism, the former Chief Justice Pius Langa stated that, transformative constitutionalism "also entails the development of opportunities which allow people to realise their full potential within positive societal relationships" (2006: 351). Although this in an opinion susceptible to flexible interpretations, the respectable Chief Justice did emphasise this principle as indispensable in the South African context (2006: 351). His statement can be linked to the central tenets of participatory democracy which extend beyond representative democracy to include the active participation of citizens in decisions that affect them (Mutz, 2006; Modise, 2017).

1.1.9 Defining "youth" and their involvement in policy

Although the term 'youth' is used generally and uncontested in society; the concept (on the other hand) is a site of contestation, due to the political, economic, cultural and social implications attached to it. According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), youth "is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group" (UNESCO, 2018). However, UNESCO also argues that, age is the easiest way to describe this group; which is the logic they adopt for their activities such as The Youth Strategy (UNESCO: 2018). Using this logic, UNESCO applies 'youth' differently depending on the context of regional or national policy activity; with the regional definition taking precedence for activities at the regional level (UNESCO, 2018). In light of this, the definition of 'youth' as defined by UNESCO is "those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years".

The African Union (AU) on the other hand defines youth as, "every person between the ages of 15 and 35" (African Youth Charter, 2006: 3). Although there is wide acknowledgement of youth participation in society, this form of participation is limited to participation as a form of

social action and community engagement and not necessarily as input in formal public policy. In fact, studies on youth development (which arguably entails participation in public policy), point to the failure of the National Youth Development Plan in facilitating such involvement by young people; as relevant stakeholders in public policy decision-making. In fact, according to the intellectual history paper written by Marcus B Lane (2005), there is very little sense in looking at participation without considering the decision-making aspect of participation. Lane's discussion is also important because it draws on the monumental and widely cited work of Sherry Arnstein (1969), whose analysis of citizen participation is primarily linked to in the field of health policy (Connor, 1988; Tritter & McCallum, 2006; Smolen, et al. 2016). Tritter

and McCallum (2006) also draw from Arnstein's image of a "ladder of participation", which they reflect on as having been a touchstone for policy makers and practitioners in the 35 years preceding their study. However, instead of merely adopting this "ladder", the scholars note that Arnstein's model proves deficient in as much as it subsumes participation into similar experiences for all those involved and emphasises power, whilst ignoring "the existence of different relevant forms of knowledge and expertise" (Tritter & McCallum, 2006: 158). This is important to note especially because studies conducted on youth participation in governance have often pointed to a deficit in skills and experience in young people as a handicap for meaningful participation (Chamisa and Shava, 2009). This study set out to test this characterisation. As we see the "youth" category covers a vast population and age group (18-35 years in most cases), from within which various skills and expertise can be gleaned; especially for the purposes on commentary regarding health reform policy such as the NHI.

The institutional definitions of youth are not completely stable, in that they do not always factor in the implications of considerations which arise when the terms 'youth' and 'young person', are used. These deliberations are more pronounced in the emerging discipline of youth studies. It is critically important to note, however, that the foundations of youth studies in American sociology and British psychology have had a significant effect on narratives on youth even today. This was noted by the late renowned youth studies sociologist, Andy Furlong (2007), in his foreword to sociologist Elisabetta Ruspini's 'A New Youth? Young people, Generations, and Family Life'. There, Furlong argued that, the "... early era youth studies become stratified in ways that have remained entrenched to present day" (2016: xvi). This cautions the researcher into the politics of the semantic; in which careful attention needs to be paid.

Although Ruspini (2016) and Furlong (2007) are notable and renowned scholars in the field of youth studies, both of them use the terms 'youth' and 'young people' interchangeably, which prompts the reader to assess the implications of the work in other research, rather than the meaning, of the terms, as each attracts different political considerations to it. This caution becomes critical in a consideration of the underlying assumptions regarding youth participation in policy; not only in public policy but health policy as well. In any sense, the terminology invites similar marginalising attitudes against young people despite the widely cited and reiterated assertions regarding the advantages of the engagement of young people at early stages of policy. Although focused on investing in disadvantaged young people from an early age, the point made by the contributors to the 2006 Science Magazine (Volume 312) also apply

in the context of involving young people in policy much earlier rather than later; because of the fairness, social justice, productivity in the economy and society at large which this promotes (Heckman, 2006: 1902; Richter, 2006).

It may be a truism, but still worth stating, that young people are often marginalised and ostracised in their own societies to the point of underclass status. The *Youth 2000* conference cohort shares this sentiment, as seen in their resulting publication titled '*Youth, the 'underclass' and Social Exclusion*'; which touches on a few of the perceptions and conceptions about young people in British society especially (MacDonald, 1997: xi). As an introduction to his chapter on '*Dangerous youth and the dangerous class*', MacDonald (1997: 1) elaborates on "youth as a time of transition [that] can be dangerous for young people themselves, leading to social exclusion and how excluded youth –as a social category has been constructed as dangerous and threatening for the comfortable majority of middle- aged, middle-class society" (MacDonald, 1997: 1). This weaves into our discussion in that introduces the element of why young people do not participate in public policy, or many other democratic processes in their societies. His theory can be identified as a theme, as seen in the sentiments shared by some of the group members who intimate how their interactions with the more senior members of their professional organisations were at times stunted.

An example of this would be the choice of the ELPHASA committee to dissolve their committee, due to being bullied into submission as opposed to being supported through the transition to being called JUPHASA. ³

According to Marsh, O' Toole and Jones (2006), in the late 1990s and well into the early 2000s the concern for youth involvement in policy was such a concern to the point of terms 'apolitical' 'apathetic' and 'alienated' youth being used to describe the decline in political involvement in the United Kingdom and beyond. They continue this discussion by referencing Norris (2003:8) who elaborated on the idea that

"many are concerned that the widespread mistrust of government authorities in the mainstream culture may foster a public climate which facilitates the growth of anti-state movements and, at most extreme, the breakdown of the rule of law and sporadic outbreaks of domestic terrorism by radical dissidents" (Norris, 2003: 8 in Marsh, O'Toole & Jones, 2006: 3).

The element of distrust is a frequent one in the South Africa youth in policy landscape as seen in the discussion below on youth politics in South Africa over the past four years.

On a macro-level, people's (including young people's) disengagement from political institutions has also been linked to their disengagement from local communities and a general lack of social integration (Marsh, O'Toole & Jones, 2006: 3). As such, the trio of writers proposes four arguments as critical assessments of the idea of youth political apathy.

Firstly, they criticise the narrow view of the political (and hence political participation) which "therefore fails to engage with how young people themselves conceive of the political and does not attempt to investigate their political imaginaries" (Marsh, O'Toole & Jones, 2006: 4). This particular argument, as is the case with the three ensuing arguments, highlights the 'other side to the coin' – which contextualises young people outside of their own purviews.

² The Emerging Leaders of the Public Health Association of South Africa (ELPHASA) is the youth collective within the Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) of which many of the study participants were members of during the time of the submission of their commentary. The collective was formerly known as the Junior Public Health Association of South Africa (JUPHASA).

The authors' second argument hones in on the "narrow conception of political participation [which], reductively and erroneously, equates ... non-participation by young people in a range of activities specified by researchers, with political apathy" (2006:5). And so, they suggest a more nuanced view of non-participation where apathy is understood not just as participation's 'other' but in a more wholesome manner that takes into consideration the different ways in which young people define participation. In their third argument they follow from feminist critique by suggesting a 'political' that is cognisant of the personal as political so as to include the politics of identity. Their argument about the personal as political in the British context is fascinating when compared to the theme of apathy, which came through in a great way in this project and of which I devote great attention to below. One way in which this came across was through the intimate sentiments that the participants showed about their involvement in policy commentary. Their fourth argument highlights the preferred attention on the behaviouralist and intentionalist approach to (youth) participation as opposed to the institutionalist approach that would unveil the actual inner-goings of the structures of political participation, which results in "insufficient attention [being] paid to the features of the political system itself and how these shape political participation" (2006:5). Although writing in the British context the same can be said of the South African and African context as similar issues are raised in discussions about youth participation. For example, Egypt is one country where the youth used different ways of participation in order to influence a regime change which "showed the world their strong belief in the cause of a country that was striving for freedom, social justice, and the welfare of its citizens." (Osman and Girgis, 2016:1). Despite these youth-led revolutions which compelled the regime change in Egypt, Dr Magued Osman and Dr Hanan Girgis of the Egyptian Centre for Public Opinion Research still hold the opinion that there has been a significant decline in social and political participation by young people, which they attribute to various reasons such as young people being despondent about their particular ways of civic participating not being appreciated as such. This idea relates to the first and second argument made by Marsh, O'Toole and Jones above which already proves the applicability of their arguments beyond the British context. In light of this, Osman and Girgis (2016:1) further argue that, "[i]t is necessary to influence this attitude and for young people to be convinced of their ability to play a role in decision making and in shaping public policy through different forms of participation". This idea also came across in the interview process where the participants shared their sentiments of how their submission did not feel like an actual influence in decision making related to the National Health Insurance (NHI) policy.

From a different geography but similarly, Armstrong Alexis director of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, Caribbean Centre, shares how his approach to policy has always advocated for "a more enabling environment for youth development and for young people to have a greater say in matters that concerned them and the development of their communities, nations and regions" (Alexis, 2005:5). Interestingly, Alexis (2005: 11) also advocates for an involvement of young people based on the carving of their own spaces-almost as if to say 'the table will not be set for you, you need to get up and make space at the table for yourself'. He cushions this suggestion by explaining that the youth activism during the period of the 1960s and 1970s in the Caribbean led to an emergence of youth leaders, "not because they were provided with opportunities, but because they created opportunities to voice the concerns of their peers". He concludes with the caveat that this youth engagement or youth development will also require "development agencies, policy makers and governments [to] recognize the catalytic role they [young people] can play" (Alexis, 2005: 15).

1.1.10Youth participation in South Africa

One could go so far as arguing that, in the South African context, public policy involvement by young people may still be informed by the historical limitations mentioned by Coovadia, et al. (2009) above. Such limitations (which include age and gender) can be seen in the reality of civil society being the facilitator of much successful youth engagement and development in various capacities in South Africa. This is despite the onus resting on the state to coordinate this; as an effort to develop a society informed by healthy and knowledgeable citizens that fully realise their rights to be involved in their country (African Youth Charter, 2006:3). This involvement, although not notably realised in practice, is celebrated and recognised as critical by scholars and policy makers alike. In fact, the normative role of young people is so celebrated that the year 2017 was declared the 'year of the youth' by the African Union. The fact that a single document can be sourced on young people's recommendations on NHI is therefore ludicrous at most, and unacceptable in the least.

The #FeesMustFall, #SilentProtest, #RhodesMustFall, #AfrikaansMustFall movements in South Africa all point to young people comprehending, committing and driving projects on decoloniality and transformation which ought to be evidence enough for their inclusion in policy making and decision making dedicated to true reform. In essence, their comprehension of complex issues that directly affect them counters the narrative that young people are not

knowledgeable and require theorising upon and not with.³

Rebecca Patterson's recent paper on the representation of childhood and youth in South African coming of age narratives feeds into this discussion by way of tracing South African literature that touches on youth to various degrees (2017: iii). Although rooted in literary studies, the merits of Patterson's endeavor are in the tropes she identifies as greatly associated to young people. These include the tensions between victim/ perpetrator, child/adult, domestic/ political, agency/ powerlessness, and identity/ difference- binaries that are summoned in a discussion on youth. In essence, the work of Patterson exposes the fissure between paradigms and practice, where young people are portrayed and purported to be a particular way yet their own narratives speak to a more nuanced illustration.

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³ The history of these movements is currently being written up by scholars across the region. One of the first academic books to cover the main fault lines is: Heffernan, A. and Nieftagodien, N. (eds) 2016. Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa before and Beyond Soweto '76. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Paddy O' Halloran is one student who, through his own academic writing – challenged the negative media perceptions of the #FeesMustFall (FMF) movement which posited young people as merely inciting violence and carrying on banal disruptive behaviours in tertiary institutions to no end. His contribution is a work of altering the perceptions available about young people and young academics as well (to a certain extent). O Halloran's reflection using key thinkers and contributors such as Biko, Naiker as well as Pithouse within the social movement discourse, whilst providing an authentic response to #FMF, is perhaps the most apt representation of the idea of 'student protests as a site of learning and its close cousin 'the priorotisation of the subaltern in the process of, not just meaning-making but also, knowledge production'. This is because of his positioning as a student himself (at the time of writing this article), his dexterity with the academic citations in the discourse as well as his critical understanding of politics of his reflection using lay language projecting a true sense of participation, consultation, collaboration and determination to appeal to the subaltern. In this case the subaltern is the student involved in the protest. From his contribution especially, there is no doubting the influence of the student political praxis in compelling a change, not only in the spaces that resonate with us, but in society in general. The interesting bit becomes the highly charged and intimacy of the politics of student protest which also occurs as a theme in engaging with the YPR contributors. In summary, these observations not only highlight the energy and commitment of young people in contributing to the development of their societies and social realities but also the value which they have in being included in the meaningful reconstruction of the South African social landscape especially.

In a residence talk organized by the house committee of Helen Joseph House at The University Still Known Rhodes University (USKAR) in 2016, a staff member shared with the young women present how the student led #FMF movement managed to fast-track the work which the Office for Equity and Institutional Culture at The USKAR had been trying to do for many years. This insight resonates with the reflections of Mengistu (2016:i) who also stated that young people are catalysts for change in systems that are wrought with injustices. It goes without saying then that inclusion of young people in the inception of critical developments in their society is more beneficial. Inclusion in this context as the setting of the discussion took place at a university, a place of privilege with resources otherwise far removed from those not afforded the opportunity to occupy that space. On the other hand, the reflective methodology adopted by the YPR contributors made for the sourcing of diverse perspectives for other young people outside of the university space.

With this in mind, it therefore remains absurd that young people would not be actively sought or even included in the critical discussions regarding a significant change in their society. For the YPR contributors it becomes even incongruent that their submission not be taken in the same stride as the other submissions. More specifically, if the value of youth input was respected-their submission might have been recognised as such. There are various reasons why the submission might not have been recognised. A reason beyond a postulated critique is perhaps one of the shortfalls of the study. However, it is maintained that these young people were critical enough to produce a response to an issue directly in conversation with their futures and did so despite the various barriers they faced. In light of the South Africa's oppressive past, the explicit and actual involvement as well as acknowledgement of young people in policy making could be an act in dispelling oppression and other ills such as corruption from the fabric of our nation. This would be possible by virtue of the critical nature of young people in seeking a better world for themselves whilst challenging inequality in the societies they live in. Young people's awareness of the oppressive nature of systems -and general scorn for them- is one way in which young people can be invited to contribute towards a reform that might introduce fresh perspectives and directives that will make it simpler for younger people to be involved and for policy to reflect even its most marginalised members. This is evidenced by Mengistu (2016: i) who stated that the youth, "serve as catalysts for the changes of undemocratic governments and their political systems". This is echoed by other youth specialists who reference different methodologies for reform that are adopted by young people, which are not always documented or documented officially. How young people prove to be assets in this sphere, is through their awareness and resilience and commitment to tackling inequality and injustice as seen in corruption and the legacy of inequality within the health sphere. Although steeped in their own political quagmires, these young people tend to authentically reflect on the reproduction of 'old power structures' and how dangerous these are to a prosperous future.⁵

1.1.11 Bringing together health inequality and the marginalisation of youth in policy

Even in understanding the social reality of the South African health care system – and exactly the policy making around – we need to comprehend the social fabric of South Africa. The thread of apartheid and the nation building following it are well heard of- however social researchers have unearthed some of the longer more intricate tap roots for the tree of health inequality. Karl Van Holdt references Partha Chatterjee's work on the nationalist project in highlighting some of

his insights on the cause for poor service delivery within the public health care sector in South Africa (Van Holdt, 2010: 4). The idea here is that the false bricks upon which the national building was constructed but has worked only to a point and is now crumbling. Professor Phumla Gqola, the self-titled 'rogue feminism' is one such academic who scorns the notion of Rainbowism which was an ideology that essentially 'whitewashed all the colours of the rainbow and ignored the power differentials of the rainbow nation in favour of the notion of all South Africans coexisting in post-apartheid South Africa' (Gqola, 2001). Although her views on the topic have developed and grown more complex, her scorn for the violence of power structures stemming from the Rainbowism reality and including higher education power officials regarding the #FeesMustFall movement remain (Gqola, 2017). This renders her Rainbowism argument critical- indeed relevant- for the purposes of understanding the social fabric of South Africa, which influences policy-making.

The *practice* of Rainbowism espoused by Archbishop Desmond Tutu is far different from its ideological aspirations of including every person in the bid for a South Africa for all. I would argue that the tenets of *de facto* exclusion, under the rainbow nation paradigm, can also be identified in how diversity and inclusion in *de jure* seeking young people to be involved in policy participation in reality excludes them.

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⁴ For a detailed study of youth and how they have been thought of in SA politics for over 40 years see: R. Mattes and S. Richmond "South Africa's Youth and Political Participation, 1994-2014". *Centre for Social Science Research UCT*, Working Paper No. 338 July 2014.

We can therefore ask: why exclude youth? This next section argues how and why the inclusion and acknowledgement of young people in policy making is sensible (indeed necessary). In Africa, and South Africa especially, the youth are a significant part of the population statistically which ought to have a significant input in policy as well. The purport of young people as a key group in the population which does not translate to their key stakeholder ship in policy making proves to be a danger to our constitutional democracy as young people read about their importance but remain marginalised in actuality. This threatens constitutional democracy because of the stark contrast between the paper values regarding young people in policy decision making and the ostracism they face in reality. The degeneration of the values of the constitution run the risk of creating a cesspool of disorder, unlawfulness and destruction if not kept in check (Mengistu, 2016).

Young people are situated most conveniently in the life spectrum at a point where they are developing and harnessing their knowledge, skills and abilities. In the technological era especially, young people are growing a space where innovation and information and technology are spaces they can explore and develop alongside their own personal developments. For an example, the group of contributors spoke of their efforts to infiltrate the 'mediasphere' in sensitising other young people about the huge change underway. Although self-confessedly not as successful as they would have anticipated, the very nature of that endeavor speaks of a different methodology towards getting other young people involved in the conversation on health policy – specifically the NHI. Regarding the NHI policy in South Africa specifically, the recognition of young people in the health policy making space would be a prudent recognition of the fact that the young people of today are to be the custodians of the NHI – in light of the projected time frame of the next ten years. Young people in the health sciences, social sciences, the fields of economics, the unemployed and those who hope to further their personal and professional capacities in the positions sure to be developed through the policy – would need to be seen as instrumental and critical in informing and realising a true reform of the health care system in South Africa.

The failure to heed this caution fosters the climate for further brain drain or a lack of buy-in from the youth because of their disengagement from the policy at its formulation stages.

Although the commonly stated reasons for the migration of highly skilled professionals tend to mention financial incentives, political instability and the perceived decline in the standards of public health services, an anecdotal argument can be made for the South African context that: one influence for why our educated youth migrate is because they are not meaningfully incorporated in the development of their societies. The failure to adhere to this caution is also sure to usher into NHI the spirit of revolt which is more common place in "the protest capital of the world" South Africa (Runciman in Pretoria News, 2017). An apt illustration of this logic can be sought from the work Gibson (2017: 580) who argues that the youth of South Africa are functioning in the space of a,

"nodal point reflected by the increasingly authoritarian and kleptocractic ruling party [the African National Congress (ANC)] on the one hand, and the revolt of a new generation of South Africans – the so called born frees (that is the generation who were born around the time of the first full and free election in 1994" (Gibson, 2017: 580).

Typical of politically charged conversation especially regarding social movements, Gibson (2017:580) references the political philosopher Achille Mbembe, with regard to the moment which South Africa is approaching, as a Fanonian one, filled with 'impatient', 'brash' and 'angry' [youths] asking new questions and demanding answers whilst rejecting normalcy; in essence (as with all young people throughout history) wanting to change society. The arguments of Gibson and Biko turn on the recognition, application and popularity of both Franz Fanon and Steve Biko in student politics in South Africa with regard to the decolonisation and transformation discourse (Gibson, 2017; Mbembe, 2015a cited in Gibson, 2017: 580).

The phrase 'in 1994, my parents were sold a dream; I'm here for the refund' is commonplace for at least black young people in social movements, and Gibson uses it to bolster his argument for the logic that drives young people to seek change and reform (Gibson, 2017: 580). As prior demonstrated above, Paddy's contribution to the discussion is key in that it, although he primarily references the 2015 protests at the University Currently Known as Rhodes (UCKAR) [now the University Still Known as Rhodes (USKAR)], he also makes mention of the major occupation of Bremner House at the University of Cape Town (UCT) which was renamed to Azania House in the spirit of black consciousness (O' Halloran, 2016: 191). Fanon's influence within student's movement can be sourced from the account of O' Halloran which warrants quoting in its entirety.

"During the occupation of the BSM Commons, which lasted from 26 August until 2 October 2015, what were usually the empty Council Chambers became a thriving space of politics, study, engagement, and protest. The walls of the BSM Commons were decorated with photographs of dozens of black intellectuals, artists, and revolutionaries [including] Angela Davis, Steve Biko, Albertina and Walter Sisulu, Bob Marley, Franz Fanon, Ellen Khuzwayo, Frederick Douglass, Maya Angelou, Robert Sobukwe, Harriet Tubman, Miriam Makeba, Patrice Lumumba, and Malcolm X. The many faces arrayed around the Commons contradicted

the pomp, tradition, patriarchy, whiteness, and hierarchy of the Vice- Chancellor's portraits. What had been a sanctuary solemnised, unimaginative bureaucracy had become a democratic, multilingual, and politicized commons where different practices, inspired by 'decolonisation', had replaced the procedural status quo as the mode of operation' (O' Halloran, 2016: 192).

The essence of O' Halloran's account is in establishing not only the summoning of black critical theorist energy within the protest parameters, but also in highlighting the prominence of a student political praxis as a form of participation in social change. Although O' Halloran articulates the sensitivities of intersectionality at the BSM Commons that saw women and LGBTQ members often being selected to represent the movement in public demonstrations and meetings, this was not the case in the protests at the different tertiary institutions (O' Halloran, 2016: 194).

The breakdown of the protest movement from progressive into disastrous is well understood through the complexities and troubles that arose from the collective at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). Raeesa Pather for the Mail and Guardian documented shared instances where, following a speech made by an EFF figurehead Vuyani Mlambo addressing the plight of workers as well as students who face financial exclusion in the reigniting of #FeesMustFall around April 2016, "– feminist, queer, and non-binary members of Fees Must Fall entered into Senate House, confronting the majority male group on instances of misogyny within the movement[which was]essentially a protest against another protest, where student gender and non-binary activists showed the divisions that have deepened within Wits Fees Must Fall since the meeting at Union Buildings the previous year" (2016).

The sharp destruction of the movement in one region (Wits) as seen here and the enduring energy and acknowledgement and negotiations of different realities within different locations is not only an illustration of the complexities within the category of youth but a reminder of the different outcomes that are replete in heterogeneous spaces. In spite of these tensions and clashes, young people carved their own spaces and arguably catalysed the drive for decolonisation and transformation of higher education in South Africa; with diverse progresses and consideration for issues around gender, sexuality and economic spaces on the different campuses all over the country.

Although these insights tend to emphasis the unity of young people in implementing sound change or reform, the diversity and complexity of the youth as a category may be undermined at times. The due consideration of intersectional between gender, race, sexuality and economic status are some of the stronger points which become defining features in social movements,

and the defining nature in destabilising the movement in some locales, which can also act as a lesson for the explicit acknowledgement of the diverse nature of young people. In essence, the nature of youth as a category is such that the diverse nature of their situation within a variety of spaces and even more variant realities makes for a crucible of energies especially in spheres of social change.

The credibility and wide application of these analyses can be traced beyond the South African context as the Centre for Research Policy in India states how,

"the university as a site of resistance continues to raise critical questions about citizenship, democratic ideals, and what public institutions should or should not be about.... these resistances remain as critical as formal politics or party-based student mobilisation, and therefore, any questions on youth and governance must engage with this complexity" (Kunduri, 2017: 6).

And in our continent, the Youth Policy Guide for Kenya already foregrounds the risks of excluding youth from policy making by emphasises how this widens the gap for:

- Young people to reject policies
- Challenges and difficulties in implementing the policies
- The wastage and ill-allocation of resources for impractical and ineffective policies
- Enduring youth disenfranchisement portending threats to peace, security and stability to the country
- Opportunities for corruption, discrimination and missed priorities
- Missed opportunities to harness youth creativity, innovativeness, dynamism and energy
- As well as growing feelings of exclusion, lack of enthusiasm as well as vigilance and ownership over policy by young people (The Youth Congress of Kenya, 2015: 24).

Although the nature, extent and complexities of student leadership especially as pertaining to party-led influences concerned are not extensively detailed in this project, their influence is regularly referenced by other political commentators mentioned in this section. With regard to the discussion on youth as a category, it is worth noting how the role of party politics is in providing a figure for the tensions that arise and not that these party politics are themselves necessarily the site for contention. This can be seen in how the USKAR also negotiated spaces

for the recognition of women and the LGBQT community not without some clashes and yet the University is known as an apolitical space. What the research study has also unveiled is: the tokenism associated with policy in Africa and South Africa, which poses a threat to the legitimacy of policy and the rule of law in the context of South Africa, as well as, the growing pessimism of young people because of the tokenism that their purported involvement in policy formulation operates under (Harker, 2016; The Youth Congress of Kenya, 2015).

In 2012 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Focal Point on Youth, UNDESA detailed the realities and merits of youth participation in decision making (UN Youth, 2012). This factsheet touched on the inclination for young people to consider involvement in 'political movements' instead of political parties- and especially in universities-, the multiple forms of discrimination that young people face, as well as the lack of representativeness that follows political systems from youth not being effectively involved (UN Youth, 2012). Despite these acknowledgements, almost a decade later, there remains little to no progress in the active effort to incorporate youth voices in key decisions in society. It can be argued that there remain lacunas in policy especially because of this lack of progress in incorporating young people in decision making. Edwin Okey Ijeoma's entry point into the conversation is the through illustrating the diversity of young people by making anecdotal reference to how, "a 16-year-old girl growing up in rural Nigeria will have different needs and opportunities compared with a young, 23 year-old man growing up in urban South Africa" (2009: 3). Through his illustration, an emphasis is made on youth being defined by social, cultural and economic conditions. Ijeoma (2009:3) continues his argument by putting it to the reader that although youth may be seen as a transitory stage between child and adulthood, this demarcation does not, or should not translate into binaries of victimhood versus perpetrator, which has been the tendency when referring to the youth.

From a different angle but with the same lens as Burns (2002: 9), the argument can be made that, in the same way that, "sexuality needs to be seen as a complex and powerful site of human creativity and self-making, as well as the site of much pain and destruction", is the same way in which youth can be understood: as a complex and powerful energy- that can be incorporated into good policy practice rather than to be left to pain and destruction.

In concluding, studies are only just coming out about the extent to which youth political activism around education has shifted the higher education landscape in SA, and about how the different elements of youth awareness and "wokeness" in SA will reshape politics. These

considerations are sure to influence and restructure the nature of research done in these areas of engagement as well. I hope this section has therefore shown how complex and dynamic youth activism and youth engagement is, in SA today and in the recent past. This dynamism is however not always recognized in public policy and the NHI is no different.

1.2 Problem Statement

Given that all new state policies of this magnitude as require public input by law and that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa sustains participatory democracy as one of its pillars, the participation of all citizens in the development of the NHI policy becomes that much more pronounced, especially as it entails eminent social change, in which critical input is required should meaningful reform be sought. Understood in this light (that of participation as a constitutional right), the participation of all citizens – and indeed young people – becomes a critical and not a merely hoped for or even absurd notion.

Although there have been and are efforts to include young people in public policy, these have primarily centered on issues 'involving them', the conceptualisation ambit of which has been limited to areas that invariably see "them" through the lens of the 'troubled trouble- makers' whose intervention is above their participation in policy. Examples of this are the robust health initiatives and projects around HIV/AIDS, and discourse on sexual reproduction, which certainly include the youth, but in circumscribed and limited ways that do not realise their potential, skills and agency on the matter. Youth are even more peripheral in other spheres – such as those involving education, housing, local government and rural and land reform, for instance. For a history of health and health systems in South Africa see: Hoosen Coovadia, *et al.* 2009. and Bongani Mayosi *et al.* 2012

This peripheral tenor is particularly strong in this study: I personally came to know about the NHI only following a course assignment which required research into health policies in South Africa. The deep and motivated academic search unveiled the NHI to which I was perplexed to find at such an advanced stage, with no prior knowledge of or about it in any of my frequented spaces as a young scholar. This personal anecdote is the profound driver of the vehicle towards understanding the context for the confusion that then struck me.

1.3 Research Question:

The research questions are a critical part of the research project as they streamline the areas of engagement of the study whilst directing the curiosity at hand.

The main research question is thus: how do young people interpret their participation in the NHI submissions process?

1.4 Aim and Objectives:

The aim and the objectives of the study are particularly important in achieving the mandate set out by the research question, as such;

The aim of the study is to examine the participation of young people in public policy making using the National Health Insurance (NHI) policy public submission process as a reference

This study, focused on youth perceptions regarding public policy participation, seeks to:

- Examine the legal frameworks that enable participatory democracy in South Africa;
- Explore the state's expert body and its recommendations for the NHI;
- Investigate the influences and the context within which this participation occurred;
- Explore their understanding of their role in the public participation process of the NHI.

1.5 The Rationale of the Study

As with all academic research, my study aims to add to the existing bank of knowledge in field of youth studies, public participation, public policy as well as the fields of health policy. More specifically, my study seeks to fill the dearth on information regarding the meaningful participation of young people, especially in relation to development and change in their social domains.

The rationale of the study is therefore to:

- Assess the notion of young people as stakeholders with a significant role to play in public policy development;
- Illustrate the context which fosters meaningful youth participation in public policy development;
- Challenge the limiting ('troubled trouble-maker') constructions of youth especially as they relate to public policy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction to theoretical frameworks section

Grant and Osanloo (2014) insist on the application of a theory as measure to guide the research process including the information search. This theory urges on us the assessment of the rights and the roles of people in different contexts beyond the constitutional and thus this theory of societal constitutionalism is most relevant for my endeavor. The theory is especially relevant as it is rooted in legal theory, a discipline from which sociology draws, and which influences the analysis of power and how we assess the implications of the law in society. This theory is championed by Teubner (see 2016 latest), as well as Sciulli, who references authors such as Luhmann and Fuller, in a bid to explicate a non-Marxian theory of assessing society and institutions and their influence on the role of citizens in specific contexts within society (Sciulli, 1992). Sciulli's explication of societal constitutionalism is a critique towards the skepticism aimed at democracies, as such, he offers a self-defined more practical understanding of how social order exists in different societies. In doing this he implores the understanding of social order - through the acknowledgement of, not only the deviant, the exemplary but also, the accepted (known) ranges of social behaviour (Sciulli, 1992: 23). As such, his societal constitutionalism implores the researcher to look at the structures, both formal and otherwise, which contribute towards different social behaviours in society. These other factors include what Sciulli refers to as, 'collegial formations' which are other forms of power which have influence over the action and behaviours of people in influencing social change (Sciulli, 1992: 90). The principles of 'collegial formation', 'voluntaristic action' and 'internal restrictions' manifested in the study, with the other notions merely facilitating an understanding of the context of youth participation. Through the usage of case law (which served as a reference for Sciulli's 'structure') and experience (through the interviews with the participants), this study was able to assess youth participation by using the theory the foundation for seeking both state (in the form of reports) and individual perceptions of youth participation specifically. This discussion is detailed elaborately under the methodology and data analysis sections of this report; however societal constitutionalism's relevance can already be concluded with reference to the globally influential sociologist, Saskia Sassen. Her book titled, Territory, Authority and Rights, is primarily engaged with the demarcations of the nation-states and globalisation in relation to rights, but in it the central tenets of societal constitutionalism came across in the consideration of rights and belonging. Her emphasis on the 'state-beyond-the government' notion is a central theme that was seen through her analysis of the new organising logic; a logic which sees actors, other nation-states, informing the global era (Sassen, 2006). Although the young professionals interviewed for this study saw themselves as informative non-state actors, the current organising logic in the public policy sphere only speaks to their involvement as a potential and not kinetic reality. Because of the very finely grained detail and contextual valuation of law and society in action placed on in Societal Constitutionalism, this theory lent itself to my methodological application. I placed this alongside one other theoretical approach, the Interpretive Phenomenological Approach (IPA). The IPA was used throughout the research process, particularly in informing the sampling strategy, data collection as well as data analysis portions of the project. Here the analysis of interactions; statements; interviews as well as the gap between yearning and actual action could be analysed and sorted for causation and veracity. As the reader will see, for the purpose of structuring this section and what follows, Societal Constitutionalism is key to this section; with IPA elaborated upon under the section titled Methodology.

The aim of this section is therefore to:

- canvass Societal Constitutionalism and the influential thinkers associated with it; as well as
- provide a critical analysis of its application in relation to this study.

2.2. Societal Constitutionalism

Conceptualising Societal Constitutionalism requires a variety of considerations such as an engagement with the influential theorists associated with it as well as the key concepts which are incorporated in its frame work.

Broadly, Societal Constitutionalism can be understood as an appeal to a constitutionalism that is not purely based on the actions of the state, its systems and actors only, but a constitutionalism that incorporates the integrated behaviours of the public as well as other non-state entities as well. To elaborate on this theoretical framework is to understand the role of the state but more importantly no-state actors in fostering and engaging in (democratic) constitutional procedures. This is of course important to this particular study due to the fact that the key informants in the data collection process exemplify non-state actors doing exactly that

- fostering and engaging in democratic constitutional procedure. In essence, Societal Constitutionalism is interpreted by Sciulli (1992) as a non-Marxist tradition for assessing the aspects of (western) institutions which either inhibit or (proactively) permit-or otherwise engage with- social power, social control or possible social integration (which is not engaged with overtly in the body of this research). He explicitly commits to and encourages the differentiation between social control and social integration (possible) as well as the (social) restraint which influences the (active) participation of heterogeneous actors and competing groups especially where decision-making and process are concerned. I find this persuasive because while Marxist explanations of activism and agency have been useful in labour contexts where class alliances and interests are yet, in studies of groups and communities not constituted through labour or extraction; Marxist theory does not always provide the nuance needed in my view.

2.2. 1 Societal Constitutionalism and Participatory Democracy

Thus the aim of this sub-subsection is to unravel his interpretation and conceptualisation of Societal Constitutionalism as a way of assessing youth participation in public policy in South Africa in the recent past – more specifically with relation to the State's NHI policy. In doing this we are compelled to look at social control; at how those in power benefit from systematic restraints; as well as the form and make up of heterogeneous actors and competing groups within the sphere of decision-making and public policy.

Societal Constitutionalism itself is a mixture of functionalism, legal theory and critical theory as fleshed out by the sociologists and philosophers Talcott Parsons, Lon L Fuller and Jürgen Habermas, respectively. These three theorists are pulled together by David Sciulli (who references Gunther Teubner) in the project of understanding, amongst other things, what influences participation in democratic procedures.

Although his theories and examples appeal to participation studies within studies of state bureaucracies and professionalisation (Waters, 1990), this study also shows how his theories align with the stakes of and for "participation" in public policy. From Habermas and Fuller, Sciulli draws the emphasis on 'procedural threshold' and 'procedural reason' – as applicable to his understanding of Societal Constitutionalism; and from Parsons he draws on the concepts of 'voluntaristic actions' and 'collegial formations' to address procedural institutions. Procedural institutions in this analysis would be the courts; and procedural thresholds refer to the systematic or institutional reasoning behind and within motivations for participation.

Drawing on this sophisticated theoretical framework assisted me in the development of a data analysis scheme that would help to unveil the power relations and "the positional" inherent in public policy commentary; as well the definitions and understandings of each individual I interviewed in relation to public commentary in the NHI policy process. Societal Constitutionalism can be identified in the interview schedule through the type of questions that were formulated. As mentioned prior, 'the roles of people in different contexts' is a key feature in this theoretical framework as well as in the Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA), this was factored into the interview schedule through questions such as 'What was your unique contribution to the YPR (Young People's Recommendations'). The responses of which matched the anticipated outcome of each participant elaborating on their role in the submission.

Due to the fact that the YPR document formed a part of the primary documents reviewed, the researcher was able to assess the themes or topics which each participant mentioned or engaged with using a simple critical word search which is detailed in the later part of this report. Although the assumption had been that the creation of the document had been a linear process, the interviews unveiled the reality that there were various parties engaged in the project in varied ways which led to a richer account of the context surrounding the document and its' contributors; especially as young people. I had to take into account that reasoning behind participation is not stable – it has ebbs and flows, and can go dormant or be sparked into action in contexts that are volatile. I read and drew on the analysis of Solange Rosa (2017); who reflected on how the approach to South African governance has shifted from a 'particularly welfare state agenda' to one more akin to that of 'a developmental state'. She argues that this has important implications for the authentic socio-economic transformation of South Africa, especially if meaningful participation in the development of law and policy as well as administrative decision-making be applied (Rosa, 2017:452).

Sanele Sibanda's 2011 article on "Transformative Constitutionalism in South Africa" pulls on this thread of authentic socio-economic transformation by insisting that, "the prevalence of a liberal democratic constitutional paradigm, has had the effect of defining the goods of constitutionalism in narrower terms than is in fact necessary or desirable (Sibanda, 2011: 482). The article – which is titled: *Not purpose-made! Transformative constitutionalism, post-independence constitutionalism and the struggle to eradicate poverty*, argues that the poverty, one of many social crises facing South Africa – is a product of not only the legacy of apartheid, but also the narrow conceptualisations of constitutional rights. It is not only SA that sees these ebbs and flows. More than a decade ago Lyn Dobson also communicated the same concerns for

the European Union (EU) where she argued for a stable yet reflexive constitution as a way of addressing constitutional development and its sub-questions on its social and moral order, justice and cohesion amongst many others (Dobson, 2007:335). In essence, Sibanda and Dobson's arguments champion the need for a broader interpretation and application of constitutional principles. In the UK and Europe now, youth are struggling with the decision making processes that their parents' votes (i.e. in the BREXIT referendum in the UK) unleashed – when they were still not of legal voting age, and whose consequences will shape their lives for decades. This realisation and the resulting frustration has propelled many people under 20 into politics and political marches and movements; a tendency in South Africa also elaborated upon below.⁵

5 For similar use of Sciuli's work to understand the confusion, anger and disillusionment of many youths but also the roots of their renewed interest in policy making and politics in the UK after the BREXIT vote see: Mejias, S and Banaji, S. 2017. "UK Youth Perspectives and Priorities for Brexit Negotiations" Special All Party Report; *London School of Economics and Political Science*. [Online]. Available: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-latest-news-young-people-eu-referendum-result-lse-reaction-bemused-angry-vote-leave-a8006226.html (Last accessed 18 January 2019).

Sciulli launched his discussion with a clarification of social order which he defines as, an acknowledgement of a range of social behaviours including- not exemplary or deviant but- those accepted in society. This was so that his definition embodies society not as a normative entity but rather as a range of different behaviours almost in equilibrium in terms of maintaining that social control. In his discussion it becomes apparent that his social order is not free of coercion, interest competition, personal anxiety and conflict; which are themes that became apparent during the study process (Sciulli, 1992:24). Worth consideration in this conversation is the fact that his definition of social order does not sanction subjectively unacceptable behaviour (Sciulli, 1992: 24); which posits the element of subjectivity, not only in social organisations but also, in the behaviours of the members of those social organisations.

According to Sciulli's theory on social order, an organisation that subjectively sanctions (and even promotes) an environment for policy participation amongst its younger members also will be one that fosters policy commentary as a norm. This is one aspect of his theory which was not necessarily maintained in the study, due to the reality that the group of young people that submitted the Young People's Recommendations (YPR) on NHI came together in an almost organic way; and with the motivation of one of their own – as opposed to particular institutional or organizational mandate. Another spanner in the working of this theory in my thesis is the conflict which the group faced with the more senior unit(s) in their organisation(s); which they expressed that they felt rendered their position and behaviours as young people almost "unwarranted" in the space that they tried to occupy and "make for themselves" within the organisation. This will be further elaborated upon under the data analysis section, however, it is enough at this point to indicate that Sciulli's theories were both partially realised, and also not, during the course of this study. Fortunately, Sciulli's theory does cover conflict with other units as a reality of social order, which means it is still applicable given the data about conflict unveiled in the course of the interviews. Although subject to the critique of not being critical enough in practicality, Sciulli's definition is apt in as far as it includes the peripheral reality of 'bad' behaviours being sanctioned or used in the effort for social order.

2.2.2 Social order, Self-interest and Collegial formations as factors in participatory democracy

Social order is an important concept at this point due to its foundation in the discussion of constitutionalism and Societal Constitutionalism which are the instructors of the principles of justice and participatory democracy that mandate public commentary or participation in public policy. This specific area is addressed under Sciulli's Substantive norms of internal restraint as

well as strategic restraints. Under self-interest, Sciulli (1992:2) introduces restrictions: rational vs strategic (both material and symbolic), which play a role in influencing the participation or hindering of participation of certain constituencies and individuals. Essentially, on an organisational level, self-restriction may be due to organisational calculation of rational and strategic intent regarding material and symbolic interests which; are further, decided by each individual or group collective along with their networks (Sciulli, 1992: 24). 'Group collective' and 'their networks' brings us back to the concepts of collegiality and power. From Sciulli's logic, we can assess the heterogeneity and composition of the groups that involve themselves in public participation using four tools of analysis: prestige, monetary loss, opportunities as well as the reduction of physical coercion (Sciulli, 1992: 24). These, link with collegiality and power in that collegiality relates to allegiances that seek to extend participation beyond state actors. Collegial formations are critical for the understanding of voluntaristic and procedural external restraints because Sciulli (1992:183) seems to imply that, these collegial formations – at least their existence- enhance possible social integration (through public participation in policy) because they make social actors feel integrated into the social fabric of their society. He also mentioned how the benefits of collegial formations compel social actors to:

- Recognise broad social change
- Recognise the government and the elite's subjectivity
- Force the government and private entities to included them in conversations (Sciulli, 1992: 189; Teubner, 2016: 1).

These points came across quite clearly in the interviews with the group members, as can be seen in how all of them expressed: a working knowledge of NHI, the influence of government and the subjectivity in trying to rush the policy into launch, as well as a recollection that at the Presidential Summit, "the private sector heavies" were there whilst young people were not adequately represented (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

Of course this can be subject to a variety of interpretations, therefore, the object of this study is to apply some of Sciulli's theories and concepts in primarily understanding youth participation in participatory democracy. Individual restrictions are, of course, informed by the prior narrowing of actors' subjective interests; which feeds into the logic of social order operating through coercive and subtle means which are palpable yet intangible (Sciulli, 1992: 24). This was seen in the work below, especially through the in-depth analysis of the involvement of

these young professionals in the NHI commentary process. In line with this theory, their personal interests and passions led them to filter energies all the way from their educational pursuits, their career options, down to their very involvement in the Young People's Recommendations (YPR) for NHI.

Another caveat at this point is that, it would seem that the commentary was through informal mechanisms of social control (organic one person and an appeal to personal interests) as opposed to an institutionally mandated effort. In fact, the YPR document arises out of a combination of the aforementioned mechanism as well as a commitment to the negotiation of the internalised restriction. Owing to their intrinsic marginalisation from the discussion, their commentary was: an act motivated by the facilitator of the project and a mission in inverting the different obstacles which they had to negotiate around until they finally submitted.

2.2.3 Obstacles and Restrictions

The most striking reasoning behind self-interested self-restriction as articulated by Sciulli is the possibility of the subtlest self-restriction which may be traced back to 'cognitive obstacles' that distort actors understanding of what is expected from them as well as which of their subjective interests are acceptable & which are not (Sciulli, 1992: 25).

According to Sciulli (1992: 25), "actors misunderstanding just what the scope of behaviour actually being sanctioned within their social unit is". After due consideration on the elements related to participation, we may find that cognitive limitations are not always linked to informal institutional and systematic sanctions. Instead, social order and self—restricted cognitive limitations can be traced back to two things:

- When young people misunderstand their social duty in society, as well as what is being sanctioned in their social unit at a particular time
- The difficulty for young people to reconcile their concerns, with their duties within certain structures.

Further, this leads to

- a) Social duties being interpreted as ambiguous due to their inconsistency with those sanctioned and;
- b) Social duties being skewed to the advantage of certain group and actors.

Critical to this is the idea that.

"social order within any complex social unit, and certainly within any sector, industry, or organization of a modern civil society, can rarely be attributed exclusively to power holders' purposeful designs [i]t is generally based in some significant part on informal, institutional, and systematic processes, and then, too, on actors' self-restrictions" (Sciulli, 1992:26).

Sciulli (1992:26) further emphasises the fact that,

"social order is likely a product of systematic forces of social change such as rationalization, commoditization, capitalization, structural and institutional obstacles, informal local interactions, and actors' self –restriction- rather than the product of purposefully enforced sanctions alone".

Again, these themes emerged in the study through the constant references to capitalism and institutional obstacles —or more precisely shortfalls—in relation to fostering youth participation in public policies such as the NHI.

Some mechanisms that have been used to engage young people have been centered on the efforts of youth organisations and youth agencies in different localities, however their failures are also widely cited –not just that of youth agencies but also policy and programs in different countries. One such country is Ghana, whose policy and programming according to the Youth Development Interventions in Ghana: Policy and Practice 2014 report "... denies the Ghanaian collective of the distinctive energy, resourcefulness and courage of the youth [and] [i]n so doing... not only harm today's youth [but] ultimately undermines prospects for the future of the entire state as well" (Korboe, 2014: 5). Korboe's reflection on the Ghanaian context for youth participation as stifling and restrictive highlights the culture of structures and institutions and the impact that this has on practices such as policy commentary.

2.2.4 Sciulli and youth participation in summary

Sciulli (1992) comes across as entirely critical theorists in the field of Societal Constitutionalism and participation which can be seen in his argument that these sociologists (primarily) do not see beyond some institutions being integrative and not merely socially controlling. His critique is also directly linked to critiques of western institutions and democracies. In other words, he questions the logic that whether explicit or intrinsic, that everything works for the betterment of 'the system'; including the self-restraint behaviours of members otherwise sanctioned to participate in different instances. I would agree with this view because of the fact that each of the participants inferring a personal interest that was

communicated and influential to their involvement in public health as well as the YPR submission; which means that they at least believe in a sense of agency in regard their actions in the public health domain. Because such a notion entails an understanding of the heterogeneous actors in question and their competing groups- as well as their recognition and understanding of what their social duties are- the study engaged with this significantly. Contrary to the theory though, as mentioned throughout the study, the duty to participate in the NHI submissions process was rather emphasised by an individual and conflict and competition was garnered from the same space as well, which means that the heterogeneous actors understood their social duty in light of their own reasoning for the involvement.

Other well regarded theorists of power and youth and social fragmentation and activism, such as Milliband (1969), Domhoff (1967) and Connor (1988), accuse the state of applying a capitalist ideology to commentary or input in public decisions through allowing or encouraging certain constituencies to contribute above others. This accusation is informed by the logic that, "...the crucial factors maintaining any ongoing (capitalistic) system are systematic" (Sciulli, 1992: 32). In capitalism being systemic or normalised inside of current global and local policy-participation this means that certain voice may be privileged above others that may have vested interests that resonate with the policy makers. Despite this as a general point, Sciulli (1992:33) holds that it need not necessarily be the skill of capitalists themselves that maintains social control but the efforts of an established and legitimised capitalist system which then somehow secures its place at the table of social control, and subsequently in the context of participation in policy commentary. Many of the group members mentioned and inferred different ways in which the capitalistic system has seemed to either hinder their participation or foster it in particular ways.

As we see in SA, the actors in our state sector may even argue they are socialists or against capitalism as a system. But the material effects of capitalism are rarely grasped and communicated in social research due to a lacuna in applying conceptual theories in social research. This can and does lead to a deficit for legal theorists in comprehending the practical application of theory in practice (Sciulli, 1992:40). A South African health economist who has also drawn this to our attention (Alex van den Heever) was referred to in the opening section of this thesis. In other words, in my view the existing system of capitalism, and its related ideologies of market place and competition, is difficult to pin-point in the heath debate; and made even more complex my aim to conduct material field research. This is also why I drew on theories such as Societal Constitutionalism that break the areas of inquiry into specific material

to assess during data collection.

One way in which this study addressed this tendency was in assessing and applying the notion of 'distinguished professional integrity' (Sciulli, 1992: 54). This was especially important for the project, for the clarity of the definition and value of the principle of participation, or how participation is 'distinguished' and its 'integrity' (Sciulli, 1992:54-55). As such, the 'integrity' and 'distinguish' of participation was achieved through looking at how the courts have defined and interpreted it, how this interpretation was recognised by members of society as well as engaging with internal procedural restraints that play a role in participation or the lack thereof (Sciulli, 1992: 54-55). From Sciulli (1992: 190), we understand the requirement to explicitly declare the difference between units of unity (or collegial formations) as well as the legislature and the other powers (judiciary and executive)'s way of interpreting participation. For this study the former was represented by the contributors and the latter by case law.

2.2.5 Participatory democracy as mandated in the Constitution and interpreted by the judiciary

As I indicated above, in this constitutional democracy, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (now 'the Constitution'), is the primary reference for any action in the South African society. Section 59 (1) (a) of the Constitutions states that the National Assembly must facilitate public involvement in the legislative and other processes of the Assembly and its committees.

The judiciary, through the courts, has interpreted this element of public consultation in relation to public policy in various cases such as the *Matatiele Municipality and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others* 2007 (6) SA 477 (CC) and the *Doctors for Life Case Doctors for Life International v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others* 2006 (6) SA 416 (CC) case, as well as the case of *Moutse Demarcation Forum and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others* 2011 (11) BCLR 1158 (CC); all of which are cited by Judges Madlanga in *Land Access Movement of South Africa and Others v Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces and Others* 2016 (5) SA 635 (CC).

In all of these three cases the principle of "meaningful participation" is emphasised as being key to enforcing and strengthening formal democracy. This can be seen below where Judge Madlanga cites the judicial precedent from the other cases in deciding on the unconstitutionality (and subsequent invalidity) of the amendments in question; subject to the

inadequate public consultation entailed in each case. Of great importance is the judicial precedent set by Judge Sachs in the now famous *Doctors for Life* case, taken up by Judge Madlanga in the *Land Access Movement case*; where young people could arguably be included in the ambit of 'members of groups that have been the victims of processes of historical silencing' as already mentioned in the body of this research and as can be observed in the excerpts below.

MADLANGA J

another.⁴² This Court has rejected the argument that the public need not participate in the legislative process as its elected representatives are speaking on the public's behalf.⁴³

[58] This Court's jurisprudence deals at length with why the Constitution imposes the obligation that Parliament facilitate public participation in the legislative process. It is beneath the dignity of those entitled to be allowed to participate in the legislative process to be denied this constitutional right. In a concurring judgment in *Doctors for Life*, Sachs J took the view that "[p]ublic involvement . . . [is] of particular significance for members of groups that have been the victims of processes of historical silencing". 44 He added:

Figure 1: (Land Access Movement, 2016: 28)

The importance of public involvement being sought at an opportunity capable influencing the decision, is also taken from the *Moutse* case in paragraph 62 as seen below.

[62] Two principles may be deduced from the above statement. The first is that the interested parties must be given adequate time to prepare for a hearing. The second relates to the time or stage when the hearing is permitted, which must be before the final decision is taken. These principles ensure that meaningful participation is allowed. It must be an opportunity capable of influencing the decision to be taken. The question whether the notice given in a particular case complies with these principles will depend on the facts of that case.

Figure 2: (*Moutse*, 2011: 30)

As per the prescripts of judicial practice, Judge Ngcobo in paragraphs 120 and 121, makes reference to the *New Clicks* case in canvassing the logic behind the participation of citizens in legislative process –such as the policy commentary for the NHI policy.

[120] According to their plain and ordinary meaning, the words public involvement or public participation refer to the process by which the public participates in something. Facilitation of public involvement in the legislative process, therefore, means taking steps to ensure that the public participate in the legislative process. That is the plain meaning of section 72(1)(a).

[121] This construction of section 72(1)(a) is consistent with the participative nature of our democracy. As this Court held in *New Clicks*, "[t]he Constitution calls for open and transparent government, and requires public participation in the making of laws by Parliament and deliberative legislative assemblies." The democratic government that is contemplated in the Constitution is thus a representative and participatory democracy which is accountable, responsive and transparent and which makes provision for the public to participate in the law-making process.

Figure 3: (Doctors for Life, 2005: 67)

The final case in point is the *New Clicks* case which introduced 'reasonable opportunity' as a critical factor in regard to citizens' commentary in public policy. This can be viewed under

paragraph 630 of the case as seen below.

[630] In this respect section 4 of PAJA offers interesting examples of procedures which Parliament has already adopted in relation to decisions affecting the public. They include the holding of public enquiries and the use of notice and comment procedures. In particular, the enabling statute itself might indicate directly which procedures should be followed. The forms of facilitating an appropriate degree of participation in the law-making process are indeed capable of infinite variation. What matters is that at the end of the day a reasonable opportunity is offered to members of the public and all interested parties to know about the issues and to have an adequate say. What amounts to a reasonable opportunity will depend on the circumstances of each case. Prudence allied to principle indicates that this is an area where the law should develop in a fact-sensitive and incremental way.

Figure 4: (New Clicks, 2005: 327)

A curious note to conclude with is this Court's acknowledgement of the need for the principles of meaningful participation to be developed in what they term a "fact-sensitive and incremental way". It is a social fact to be reckoned with that young people are significant members of society that ought to be treated as meaningful stake holders in policy development. From this note alone an argument can be made for an interpretation and application of the law wide enough to take into the sensitivity of how youth are incorporated and understood in society and subsequently policy. Having set out the rules, laws, and social expectations that the intermingling of social pressure and law making and rights-based theories have produced in SA, I will now proceed to outline and analyse my own data in this light.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction to research design

According to Alan Bryman (2012: 45),

"a research design relates to the criteria that are employed when evaluating social research...it is therefore, a framework for the generation of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research question in which the investigator is interested"

Although my Societal Constitutionalism features as a theoretical approach, its influence is also recognisable in the design of my research through the Interpretive Phenomenological Approach (IPA)- which is the primary source for the design of the research process.

3.2 Interpretive Phenomenological Approach (IPA)

The IPA is an approach that seeks to guide the research study through grounding it in three fundamental principles: phenomenology, hermeneutic as well as idiography. Although relatively recent, the approach is valuable in that it incorporates well established principles for developing well-thought out, strategic and reliable research (Agbedahin, 2012: 122; Smith et al., 2009: 5 cited in Agbedahin, 2012: 125). Under the framework of IPA, we find phenomenology which is one of the instruments which was used in the completion of this project. By description, phenomenology is a research approach or philosophy that is, "concerned with the question of how individuals make sense of the world around them and how [the researcher] should bracket out preconceptions in his or her grasp of that world" (Bryman, 2012: 30). Phenomenology was reflected throughout the different stages of my research project. The most efficient way of gaining knowledge about youth participating in the NHI happened to be through tracking down the only group of young people that made a submission as young people- which satisfied the phenomenological paradigm, as the group turned out to be the most apt resource for the endeavor of uncovering youth experiences of the NHI submissions process. The participants interviewed constituted a 'case study' only in so far as their submission being the only case in point identified however the IPA does not subscribe singular research designs. This is because of the IPA's pragmatic commitment to arriving at a description using multiple methods (as will be noted below) as opposed to through identification under a research design. Therefore, the study remained a project in the IPA and not entirely a case study or ethnography.

In the spirit of triangulation, encouraged in the academic field of research, qualitative document analyses were carried out in order to expand, verify and elaborate on the context of public participation in the NHI in general (especially). This was conducted alongside the semi-structured interviews with the youth participants. Semi-structured or semi-standardised interviews are a feature of phenomenological interviewing which encourage the interviewer to, "explore, probe and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject" (Patton, 2004: 343 cited in Agbedahin, 2012: 142).

Although the ambit of the study sought to include interaction with and input from the government (as the recipients of the public submissions), it is common knowledge that difficulties arise in instances when such information is required for research purposes. Despite countless emails to the relevant email addresses and individuals charged with receiving NHI submissions from the public, no response was elicited as a way of triangulating the state's input on the issue at hand. Subsequently, there was also no way of verifying how the document was available on the NHI website (not run by government) but is ill-mentioned in policy process analyses related to the NHI. The Monitoring and Evaluation Report on NHI is but one effort to address this deficit- especially because of the institution being a government department. With regard to idiography, the "IPA is idiographic as its proponents focus more on knowing in detail individual experiences" (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012: 1). Atkinson and Coffey (2011 cited in Bryman 2012) argue that, "documents should be viewed as...distinct level[s] of reality in their own right" (554-555). The idea of 'qualitative content analysis' bolsters this by requiring extracts 'with brief quotations' from a source (Bryman, 2012: 557).

3.2.1 The Hermeneutic Circle

The most appropriate and successfully analytical tool in the hermeneutic framework was the 'hermeneutic circle' which allowed me as the researcher to move between the text, the diction and language as well as my own interpretations of the information explored during the

data collection phase (Smith, et al., 2009: 26 cited in Agbedahin, 2012: 129). By instruction, hermeneutics lends itself to 'a theory of [the] interpretation' of experiences and reality and so applying this in this context made for a richer discussion with the participants and a more wholesome educational journey for the researcher (Agbedahin, 2012: 128).

According to Smith et al. (2009: 26), the entry into the text at different points throughout the research process offers different perspectives on the part-whole coherence of the text. In other words, the part and the whole can refer to: the single extract and the complete text or the interview and the research project (Smith, et al., 2009: 26 cited in Agbedahin, 2012: 129). In even simpler terms, although the study does not extrapolate the experience of the YPR contributors as representative of all young people's experiences, their individual experiences point to a 'part' reality of youth in policy. This is also the case with 'a double hermeneutic' where the researcher "make sense of the participant[s] trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Agbedahin, 2012: 125). Finally, Mertens (1998 cited in Avramidis and Smith, 1999: 28) state that, the interpretive/ constructivist term appears to represent the theory that, "realities are multiple and socially constructed and, of course, influenced by history and culture" and so, although the interviews represent the youth perspective which ought to be observed and absorbed, other realities exist too outside of those uncovered in the body of this research.

3.2.2 Hermeneutic Phenomenology as phenomenology in IPA

Swanson (2007: 175) stated that,

"[h]ermeneutical phenomenology is grounded in the belief that the researcher and the participants come to the investigation with fore-structures of understanding shaped by respective backgrounds, and in the process of interaction and interpretation they cogenerate an understanding of the phenomenon being study"

Hermeneutic phenomenology is also known as interpretive phenomenology which further cements the relevance of applying IPA in the whole research study. Additionally, there is some merit in using both the Societal Constitutionalism as well as the IPA methodology, because according to Norman et al. (1998: 266 cited in Bryman, 2012), it is possible blend elements of different paradigms together especially if the paradigms "share axiomatic elements that are similar or that resonate strongly between the two of them" (Norman et al., 1998: 266 cited in Bryman, 2012). This is particularly the case with the two frameworks because of their commitment towards uncovering experiential substantiation for phenomena as opposed to a normative reality. This is also true of the interpretive and constructivist perspectives applied in

this participation rich study due to the observations by Norman et al. (1998: 266 cited in Bryman, 2012) that "elements of interpretivist/postmodern critical theory, constructivist and participative inquiry, fit comfortably together".

3.2.3 Idiography

Idiography is the third element fundamental to the IPA approach. From Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012: 3) we can understand idiography as "refer[ing] to an in-depth analysis of single cases and examining individual perspectives of study participants, in their unique contexts". In doing this, the project of e exploring the particular rather than the universal becomes crucial (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012: 3). I followed through with this approach in this study through weaving between important themes raised during the interviews and the related topics raised in the documents used as well. The research participants were also consulted at different points of the study in order to refine and clarify certain perspectives shared about the topic at hand. The email thread with the email addresses of the participants and the recipients of their submission was also consulted at various points of the study.

3.3 Sampling strategy and access to the young contributors

Although precise information about the stages of the National Health Insurance policy were not easy to come by, the NHISA website, which is dedicated to the curatorship of information regarding NHI submissions amongst other things, pointed to a single submission made under the guise of representing young people. This unique submission was therefore the core interest of this study; as a tool for understanding the role and experiences of youth participating in public policy submissions processes for the NHI. Purposive sampling was therefore used to select the research participants as well as the documents that were consulted in the research process. The IPA approach, in its appeal for the rich detailed experiences of individuals, guided the researcher in seeking to interview at least 10 of the 19 contributors.

3.3.1 Sample size

Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012: 5) argue that there are no specifications regarding the sample size, but the grounding of the approach in qualitative research points to a commitment to a smaller sample. The interview of more than ten participants then clearly deviates from the IPA's appeal for a small sample however this deviation is restored by the argument that richer detail was still elicited from each participant through each of their reflections being incorporated in the data analysis stage. In my research proposal I had aimed to communicate

with at least 10 of the participants; fortunately, through planning and support, 11 participants were interviewed. A retrospective element to the study was identified due to the fact that the contributors had to reflect back to the process of formulating the submission, however this retrospectively is also limited in that the participants still had to speak to the current feelings, opinions, convictions and concerns which they have currently about the role of young people in public policy.

3.3.2 Creativity for accessing the participants

The completion of these interviews was not achieved without struggle and creative intervention. The importance of sourcing a gate keeper in assisting the researcher to 'track down' people, cannot be overstated. For a group of people who seemed so easily accessible merely because their names and surnames appear in full on the YPR document, the individuals surely proved challenging to pin down for interviews. The assistance of the PHM's coordinator was invaluable as he was able to send the email addresses of all the contributors as a starting point for seeking communication. This sharing of information was done due to the fact that the document itself (available widely on the internet) as well as the submission, included the email addresses of the contributors, the ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria's Humanities Research Ethics Committee was also evidence that the endeavor was for the purposes of research only- as stated in the ethical clearance certificate obtained following the submission of the project proposal.

My journalistic skills in conducting interviews under time constraints ended up being less utilised than my investigative abilities. This is because, although the coordinator of the PHM provided me with the email addresses, I still had to use social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn as well as Twitter as a way of placing myself in the more social and less academic spaces of the participants as a way of diluting the strict and official nature of seeking their input for my research study. Although it was clear to me from the beginning (and through a cursory search of the participants in an online search) that all of them were passionate and engaged in public health issues, this WhatsApp group provided richer context for the spaces that the participants engage in on issues related to their submission.

3.3.3 Description of the Young People's Recommendations (YPR) for NHI contributors

Over-and-above the semi-structured in-depth interviews and informal input from a majority of the contributors in to the document (some of which were not included in this research as official participants in the study due to the informal nature of the conversations), the YPR document was also engaged with in order to provide context for the interviews.

This key document in question is titled the 'Young People's Recommendations on South Africa's NHI White Paper' and is also one of the only documents that encompass a comprehensive effort by a group of young people to have their inputs considered as part of the consultation process for the new health policy aiming at changing the health landscape as we know it today. The Young People's Recommendations (YPR) on NHI is the sole brain child of the younger members of the Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) specifically ELPHASA (The Emerging Leaders of the Public Health Association of South Africa) which was coordinated under the People's Health Movement (PHM) which identifies itself as "the South African Chapter of the People's Health Movement (PHM), a global network of grassroots activists, civil society and academics, predominantly from low and middle income countries" (PHM-SA, 2018) and of which many of the interview participants are a part of. In order to triangulate the information from the interviews, the researcher read through the YPR document in order to glean information about the nature, context and contributors of the document. Having read through various other submissions from the NHISA website (which collates submissions on the NHI) during the literature search stage, the researcher was able to understand how actual submissions are presented. This aided in the data collection whereby the information from the document became critical in facilitating the semi-structured interviews with the contributors to the document.

3.4 Data collection

The data collection process comprised of phenomenological interviewing entailing semi-structured interviews and note-taking, the use of Voice over Internet protocol, desktop research: in the form of qualitative document reviews and secondary document reviewing as well as semi-archival internet perusal for news headlines with the key word 'NHI'. A form of non-participant observation of the ELPHASA National Network 94-people strong WhatsApp group also occurred whereby the researcher was invited to be part of the group by one other member who found the group apt for the context of the study. Due to the nature of the group being an open and fluid public network where anyone within can send the invite to others, there was no ethical concern as each member is aware of the traffic of incoming and outgoing members. Beyond the context which the group provided for some of the situations that would arise during the interviews, the information obtained from the WhatsApp group was not tabulated or coded as, 'the experiences' of the participants were sought from their own verbal utterances and not

from prior conceived presumptions. As such, statements surrounding the abilities and capabilities of the young people were sought from the participants themselves especially through cross-referencing the skills and encounters they had with each other throughout the creation of their submission.

3.4.1 Phenomenological interviewing

The IPA champions for in-depth phenomenological interviews by way of a semi-structured approach (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012: 9-10). Here the researcher is charged with asking questions that seek to understand how the research participant interprets the topic at hand and their thoughts, emotions and responses in relation to the information shared. For this study this meant asking the contributors to share their knowledge and experience around the history, their motivation and reflective opinions on being involved in the Young People's recommendations by way of questions contemplated prior and throughout the interview. The interviews were initiated only after a caveat from the researcher that the participant was free to elaborate on or restrict their responses as far as they were comfortable. This allowed for an interesting analysis of the data with due consideration to the information shared and withheld. This also made for an open-endedness fit for the process be deemed as semi-structured.

3.4.2 Secondary data analysis

Secondary analysis as a form of triangulation was also used in the research process. Here, information from government and non-government resources such as reports and memoranda were used in tracing out the literature on youth politics, public participation and the different frameworks related to participation and the NHI. These documents and resources were analysed using the three guiding principles of the IPA namely: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography; principles already introduced earlier in this report.

3.4.2.1 Reports on the NHI process: Secondary data Analysis and a description of the three documents used for data collection

- The Dullah Omar Institute (DOI) report
- The Young People's Recommendations (YPR) on South Africa's NHI White Paper
- The Socio-Economic Impact Assessment System (SEIAS) Final Impact Assessment (Phase 2) report on the White Paper on National Health Insurance

The aim of this section is to introduce the three key documents that form a part of the data collection process which were subject to secondary data analysis. The synthesis of these documents will be achieved in part through the data analysis section where they will be linked to the themes and ideas identified throughout the study. The documents were obtained through a referral from a senior consultant of the first comprehensive website to appear when one types in 'NHI SA' into Google search. This consultant, who replied in less than a week, was the gate way for my engagement with the three documents that provided invaluable input for the conversation on the reality of public participation in the NHI context of South Africa.

The reality of the documents not being readily accessible to the public (or upon request) is a deficit, in that the rich qualitative detail on this (political) process is lost. This makes the process veiled and inhibited from challenge and confrontation. It was a tacit endeavor of this research study to also highlight the crucial areas and realities found within these documents so that conversation may be launched for future consideration in future research. A few other documents have been dedicated to the assessment of the public consultation process of the NHI, however many of these fail to do so with an inclusivity-sensitive lens cognizant of marginalized people's such as the youth. In the appeal to assess youth inclusion in the NHI process, the two documents mentioned above (excluding the Young People's Recommendations), were searched for the keywords 'youth' and 'young people'.

From the DOI report, a conclusive search reveals only 1 hit from the document's 88 pages. The same was noted of the 'Socio-Economic Impact Assessment System's Final Impact Assessment (Phase 2) where 'youth' has one hit from its entirety of 48 pages. Unlike the latter though, the DOI research report does lay a disclaimer to the effect that there might be gaps in their report due to the complex nature of the qualitative methodology they used (including speculations and perceptions and not just facts) and their scope of engagement (subject to accessible and inaccessible networks and structures of power and influence). From the DOI report an important observation can be noted which warrants quotation in its entirety:

"The terrain covered by the [report] is extremely complex; the field includes a large range of interested stakeholders with very different ideologies, approaches, and interests at stake. These may also hold different levels of influence in different contexts, depending on with whom and where they are engaging. Within specific sectors or stakeholder groups there are also significant differences, thus to draw conclusions regarding 'The Department of Health' or 'The Private Sector' is not possible without first engaging in the heterogeneity, the vast differences in position, motivation, action and influence within these. Added to this, positions and levels of influence do not remain static, for some actors they change over time" (own emphasis; Waterhouse, Mentor-Lalu & Kabagambe 2017: 6).

Although the document had formatting and language errors, it still provided the core objectives of the NHI. Whereas the document seemed to provide a comprehensive overview of the NHI process in its entirety, the SEIAS report failed to detail its own context of what the SEIAS process is, and what it entails. Essentially what methodology was used in compiling the document was neglected. Such a disclosure of the methodology would enhance the transparency of state policy process, especially for young people curious about the progression of democratic processes such as the SEIAS. This report from the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation received less sympathy as a state report charged with addressing the interest of those marginalised from the process of policy commentary. The vital critique of this report, for the purposes of this study, is its lack of inclusion of the YPR document as one of the 160 documents received from stakeholders in the NHI process for no clear reason – even through inference from the methodology.

The full title of the DOI report is 'Decision Making on Health in South Africa – What Can We Learn from National Health Insurance (NHI)' compiled by the Dullah Omar Institute (DOI) of the University of the Western Cape. According to the Institute's website, ever since their inception, they have always contributed to policy formulation in South Africa; and now more increasingly elsewhere on the continent (DOI, 2016). Their history boasts involvement with activists such as Bulelani Ngcuka as well as Brigitte Mabandla, and their current efforts includes a review of the decision-making process as it relates to the NHI; which is the primary reason for its inclusion in this research study. This study maintains its mandate to assess youth participation in public policy as it relates to democratic process by referencing The DOI report. The inclusion of this report was crucial because of its compilation by an institution dedicated to the assessment of -and active participation in- the democratic process of policy analysis and commentary. The research report, published in April 2018, was a project commissioned by the Open Society Foundation in relation to their Open Society Foundation Public Health Programme which asserts its efforts in,

"enacting new work to reveal and challenge the exercise of power in health-related decision- making at local, provincial, national and international levels that undermines the pursuit of health as a human right, particularly in ways that are undemocratic, inequitable, non- transparent and/or unaccountable" (own emphasis Waterhouse, Mentor-Lalu & Kabagambe 2017: 6).

Between the three of them, Waterhouse, Mentor-Lalu and Kabagambe, the authors of the report, all have extensive experience in field and discourse on human rights, social, economic and cultural rights, social justice, advocacy for development, reform and the implementation

of law and policy for women and children's rights as well as an elaborate involvement in civil society organizations. The document is especially critical coming from the Open Society Foundation as well as the DOI – two major contributors to the landscape on human rights and the realisation of these rights on the grounds of equality and fairness.

3.4.3 Non-participant observation of the WhatsApp group

Over and above the document analysis and interviews, non-participant observation was also carried out on the WhatsApp⁷ group of 94 people that form part of the youth network called the Emerging leaders of Public Health Association of South Africa (ELPHASA) of which many of the interview participants are a part of.

Although a majority of the members to the group are dormant, there is constant meaningful interaction between many of the members. Unlike the tendency with other WhatsApp groups, very little out of the purview of public health is shared; job opportunities, scholarships, political commentary related to health as well as 'tweets' and news articles are commonly shared and commented on by different members at different times. The observation of this group proved to be particularly beneficial for my research project as many debates, concerns and public health successes were shared there that prompted towards further research or alerted me to invaluable information that I might not have encountered had it not been for the group. An example of this would be the conflict between the senior and junior leadership of PHASA which saw the ELPHASA committee dissolving due to the "disrespect and humiliation" they suffered at the hands of the senior committee members. Being privy to the meltdown, which saw many of the junior committee members leaving even the WhatsApp group, came in handy when I had to diffuse one of the participants' hesitance to elaborate on issues involving the politics that young people have to deal with in certain spaces. Their realisation that I was on the group and was already aware of the situation made way for a more raging and raw response from them- and ultimately richer detail for the purposes of the study. From that interview I was able to incorporate that caveat of my membership for the rest of the interviews, which had a significant role in making the others feel comfortable sharing their intimate reflections on the topic as they saw me as 'one of them' already.

According to Africa Quartz weekly, "WhatsApp Messenger is a freeware and cross-platform messaging and Voice over IP service owned by Facebook. The application allows the sending of text messages and voice calls, as well as video calls, images and other media, documents, and user location. It is very popular in South Africa and widely used in the developing world. The data is owned by Facebook" See: https://qz.com/africa/1206935/whatsapp-is-the-most-popular-messaging-app-in-africa/ (Accessed 5 January 2019).

3.4.4 Qualitative research using online personal interviews: Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)

The definition of Voice over Internet Protocol can be sourced from Ayokunle (2012:829) who describes it as, "a technology that transmits voice signal in real time using the internet protocol (IP) over a public internet or private data network". This refers mobile and internet related communications that can take place in synchronous and asynchronous modes; more simply: calls and voice communication that takes place via the internet.

According to Bryman (2012: 668) the two important distinguishing factors in qualitative research using online personal interviews are: whether the interviews take place in synchronous or asynchronous mode. The 'time lag' inherent with asynchronous exchange is one of the risks which Bryman (2012: 668) flags as an issue when conducting an interview in this form. Fortunately, the trust built with the participants prior to the interview period as well as during the interview process made it so that following up on the responses was not as high a risk as Mann and Stewart (2000: 138-139 cited in Bryman, 2012: 66) caution against. Only one interview was conducted in asynchronous mode in its entirety. This was the case due to the irreconcilable difference in availability between the researcher and the participant. This was bypassed through a preliminary conversation with the participant through WhatsApp Voice Notes so as to establish a sense of pseudo synchronicity. By the participant listening the voice of the researcher- introducing themselves as if through a phone call and sharing information about the study, the participant was want to feel – when listening to the voice note for the first time – that they are actually meeting the interviewer and can answer them as if they are interacting with them in real time. Such approach was important for the purposes of ensuring as close a relationship between the researcher and the participant. Any concerns surrounding the time-lapse between the time the questions were asked of the participant and the participant's response were bypassed by the short time between the 'read receipt' and the reply time which was significantly short enough to not raise any concerns. The participant's responses also did not seem practiced as the responses were sent in succession to one another. The relevance of note-taking became more apparent as this form of interviewing required a collation of responses from the text, WhatsApp voice notes, Skype and Phone call conversations (sometimes all for one person). Due to the success of this data collection method, data collection via Whatsapp Voice Notes is commendable especially as it allows for convenience and lowers the attrition due to lack of availability. A cautionary note is however, that the time lapse must be born in mind for rigourous research ends. This is because participants may and do take time to consult

with the other parties in preparation for a rehearsed response, and this would demean this phenomenological project. Although there is a wide tendency for asynchronous interaction especially communication via social media to be seen in a negative light - and even by the participants themselves- this study has proven that asynchronous interaction as a qualitative data collection tool is efficient and convenient primarily because of the convenience factor. Some of these conveniences include: the participant having the choice to respond to the questions at an opportune time, the researcher accessing those responses at their own convenience, the 'informal' nature of it allowing the participant to feel less pressured to respond but also for them to answer the questions much in the same way they would when conversing with their peers through voice notes. The latter was especially important for this project because of the phenomenological and 'discussion-centered' element of the interview process.

3.5 Ethics

My study adhered to the requirements and ethical principles and conventions of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria. This included treating the research participants with respect and dignity especially through enrolling their informed consent to participate in the research study. Although some challenges arose, solutions were found to circumvent each challenge.

According to Ali and Kelly (2012: 59), research ethics is more than just about the research participants; it has increasingly become about the representation of information with due consideration of the ethical inequalities of gender, sex, class and ability. Fortunately, the authentic composition of the group lent itself to various perspectives and reflections along the lines of gender, sex, class and privilege evident under the data analysis section of this report.

However, as in noted in Zou (2016: 56), "it [remains] important for social science researchers to protect the welfare of their participants during the research process so that the negative consequences of their participation are limited". As such, although the names of the participants appeared on the YPR document which is available in the public domain, I opted to anonymise the names of those who consented to taking part in the study. The consent was attained by way of consent forms (see Appendix) which each participant was requested to sign voluntarily, after they had read the informed consent letter detailing the study. The process of reading and signing the consent forms happened before the interview took place. It was challenging to get the consent forms of the participants in due time as some of the participants did not readily have access to devices that allowing for the scanning of signed documents. In these instances, I had

to employ the usage of electronic signatures, as well as verbal consent- captured in the recorded conversations (which all of the participants consented to).

As already noted in great detail in the body of this research, the crisis of the discomfort of the participants- due to the politics associated with the dissolution of the ELPHASA committee-was solved by the access I had to the WhatsApp group some of the participants belonged to. This access was granted by one of the contributors who added me to the network but ended up not being a part of the study, but to whom I am truly indebted to. Some of the people who were traced for having their names in the document declined to be a part of the study for fear of not having enough information to share about the study. Of course this is an extension of the logic that some of the people who had their names on the document did not do any work, which will be addressed below.

3.5.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

No harm was posed to the participants, however I chose to anonymise all of the research participants and not mention their affiliations too specifically because, although the names of all the participants are stated explicitly in document, some of them preferred to share their insights anonymously. To maintain the confidentiality of the participants, the recordings of the interviews were saved on different devices requiring 2-step verification for access. The hand written interview notes did not include the real names of the participants but instead included code letters that corresponding with saved files in a method only comprehensible to the researcher.

3.5.2 Member -checking and positionality

Member-checking is commendable aspect to the IPA which compels the researcher to check in with the research participants at various points of the study; especially for clarity purposes but also to offset the neglect of participants after information has been acquired from them.

As such, throughout the journey of my research I would check-in with the participants regularly to assure them of their input being valued; as well as to checking in on their personal progress regarding some of the personal information shared throughout and outside of the interview. The core benefits to this include the strengthening of the trustworthiness and validity of my work (Agbedahin, 2012: 150). This is also in line with Mann & Stewart's suggestion to maintain contact with participants which I deemed important- as well as our interaction was a pseudo-colleagueship (2000, cited in Bryman, 2012: 668). I can only explain this in how each

participant would end up engaging me in a conversation outside of the purview of the interview-raising questions- of which we would commit to getting back to each other about. A curiosity in power dynamic can be seen in how most of the participants' switched roles so that they also posed me with questions on public health and inequality. The curiosity is in how some of these young professionals—due to various factors- portrayed a different dynamic to the expected 'superior' role of the interviewee who can withhold and reserve information from the interviewer at their mercy. Some of the contributing factors for this could be the manner of reaching out to them using their professional, social and personal modes of communication (email, WhatsApp call and phone call) which consequently made for a wholesome engagement with them.

As mentioned prior, the hermeneutic circle is cognizant of the meaning making process of both the researcher and the participant as influencing the results of the research project. As such, it makes sense that my social location, identity and resources did have an impact on how I was perceived by the participants who felt comfortable enough sharing more than an hour's worth of material on their experience in the NHI submissions process. Although the pool of participants were all tertiary scholars or graduates, they did not show any hostility or treat me like an outside presumably because I introduced myself as Master's student with a keen interest in the field public health and democracy; which made them feel at ease in having relaxed conversations with me as a peer, outside of the formal space of emails. Although I felt it necessary to introduce myself to the WhatsApp group, this is not the general culture of it especially in a group with constant traffic of people leaving and being added. I believe that doing so would have altered the authenticity of the observations made on the group whilst also being unnecessary. I placed reliance on the fact that the group was an open network where each person could invite anyone else and so the group members are aware of the risk of any person joining the space.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Findings and Interpretation

INTRODUCTION THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter draws extensively on the social media, email, and interview data for this thesis and is made up of many direct quotations and patterns in communicators, which I then analyse and place into conversation thematically. (Note: Because of its narrative, hermeneutic and phenomenological method this section will be set out discursively not in numbered and segmented form.)

According to an email thread shared by the People's Health Movement -South Africa (PHM-SA) coordinator, the date stamp for the submission of the YPR is 31 May 2016 which made the process about 2 years old, as the study was taking place in the year 2018. This was a particular concern for some of the participants who felt that the time lapse would render them unable to answer some of the questions, or answer them without recall bias. Despite this fear of recall bias, many of the responses were infused with emotive recollections that did corroborate with the content in the YPR submission, the email threads as well as the experiences and encounters shared by the other contributors.

The aim of this section is therefore to elaborate on the findings from the in-depth interviews conducted with the contributors of the YPR. This will be achieved through organising quotes into sub- sections emanating from areas that were explored in the study. The discussion in each sub- section will be infused with references to the literature as well as the qualitative document and non-participation observations engaged with throughout the research.

Because of the nature of the YPR being a collaborative project amongst these young professionals, a certain degree of duplication was inevitable; however, due to the phenomenological aspect of this project- the precise manner of communication (choice of diction as well as linguistic preference of each participant) was especially appreciated for the rich detail it would provide in understanding the perspectives and experiences of each participant. As such, though broadly communicating similar issues and themes, the manner in which each participant elaborated on their experience was vital in facilitating an understanding of youth participation in the NHI policy (commentary process). This also highlights the diversity in perspectives around the same issues. That is to say, key quotes will be the launch for the discussion points of each interview which, although related to the literature mentioned in the genesis of this report,

simultaneously compel re-theorising and commentary as a way of fulfilling the objective of the study to critically analyse youth participation in policy.

The double hermeneutic, which compels an introspective and reflexive research process, defends the incorporation of personal insights and experiences within the data analysis section because of the constant reflexivity required of the researcher in constructing a rich narrative on the topic at hand. This application will also make for shorter recommendations and conclusions sections, as the recommendations on youth participation were in part provided by the participants during the interviews and analysis of each quote incorporates recommendatory and conclusive input addressing youth participation in public policy.

4.1. Social order, influence and networks in youth participation in policy

The landscape of public participation in policy does not lend to itself to young people being involved in a meaningful way. In fact, reality points to conflict between symbolic and material interests within the discourse, which foster internal restraints against youth participation. In this context, the academic and social networks of these young professionals outmaneuvered their internal restraint norms which allowed for their commentary on the NHI. This shows how the existence of certain social orders, networks, collegial formations and group collectives challenge the internal restraints of young people.

"My supervisor introduced me to the People's Health Movement (PHM) and at that particular point the PHM was actually educating communities about the NHI, so I attended one of their community meetings and from then that's how I became engaged within public health and health politics. I also met other younger members who were like 'let's work on a response'- they were already working on a paper as the PHM but they felt that it was very important to hear what young people had to say. So we just coordinated ourselves: different universities, different parts of South Africa, different professions and yeah, we put together a paper... of recommendations" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

"I became aware of the NHI through my mentor but really dived into things when I became involved with the Department of Health which is how I have a good knowledge of the regional and provincial health sector of Gauteng" (Camilla, 25 October 2018).

Iviwe shared how her involvement in the NHI was indirectly influenced by her supervisor whose motivation to do so could simply be linked to her and her supervisors academic interest in the field of public health and community health. She found herself in the PHMSA

community. It was comprised of a diverse multitude of other young people involved with public health in different ways, who were then mobilised to realise a document filled with young people's input on the NHI. Camilla's mentor was also an example of the influence of senior professionals and networks in general, in sensitising younger professionals about ways in which they understood and contributed to the development of their societies.

Key themes that arose from these conversations included:

- Tertiary institutions as privileged spaces for networking;
- Young people as a collective with veritable input in policy distinct from other collectives;
- The plurality of the collective of young people, replete with skills.

4.2 Tertiary institutions and their role in youth and public participation in policy

Tertiary institutions such as universities are among the entities identified as stakeholders involved in the consultation process for the NHI. Some of the participants recalled campus visits by the Minister of Health, along with the type of audience present; which they expressed as another questionable form of public consultation merely because of the low presence of young people at such engagements. At The University Still Known as Rhodes (USKAR) for example, although the presentation by the Minister was held at 12h00 on Monday 23 October 2017, that time conflicted with lectures scheduled to begin 12h20 and when lunch meals would be served in the residence dining halls (Rhodes University Communication and Advancement, 2017). This conflict in time is but one example of how even in spaces where young people could have the opportunity to engage on policy, other structural barriers arose. This is not to say that the perfect time would solve this; however, it is critical to note how such factors play a role in restricting meaningful interaction with young people with regard to policy. One of the participants who particularly spoke on the role and the nature of universities in relation to policy was Bronwynwho also shared how she got involved in the Young People's Recommendations through a campus call. Although critical of the general university consultation by the government, Bronwyn also speaks from a position of privilege as a contributor solicited for her input in the multi-university submission. However, she fails to recognise this submission and the YPR document as the same thing. Her failure to connect the two points can be attributed to her lapse in memory regarding the process, but also her not-so-intimate involvement in the submission in its entirety (Bronwyn, 3 October 2018). Her critique of the role of universities in policy process

is prefaced by her recollection of first encountering NHI through a project she completed as part of the requirements for her degree. She also recalled the campus consultation with the Minister which she stated was well-attended by an audience limited to professors, HODs of the university but very few students. This was one of the areas she emphasised, that the youth -the would-be custodians of NHI, as she put it, were not really present at a platform that could have fostered the beginning of meaningful engagement with them. She spoke of how students were limited from attending because of the short notice (a day before the Minister's visit) and the fact that many of them were in class at the time of the session. Bronwyn also shared how the talk was mainly dominated by conversations on the ambiguities in the funding structure for NHI, with little time for questions and answers. This centrality on the fiscal aspects of the NHI proved to be another limiting form of engagement as many students would be ostracised from the discussion which over-emphasised the financial considerations over other relevant contributors to the NHI.

4.3 The distinct perspectives and concerns of young people

"In one of the workshops we ran, we had anticipated young people but ended up with mixed population. You could hear the concerns of young people regarding job security and their lack involvement in the conversation on NHI. At one of these workshops we invited Vishal Brijlal, I think he is the advisor to the deputy Minister of Health, and we had a great discussion on the NHI where one of the problems identified was the fact that there is no proper resource to answer those questions at people level. I mean- yes they are accessible to find, but you don't understand the language- the bureaucratic language, so is the document really accessible?" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

"it's being recorded from like one point, it's not really going into detail about how the NHI is going to affect the person, its more I can say on a higher level" (Enhle,11 November 2018).

"Our university system very much encourages one track specialisation, so for example in medicine I wasn't encouraged to understand policy or the economics of health and the intersection of things thing in my field of clinical medicine; which I think is really important

... I think, given the fact that NHI will largely affect young people going forward, as we're the next generation, we're the ones that will be the biggest population group and we need to understand how NHI works and have contributed to a system which is tailored towards South Africa and the needs of its people" (Bronwyn, 3 October 2018).

Bronwyn's critique, as seen above, brings us back to the deliberation on the role of the university in youth policy participation. Her discussion focuses on two related areas: the 'one-track specialisation' of courses in university, which impedes young people from engaging in issues that affect them (broadly) and subsequently restricts their civic involvement in policy through monopolising their energy, time and interests. As a solution, she proposed an inter-disciplinary approach to education which takes into consideration the intersectional realities which young people live out in reality. More specifically she suggested that the NHI be addressed and discussed within educational institutions, as well as through various departments, so that young people obtain a knowledge of and understanding of NHI whilst building their career interests. She used 'the phrase 'investment' -a shadow of the very real (financial) rhetoric on vested financial interests; which many of the contributors touched on. Bronwyn's views lent themselves to a conversation on the political economy of health, and to some extent, the neo-liberal practices of the university. In line with her conviction about a broader engagement with NHI, was her argument that there are not enough champions; lecturers and other professionals pushing for an incorporation of the NHI (and policy discourse) into different subjects. She hoped that, post – implementation NHI, the state would endeavor to expand knowledge on the NHI to all young people (especially) and not just the health professionals that will be working within NHI. In this way, Bronwyn specifically championed for a youth engagement that extends beyond the neoliberal paradigm which stratifies interests into economically driven ones that compel young people to relate singularly to situations they otherwise have permeable associations with.

Whilst elaborating on the meaning of commenting on policy, Jared proposed effective campus engagement initiatives with university students (and leadership groups); focusing on policy and not just politics, as a way of involving young people in the processes. Although he did not explicitly mention the SRC (Student Representative Council), his opinion on youth participation in policy points to the onus resting on student collectives; which contrasts with Camilla's proposal for institutional reform. Regarding the influence for his participation in the submission, Jared spoke to a variety of concerns including the 'the plight of the psychology student' as well as the general direction of policy despite public concern. Jared felt that psychology students are amongst those disadvantaged by requiring higher degrees in order to practice and therefore aligns

his argument for youth participation with the plight of unemployed psychology graduates that would be of instrumental in context of the NHI. His argument is, in a society where psychology students are in the sphere to be able to contribute in some ways to mental health issues to prevent tragedies such as *Life Esidimeni*; they are sitting a home despondent with their degrees and are not being targeted as possible beneficiaries to the NHI in future. He believes that with their undergraduate degrees these graduates could be involved in the advocacy and monitoring in the field of mental health (for example) instead of being compelled to pursue higher education. The other reality is that there are limited spaces available in Honours programs in South Africa and so job creation becomes one of the more feasible solutions needed for the students that are not accommodated- which Jared believed can be sought in the proposed healthcare system.

"We need to train people to teach people about mental health and awareness, however psychology students do not seem to have the persona for this or it is not impressed upon them in school" (Jared, 11 November 2018).

In line with the job creation for students proposed by some of the other participants, part of what Danisha finds important about NHI is the need for budgets to be set aside for the re- engineering, retraining and re-education of professionals to accommodate the incoming NHI- though it may incur financial obligations. Bronwyn said that it is more important to get more youth input and consideration within the NHI primarily because of the large burden of unemployed youth. We need to cater to this stratified youth population that is unemployed. It is reasonable to deduce that Bronwyn understands NHI as having intrinsic factors that will or ought to reflect or speak to this large burden of unemployed youth. Her idea can therefore be understood as an appeal to include these young voices in creating a society where their plight is an inescapable reality. Talking to the participation of young people, Bronwyn said, "I don't know if are always allowed or even given the opportunity to [participate in policy]". The semantic usage of 'I don't know' should not be taken as a direct indication for a lack of knowledge but rather as polite skepticism for the inclusion of young people in meaningful participation in policy.

In her acknowledgement of the structural deficits that prevent young people from truly engaging on important issues such as health and the NHI, Bronwyn also expressed a sense on discontent for the way in which young people only engage in policy decisions when the time for undesirable outcomes has come. Here she references the #FeesMustFall movement for how students most potently 'flex their engagement muscles' and use their passion to act against policies unfavourable to them. It is interesting that she brings up the #FeesMustFall movement as, the discourse ushers in consideration of popular praxis as a form of learning and engagement

especially for the systematically marginalised. The reflections of the contributors articulated a culture of marginalisation in various instances:

- Not feeling encouraged to pursue the various policies that inform their personal and professional lives as young people;
- Not feeling welcome to participate in policy commentary as young professionals with input in their fields;
- Being fundamentally excluded from the conversation through the structure of their academic programme.

Their work of perseverance beyond all these barriers not reflecting in the rest of the conversation on NHI is reason enough for their disappointment. From this viewpoint we can see this marginalisation which can be articulated, to some extent, through the discourse on #FeesMustFall as the movement of the marginalised. Perhaps one key difference between the conversation about NHI, and the formulation of the YPR document and the exchanges around #FeesMustFall, is the privilege that is inherent in the formulation of the former. Although much of their interaction was facilitated under the People's Health Movement, the educational qualifications of the contributors are a factor that played into their knowledge and experience, which was subsequently poured into their recommendations.

4.4 The youth submission: the document, politics and emotions

"Young people should write their own papers because we have different priorities — [with regard to PHM] which were maybe different from PHM's priorities. Also because as young people we are the future doctors, we are the future professionals, we will be working in the NHI and there were many things which we were particularly uncomfortable about that were not carried through in the process and it [the NHI policy] had already come so far- and it was now a white paper and this was the first time I heard about or actually engaged with it and getting the opportunity to engage with it" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

Over-and-above their educational attainments, one of the other forms of identification which the participants used to describe themselves included their professional involvements in different associations and movements especially JUPHASA (The Junior Public Health Association of South Africa; which would later be changed to ELPHASA). Some of the contributors shared their leadership positions and their different associations within these spaces- primarily within

ELPHASA and PHM.

"The PHM assisted me in engaging around the education on the NHI as well as fighting for 'The People's NHI'- against vested interests and private interests- which is something that the current NHI has deviated from" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

In this instance Iviwe introduces the notion of 'The People's NHI' which, although not mentioned in the document submitted for consideration as comment, is a regular point made by many of the contributors with an intimate knowledge of the young people's submissions process. Should the document be taken as a key reference for what 'The People's NHI' could be- as directed by many of the participants, this version of the NHI can be succinctly described as the bid for a healthcare system for all citizens that will not prioritise financial interests over the principles of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The Young People's Recommendations (2016: 16) document refers to this by hailing, "the consideration about profit over people's health" and going into significant detail about the concerns which may render the NHI susceptible to profit-driven motives surpassing people's health. The NHI, a primarily socialist aspiration rooted in social solidarity, naturally attracts anxieties and fears against profit- driven motives due to its intended inception into a saturated neo-liberal environment such as that of South Africa (YPR, 2016: 16).

"It sounded like a dream... It was something I had never done before and it as such a current topic back that made me realise the implications it has for the future health sector or department that I would be going into -and here was a reform that proposed to change everything about health systems in South Africa as we know them, so that inspired an interest and research in to what's happening or what's going to happen and a lot of us were interested in questions such as 'where do we fit into this picture', 'have they thought about us in making decisions that will completely affect our professional lives' and 'why aren't we being consulted" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

The awe and amazement of taking part in a submission can be seen in the language that Iviwe chooses to describe her involvement and motivation to take part in the submission in the first place. Her use of emotive phrasing and diction in the phrase 'it sounded like a dream' highlights the extraordinary nature of the submission as well as the affective relationship which she had with the submission. Through her use of the term 'dream', the idea of the normative and not material nature of youth participation in public policy is emphasised. Her awe and surprise show how the young contributors saw their submission as a great action; naturally accompanied it with

emotive connections to their submissions process. It is therefore to be expected that some of these young professionals saw this monumental feat as deserving of recognition and response.

"Why are they not trying to convince us young people to get involved?" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

"All of us felt that none of us were heard, like it was just a gimmick... We ran workshops with young people at UCT and made points which we then incorporated into the submission. We said something and it is on record and I think that is the most important thing. We don't know if it actually reached its target, how much of it was read and how much of it was implemented." (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

4.5 The questions and concerns of the youth collective

In sharing her inception to the NHI Anelene mentioned the discomfort she felt at realising how far the talks of NHI had come, without the input of or wide knowledge of young people; almost as if something that would affect young people greatly in their professional careers and in their lives in future, was happening without their knowledge. It is true that this sentiment was shared by the group as can be noted in the different reflections of each interview. As such, even with their submission having gone through, many of the participants felt that their involvement was merely educational (learning the process of formulating a submission) and not influential to policy and will continue to not be so, until young people are invited to voice their concerns on certain platforms or are taken note of in the instances that they do. The youth political praxis is here presented and along with it the idea of the submissions process as a site of learning, much in the same way that 'O Halloran (2016) presents the USKAR #FeesMustFall movement as a site of learning -with the University as a site of struggle- as seen through the student political praxis (O'Halloran, 2016). The lack of response for written submissions can arguably attributed to the fact that the commentary may have been assessed and incorporated into the next version of the policy draft, however, the issue arises when state reports on the submissions process do not even recognise the existence of young people's contributions, or the next draft does not even address their concerns as raised in their submission.

"I think the document could have a great impact because there are quite important questions that are asked with regard to parts [of the policy] that could be reiterated or more clearly stated. If I am not mistaken in one of the chapters there is a part where specific questions are asked; I am not sure though if those question were actually answered..." (Kyle, 11

November 2018).

The questions being asked at this part of the submitted document contain a range of concerns and 'red flags' capture under the umbrella of fighting for The People's NHI. Although the participants show a range of different confidence levels regarding a response on their submission, the most resolute was from Anelene who confesses to reading the draft Bill on the NHI and not coming across any significant address of their concerns.

"I could feel my point of view being a low priority when I read the Bill...I couldn't pick up anything – there is also a possibility that I don't remember...but I know that some of the concerns we raised – some of them are still not being really really addressed in the NHI; concerns such as some of the services ...and the 'how'- how are we going to do all of this" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

"I get tears in my eyes 'cause I hope the NHI works...we need that hope to turn our health care system around" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

"I never thought such an opportunity would come my way...my membership in JUPHASA was part of the reason why I got involved in the [PHM Coordinated] submission... [it] really helped me in actually realising my passion for public health" (speaker emphasis. Camilla, 25 October 2018).

As the reader can see the continued usage of emotive language by the contributors appeals to what theorists have called "the notion of Affect". And emphasise the emotional response or connection which many of the participants still have with their submission. The theme of surprise and pride is carried through by Francois who rooted his gratitude for the submission process in the facilitator of the entire endeavor (who did not consent to being a part of this study). The surprise expressed in the interviews related to their actual effort to make a submission rather than a shock for their involvement and anticipation in the policy commentary. The despondence from the lack of feedback was constantly expressed by some of Anelene's colleagues who 'put time and effort' into creating and submitting The Young People's Recommendations. The lack of feedback or translation into action, from the Department of Health, was one the factors which left the participants demotivated from this particular endeavor. The note of despondence was identified in Anelene's recollections of having felt like a low priority. Iviwe's passion and emotional connection with the NHI and her participation in the submission too was also expressed through her reference to 'tears in her eyes' in the hope for the NHI to be a success.



"What the NHI can therefore do for young people is to develop communities, the workforce - as well as job satisfaction- with the voice of the youth in mind... "otherwise we have destroyed or missed the great opportunity to change the lives of a generation – to create a disease free generation because the NHI is huge, if you have healthy families, you have healthy societies, healthy cities, healthy countries – that are productive" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

Iviwe's perspective was in line with the Healthy Cities/ Health Communities theoretical framework. Research into the theoretical framework uncovers it as a community-based approach that operates on the premise that 'some healthy community systems works well when all citizens enjoy a good quality of life' (WHO, 2018). The idea is that citizens actively participate in the creation of their healthy community through a wholesome view of wellbeing which takes into account the social determinants of health development- the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age (WHO, 2018). This conceptualisation of healthcare posits Iviwe as a true thinker in the notion of social solidarity. Her reflections also showed how young people ought to be firm stakeholders in the development of their communities and societies. Further, her perspective pushed for the participation of young people in meaningful change in the societies — as a way of creating a healthier environment surpassing health alone. Her reference to this theory was also a reflection of the critical thinking or theoretical approach which she applied it to the NHI.

4.6 Education as a boon and a barrier for policy participation

As with all the other participants, Iviwe also identified herself according to her educational attainments. She further shared her experience in both the private and public sector which she used as anecdotal reference for her affective reflections on the importance of the NHI. Besides also having published a few articles as well, Iviwe shared the varied groups and associations of which she was a part of including the PHM that facilitate their input. From her input regarding an email with multiple 'influential people' included as recipients, the researcher was prompted to investigate the time frame as well as the nature of that email; particularly because of the specifications of a singular email address to receive submissions. In actuality, the White paper published on the 15th of December 2015 stated that submissions would be accepted via email until the 15th of March 2016. Anecdotal information showed an extension of the date which is how the YPR contributors also justify their submission time frame; which therefore negates their submission being ignored on the basis of it being late. Other reasons may arise still as to why the

submission is not included in other reviews of submissions.

4.7 Overcoming internal restraints and barriers

Addressing internal restraints and barriers for participation entails a look at both: the personal hindrances (as influenced by personal perceptions on the idea), as well as, the interests which compete with the successful engagement in commentary. In this context, time-sensitivity was a critical area of engagement, which had significant bearing on the level of engagement of the participants and cropped up at various points throughout the project.

"A lot of us were full time students, we worked and some were young researchers at the same time...it does take time and direct interest to pursue a submission, so that was the context of our submission" (Francois, 7 November 2018).

"In these decision-making opportunities we are always fighting time" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

"We felt that, you know what, there are some gaps that are not being addressed...and young people are very creative when it comes to coming up with solutions. However, if I didn't have that allocated 4-week departmental allocation where I had to be involved with the department of health to complete that course and obtain my degree, then I probably would be sitting here without having this passion and this knowledge to help me realise my dreams and work on my future and the future of my colleagues and community" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

The different quotes above show different yet related perspectives regarding policy submission (especially by young people). Iviwe and Francois highlighted the time difficulty that they faced and Anelene elaborated on what drove her to fulfil her participation (whilst Francois stated what competed with their submission). On the one hand, Anelene inherently shared how a space needs to be actively created for young people to become involved in policy and on the other hand Iviwe and Francois voiced the other interest and time that may restrict this. The mounting competition between the interests of everyone in the digital age, are well-acknowledged and this is especially true for young people whose professional interests are at formation stages. On the other hand, Francis and Iviwe's concern for time was a real one, which makes it all the more critical for endeavours that purport youth participation as important, to actually pay credence to the reality of their interests being siphoned by their educational aspirations especially.

Further emphasis of time as a restraining notion was observed through the email containing the recommendations of the YPR youth. The call for comments on the NHI draft policy was made on 11 December 2015 with the deadline being 3 months after, yet the submission was sent on 31 May 2016, 2 months after the cut-off date. However, according to one of the conveners of the document, an announcement for the extension of the deadline allowed for the documents submission for consideration. As is the tendency with communication with state officials, emails sent to the NHI submissions email- to ascertain the accuracy of this- did not garner reply.

4.8 More internal barriers and politics within the group

"It was difficult to mobilize ... young people are 'sleeping'..." (Danisha, 29 October 2018)

Danisha's perception that young people are not mobilised enough or that they are 'sleeping' was the less sympathetic response to the reality of low youth participation in their call to action for the commentary on the NHI. This participant was perhaps the most evocative and passionate in her responses. Our interaction started with amplified hesitance until her realisation that I was part of the WhatsApp group where their issues and concerns were raised. Some of the politics included the suspension of the 2018 ELPHASA/JUPHASA committee following their requested name change from 'Junior Public Health Association of South Africa' to 'Emerging leaders of the Public Health Association of South Africa'.

The use of the Twitter social media platform formed part of the collectives' efforts to engage with other young people, as a methodology to curate some responses for their submission. In the spirit of her passionate interview session, Danisha denounced some of the ideas related to their submission, including the Twitter efforts by the youth collective. As gleaned from the other participants as well, the low number of tweets re-tweeted or shared by followers of their content was an almost defining feature of the Twitter initiative. Closer inspection showed how Danisha's view that young people are sleeping drew from the self-admitted unsuccessful effort to engage young people on Twitter on the NHI.

"The Twitter response "wasn't too bad but not too good [either]. Many of the Retweets and comments were mostly from the members of ELPHASA & PHM only, and not so much from the general public" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

"Tweets by members will do nothing in moving the agenda forward- cause that's just efforts to make yourself look better" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

These comments highlighted how the success of their WhatsApp group did not necessarily translate into success on Twitter - especially as they had hoped there would be a bigger storm around NHI over and above their efforts to create conversation and awareness elsewhere. Anelene's reflection specifically referred to 'a small left over group' of contributors who collected and called themselves the NHI Corps, and went on to start a hashtag #WhyNHI in order to promote NHI conversation on Twitter. Anelene used the phrase "still interested and still want to take NHI forward" when referring to this NHI Corps. The double emphasis on 'still' gives us insight into the missing contributors who are no longer involved, probably because they may no longer be interested in, or committed towards, furthering their efforts in relation to NHI (at least through this network).

Anelene was one of the participants who confessed to their underwhelming Twitter awareness rally on the NHI and Danisha opined on the effectiveness of the Twitter rally methodology. From these comments alone various ideas were identified a) a participation strand that requires some engagement, namely an expansion on the principle of 'Meaningful Participation and b) a conflict or tension in the views amongst the young contributors themselves. Perhaps the same lack that government tends to have of 'not speaking to young people in the language of young people' was the same route which paved the underwhelming response to the YPR's mobilisation efforts. The same factors which tend to leave young people frustrated by government's marginal communication with them regarding important issues can also be identified in how these young professionals sought more action from other young people but received low interaction instead.

4.9 Expanding meaningful participation

Communicating with the Twitter universe without due consideration for how this engagement can be harnessed to create a wider reach in line with your goals is a dangerous effort sure to leave one with disappointing outcomes (as was the case with the YPR youth). There is a tendency for people to believe that by merely initiating hash tags and sharing them that a storm will rage on Twitter making for a Trending Topic. I shall coin this tendency: 'Hashtag Hoeism', the commitment to starting a hashtag and carelessly sharing information under it but not applying nuanced media sensitive considerations for its success. Of course any marketing and media studies scholar (and lay Twitter user) could tell you that starting a hashtag and getting a Twitter handle is not enough to make a success of even the most brilliant of ideas, yet some young people also fall into this trap by thinking that, 'I'm a young person, surely what - important and relevant information- I post should be received with due consideration of that'. Although an in-depth media analysis of their Twitter efforts was not conducted for the purposes of this research,

Anelene's confession that many of the Retweets were from members of ELPHASA and PHASA point to a deficit in line with the tendency for 'Hashtag Hoeism'. NHI is still a low priority for people not involved in the field of public health and the NHI Corps (coordinators of the Twitter rally) lacked the edge to drive the awareness beyond people already within their networks to at least other (young) people already passionate around health and justice. In other words, they struggled to find a platform to make a difference or engage meaningfully in order to have their voices heard in that space. It is enough at this point to attribute this shortfall to The NHI Corps' surface-level engagement with the Twitter universe as opposed to the deeper engagement required for a successful venture. This complexity of social media activism and social media for change is an elaborate enquiry that is more fully realised by the authors that engage with social media analyses of youth-driven movements (O' Connell, 2014; Thomas, 2010). Although they were aware of their own deficits in social media use, the group members also spoke to the failure on the part of government, to try appeal to youth.

4.10 Internal personal conflict, privilege and group tension

Danisha's disdain for Twitter as a form of engagement particularly ushered in the tensions within the group which also constituted the politics of youth engagement in policy. These tensions are a predetermined feature in Sciulli's theory on social order and power dynamics as elaborated upon in the introduction to this study. The precursor to her emphatic communication on the politics within the group was a reflection on how, up until the dissolution of the committee, meetings were held every Thursday to explore various issues around health primarily- with a group mostly comprising of black women who, as she stated, were consciously aware of their positionality and privilege as young professionals in the field of public health. Enhle's quote substantiates this as she stated how she "always had a curiosity about the level of engagement and involvement and inclusion of young black people in high levels of decision making" (Enhle, 11 November 2018).

"We are constantly communicating... I know it's not very professional- but we have a WhatsApp group where we discuss and share information on NHI as the NHI Corps (the Twitter collective), and further, share that on the ELPHASA & PHM WhatsApp groups".

Another technology-driven tool that influenced collaboration and conversation was the WhatsApp group which many of the contributors were a part of (and some remain within).

Although there was emphasis and praise for technology and social media as the primary tools

that fostered the submission of the Young People's Recommendations, the comment on WhatsApp not being a professional platform- warrants interrogation. There was an almost self-disparaging tone or at least an intrinsic conflict (or criticism) that manifested in the comment on the professionalism of WhatsApp. Undoubtedly the most common and effective way in which many young people came together to share and discuss information on a variety of topics, the notion of WhatsApp as not professionals happened to be telling of the spaces the participants frequented which would dictate professionalism as not inclusive of WhatsApp. A definition of professionalism as restricting practices comes to mind. One can see how these young people stretched boundaries- not just the political (which the public participation process is arguably situated within) but also- their personal boundaries. Another point that was gleaned from the unobtrusive observation of the activities on the WhatsApp group was the reality that more than just information on NHI was shared on that platform; job posts, scholarship, fellowship as well as research opportunities were also shared openly.

"In developing our own leadership styles and pursuing idealistic approaches, you will find that some views might collide...some people get comfortable with hearing their own voices and using them for celebrity status rather than in actually engaging with their peers for meaningful input" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

Whilst Danisha managed to highlighting the importance of youth input in policy conversation, she similarly rendered a discussion on the negative power dynamics that result in young people seeking to have their voices heard. She reckoned that, the same thing that happens with the elite - when certain voices push for recognition above others- also happened with young people too. Danisha's point was however valid as she introduced a discussion on traditional power structures. Her idea communicated the recreation or reconfiguration of a power models which left people such as herself critical of the engagement that young people have amongst themselves. This was especially evident in her skepticism about some of the names that were added to the document. She also asserted that some of the contributions were not based on community engagement efforts, which she appeared to privilege above other forms of collecting data for the document. What became evident through the other interviews though, was the fact that the names on the list did not represent just the contributors but also other young people and professionals in support of the document- a factor only unveiled throughout the data collection process. This was especially articulated by Jared & Kyle who expressed how their names were more of a vouch for the document. These communication issues included, the reality of the participants not being on par with each other regarding a variety of concerns such as the follow-up to the submission.

"I see myself really as a public health activist" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

The above quote is a case study in the epistemic divide between intellectualism and activism which also became evident in the conceptualisation of WhatsApp as an unprofessional space. In essence, the same way in which activism was relegated to a different unprofessional space was the same way in which WhatsApp was phrased as non-professional as well. This was despite much of their professional/activist work having been achieved through the WhatsApp group. The idea of the WhatsApp as unprofessional was one notion that introduced the confusion over the question of 'whose NHI it is anyhow, that of activists or professionals involved in the NHI?' This epistemic divide was emphasised by success of the 94-people strong WhatsApp group which remained focal in the communication of ideas. This plurality was reiterated by all of the participants, who pushed for a NHI with diverse inputs. We can look back to Anelene's comment that health professionals will be affected by NHI. In advancing a plurality and diversity in the NHI commentary space, Anelene argued that the NHI could find a way to appeal to different sectors (housing and water) because its reach would be far-reaching and would affect many other sectors that need to be considered in the process. The inter-sectoral influence of NHI as having an effect on everyone's careers was another interest, of Francois specifically. This 'far-reaching' notion mentioned by Francois and Anelene especially, emphasised the 'wider' application of public participation as championed by the YPR youth. François's concern for careers aligned with his identification as an aspiring public health academic with a mission to bring together Information Technology (IT) and mental health as well as the struggles of psychology students (from where his employment concerns arose).

The notion of the epistemic divide underlines the privilege that accompanied the YPR youth, yet their awareness of this proved to be another strong feature of their recommendations; which meant that their insights extending beyond their personal networks. The internal reflexivity of the members also proved this. In her elaboration on the networks and value of the input, Hannah reiterated that the complex composition of the group meant that a diverse set of opinions was generated. Through interactions, workshops, seminars and conversations with other community health care workers and professionals (some of whom are young people themselves) the contributors were able to work beyond their privileged position as educated young professionals in order to produce a document cognizant of the broader concerns of young people in South Africa. This reflexive nature was also notable in the qualitative report by the Dullah Omar Institute Report (2018: 3) which disclaimed their methodology by stating the possibility of gaps in their report, due to the complex scope of engagement- subject to accessible and inaccessible

networks as well as structures of power and influence- and the nature of the methodology of including speculations and perceptions and not just facts (DOI, 2018:3). This disclaimer proved to be relevant as the YPR document was not mentioned in the report at all.

In comparison to Bronwyn, Anelene (despite her concern for recall bias) was able to recall that it was her passion and 'public health activism' which was one of the factors that prompted her to become involved in the NHI Young People's Recommendations. Part of the other motivating factors for her involvement included her obit in spaces with other youth and young experts in NHI who were (and still are) motivated and active in the public health space. Anelene also recalled how she first heard of the NHI during her time reading for her Master's in Public Health, which was a fair dilution of her fear of recall bias, as she was able to answer specific questions with answers able to be corroborated with the input of the other participants.

The above was also a case in point for the discussion on privilege and educational attainment as some of the participants reverently reiterated the 'skills and qualifications' of their fellow colleagues, perhaps as a defense mechanism to emphasise their space in the public health conversation but probably also, as a way of showing their pride in having a diverse and educated collective as fellow contributors to the document. This was not to say that the privilege was inhibiting, if anything the awareness of their privilege was another strong feature of their document. The internal reflexivity of the members also proved this. Although primarily identified through their involvement in this submission, the young professionals that formed the core of this project identified beyond their membership in ELPHASA-the youth collective that works with PHASA and the PHM-SA which was the primary umbrella under which the young people came together to submit their submission. Their educational attainment was the next common reference which the participants used to identify themselves with; with an overwhelming majority of the participants showing a Master's in Public Health (MPH) as one of their educational qualifications over and above their professional jobs within and outside of the field of health. Although the majority of them have Master's Degrees in Public Health, the variety of their undergraduate qualifications is a testament to their variety as well as of those without MPHs but rather qualifications in Psychology and Information Systems. Throughout the interviews we found that the participants constituted a group of medical anthropologist, occupational therapists, pharmacists, medical doctors and medical interns who got together to share their insights on the draft policy on the NHI. There is no disputing the professional environments to which most of them are accustomed therefore, such statements can also be seen as spatial demarcations between their professional careers which they separate from their

'activism'. This spatial demarcation was made more apparent by their comments regarding WhatsApp as unprofessional and again through their identification as 'like' activist instead of activists in the full right. Such perceptions could be attributed to the perception of activism as being a primarily 'philanthropic effort' generally associated with students in the Social Sciences and learners in high school instead of young doctors, nurses, pharmacists and IT professionals. In particular, Hannah (8 October 2018) shared how a particular young woman named Lerato was doing great work 'on the ground' with regards to sexual reproduction in Pretoria. The opted phrase 'on the ground' can also be seen as an indication of both the spatial demarcation different from different 'works' being done in different spaces as well privilege and the epistemic divide (Hannah, 8 October 2018).

"Our chairperson was central to this, committed and dedicated, this was her brain child she used her marketing skills to compile the submission and mobilize us (which isn't easy) — not edited so it reads well and not really structured properly. A lot of people put their names on the document that didn't really do any work" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

Although justifiable, Danisha's inputs are an example of the conflict in knowledge between the different contributors. Further evidence of this is Francois's interview which ushered in different perspectives in that he conceded to not being involved in the formulation of the document. In his reflection on his precise involvement, Francois highlighted how the enthusiasm of their facilitator and organizer was crucial to his involvement in submission. Following this, he elaborated on how certain voices and personalities have a knack for marketing and mobilizing around health issues, and so the call for them to act should be honed in on.

4.11 Voluntaristic action and collegial formations

"So, the lawyers in dealing with the rights deal with that, the Rural Hospitals Advocacy Project will speak to their area of expertise and the TAC and PHM might end up dealing with HIV & Stock Outs and other health systems related concerns, but only one civil society group will be asked to join the table and that causes some issues" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

"We can empower people more than we can empower institutions There is no way that institutional obligations can force people to act, cause much of the hard work that goes into commentary- at least for our submission- was based on volunteer work" (Jared, 10 November 2018).

"Young people need to be involved and need to have conviction and ownership within policy-making...young people have a big role to play...so missing the youth hurts the youth because young people can create and innovate as well as come up with alternative approaches for doing things" (Kyle,11 November 2018).

"It is imperative to have as many voices reflected...there is no youth structure for NHI and how they address our concerns without referencing us is very troubling because essentially, anything without us is against us" (Enhle, 11 November 2018).

Sciulli's argument on collegial formations centered on their importance in facilitating possible social integration by making the actors feeling integrated into the fabric of society. Reflecting more closely, Sciulli also envisioned collegial formations as agents for recognising a) social change and b) elite subjectivity, as well c) compelling government and private entities to include individuals and entities in conversations around policy (Sciulli, 1992: 183-189). Should civil society organisations (CSOs) be understood as collegial formations, all three notions of Sciulli's argument are realised. Danisha, Jared, Kyle and Enhle all speak to this by highlighting how the facilitation of participation relies on the various networks with different interest which essentially make it simpler for institutions to get out their response for submission because they have defined interest and agendas to pursue in moments of social change. Iviwe also emphasised the point that young people are hungry for information but there seems to be no one doing the hard work of trying to get their views on the matter. In fleshing out this theme, she stated how PHM submitted a response prompted by their championing for 'The People's NHI'. Although Danisha admitted a lack of success in submitting a planned subsequent comment on the draft policy; which she believes, might have been side-stepped if their collective was more institutionalised, this sentiment was not shared by any of the other participants, who felt that 'the magic' of their submission was in their organic coming together as volunteers of JUPHASA & the PHM. Camilla's proposed insights to this included follow up projects to address the concerns raised in their documents and disseminated in different departments in universities, for broader input from young people and young professionals. As with the other participants, Camilla regarded the NHI as ideally eye opening for citizens and young people who she felt needed to be involved so that they could understand its reach and vice versa.

4.12 The different seats at the policy table

Although reiterated as having implications for every person in future, the approach to NHI has tended to be from the perspectives of different collectives addressing different concerns. The

reality of differential yielding power was recognised by the participants who sought to bypass or manoeuvre around in various ways some of which have been mentioned in the body of this study. Danisha spoke to this point by elaborating on the competition for recognition in decision making bodies within civil society. She found that this competition, compelled by the restricted nature of who 'gets to join the conversation and have a seat at the table', motivated collaborations between civil society groups. One example of this was how Section 27 (through Mark Haywood) supported the YPR and its contents by adding their name to the submission.

Anecdotal reference to support the reality of different seats at the policy table, is the fact that not that very few young people were present at the Presidential Health Summit held on the 18th and 20th of October 2018, wherein key decisions on the health of South Africa were relayed to all those who were present. As is the case with state-planned events, the summit was by invitation only and located at a venue far from the CBD of any metropole; which rendered it inaccessible to quite a variety of people that might have gained much from being there.

This is especially dubious as the invitation claimed the following: that,

"[t]he Presidential Health Summit will bring together key stakeholders from various constituencies in the health sector, to deliberate and propose solutions to address the challenges facing the South African health system. Delegates will work towards strengthening the health system to ensure that it provides access to quality health services for all in line with the principles of universal health coverage through an inclusive process" (NDoH, 2018, own emphasis)

Reflecting on the event, Danisha showed her disdain through stating how, "all the "private-sector heavies were there" (2018). Danisha also spoke of the politics of engagement which dictate which proverbial seats are offered to whom at the proverbial policy table. Upon hearing of my difficulty in getting admitted into the summit despite my efforts to secure a reservation and invitation, Danisha confided in how a similar fate befell a known colleague; with the caveat that her colleague was able to utilise her networks to gain admittance into the summit. Such a situation was evidence of- not only the relevance of networks but also- their power in political spaces of influence. In the same vein, Sciulli spoke of these collegial formations and the different benefits they have in securing different voices and considerations, in otherwise cordoned off spaces. This was another example of restrictions against participation which influence the lack of young voices in large decision making and information dissemination spaces.

Anelene reflected on an anecdotal reference to a concern raised by Minister Motsoaledi at a conference, that civil society was not involved in the NHI process. In her response to this, she referred to the Young People's Recommendation (the document) and the efforts around it; which seemed to be absent from the Minister's purview of the efforts by civil society (including young people) in commenting on the NHI. Similarly, Jared shared how just as with the Hate Crimes Bill, some voices will continue to be silenced despite concerns raised by the public and so for him it was important to begin to attempt to influence policy at its inception rather than at a later stage when the damage is already in action.

Despite her evident cognizance of the benefits of associating with senior officials as well as other civil society collectives, Danisha's disdain for older public health officials manifested in her conviction that they are reproducing problematic power models, and structures, throughout the municipal, provincial and national level by not including young people. Even though she understands that youth participation goes beyond institutionalisation, her ideas centre around the neo-liberal tendency in bureaucracy structures for ideology to be so hidden that practice and perceptions do the dirty work for them (Danisha, 29 October 2018). This means that although traditional or standard bureaucratic measures may exclude young people directly in principle, perceptions around young people further restrict their voices from being sought or considered because of their value and position in society being viewed as a substandard and almost mute. Again, this is a case study in the external restraints that play a role in youth participating in policy.

Danisha subsequently referred to these realities as contributing to the difficulty of being a young person in SA and how- compounded with being a woman- operating within the sphere of policy becomes a violent experience influenced by the unflattering perceptions about young people and young women. Her conversation showed how adept she is with terminology related to gender, queer identities and gender non-conformance (GNC) discourse which additionally highlighted her sensitivity to these inequalities and what to name them. The intersectionality of race, class proved to be an important part of the discussion with Danisha, seen in how she shared that, up until the dissolution of the JUPHASA committee, some of the women who contributed to the document as well, had been meeting every other Thursday and sharing insights of on some important issues within the field of public health- as already mentioned before.

4.13 The dissolution of the committee

"The truth is that we were bullied -and of course 2 days before the PHASA conference, 'to make nice' someone was [sent] to try play hero. But we saw right through it...we had asked

and asked if there was a procedure to follow for changing our name and nothing was said and all of a sudden we were suspended with no explanation what-so-ever...we felt betrayed, hurt and highly disrespected" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

The feminist thread of the personal as political manifested further through Danisha's recollections about how the entire encounter left them disappointed, hurt and emotionally drained. Despite their awareness regarding the marginalisation of youth in society and subsequently in policy participation, the collective still embarked on the experience which left them with individually confessed mixed- emotions.

"At the moment there isn't enough exposure on the NHI...not a lot has been done to educate our professionals...I mean, it's not a medical thing- it's not a thing you would, like, normally learn about in medical school, but it is so important because it is going to impact everything that we do in health" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

Anelene's above comment was based on a forum discussion conducting with nursing and medical students, regarding their knowledge about the NHI, which she found to be very limited; in part due to the fact that health education institutions falter in sharing such information with their students- she believes. These consultative interactions with nursing and medicine students form part of the methodology which contributed to the input for the YPR document. Like the other group members, Camilla reiterated how the consolidation of input from very structured seminars and research papers was tracked through webinars and Google Drive through definite deadlines. Anelene also intimated that the group had planned to submit a recommendation for the NHI Bill released in July 2018, however time got the best of them (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

4.14 The meaning of youth participation

"For me [the YPR document] meant putting into words what I had experienced as a professional in the field as well taking into consideration everything I had seen and observed from my colleagues, allies and other young professionals" (Enhle, 11 November 2018).

"if you're in that sector & the field and you know the gaps and [have the knowledge that] NHI is not the one taking care of or creating those gaps...then it's easier for you to identify those gaps and highlight them. For example, myself being in public health, I have a limited knowledge of mental health, but someone from the Psychological Association of South Africa (PsySSA)—who works with this on a regular basis- can identify the gaps and what we

need to improve to address that need" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

These young professionals have experience working in various locations such as rural KZN, urban Johannesburg, private practice, community health centers abroad (including in the UK)—which they tapped into in order to enhance their contribution to the YPR document. As already mentioned, the methodology for consolidating the document included input and support from Section 27 as well as other contributions by the group members. Anelene referenced the input of nursing students in the discussion about involving other young people in the process. She also shared a concern about the lack of exposure which (young) people have to NHI; of which PHM takes it upon them to provide ongoing discussions with students in this regard. On the other hand, on the point of young people and their involvement in policy, Anelene opined that young people are really passionate yet unsure of where they can put that passion. Elaborating on passion as something that drove many of her colleagues' efforts, she stated that "being in JUPHASA is like volunteering, you have to use your own resources to make things happen". Following this, she suggests that we educate ourselves on issues that affect our population, more specifically on how they can affect our population.

4.15 All work and no response on the submission

"Our chairperson was central to this, committed and dedicated, this was her brain child she used her marketing skills to compile the submission and mobilize us (which isn't easy) – not edited so it reads well and not really structured properly. A lot of people put their names on the document that didn't really do any work" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

"We had a coordinator as well as a team of people that would edit and review our comments" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

These quotes shone a light on the internal dynamics of the participation. Although Danisha was aware of the inception of the document; as well as seen in how she hails the communication that went into the formulation – somehow she lost the communication that non-contributors would be invited to add their names in support to the document. The reality is that the aim was never to use the voices of the contributors only...as with petitions, some of the contributions were in solidarity and many of those who made marginal support, are honest about their interest, reading and acquiescence with the objectives of the study and so added their name to it. Anelene only recalled that it was the idea of one of the members to come together and formulate a response; she could not recollect the individual- which was another indication of her looser connection

with the process of submission.

According to all of the participants that providing input for the submission, as part of this effort, discussions were held in order to move the idea along. To document this process and facilitate the collection of information, 'Google Docs' were critical in allowing everyone to contribute their input whilst tracking the input of the others as well. Of great import at this juncture- and by inference from the participants' opinion- was the recognition of a single 'driver' of the project with various team members that would do the editing. This is especially important as the document cited two spokespeople but most of the participants mentioned one person by name. This could be an indication of the visibility difference of both women or, humility on the part of the most widely mentioned 'driver' of the submission.

4.16 Tokenism

The notion of tokenism, window-dressing or lip service is one that crops up in conversation when young people express their involvement and value in decision-making spaces and professional collectives. A recent article by Megan Harker (2016) a young professional in the field of public health makes one wonder about the role of young people in spaces dominated by senior professionals and elders. Some of the concerns raised in her article include the bulking of different ages, under one youth category, for the purposes of advancing narratives about underdeveloped capacities to participate as stakeholders in policy especially. She poses the following rhetorical question which warrants quoting in its entirety and subsequently supports the same concerns raised by the participants in the study.

"When mentors and elders unconsciously treat young people like tools to meet ends, it's inevitable that young people start to feel like innovation chips in a poker game or labour pawns on a chess board" (Harker, 2016).

"It would seem that we are the forgotten generation in the discussion and I am quite saddened by that but what the paper managed to do was to lift our voices up in the conversation; however, there's still a lot of room to get young people involved in this conversation. Sometimes you to think that what you do, the hours you spend and the passion you have... sometimes you think that the fires are burning and no one is watching or you have a died down fire" (Camilla, 25 October 2018).

"Throughout the submission are questions posed to the NHI legislators. The questions are important in that they addressed the grey areas or areas where parties could come in and pose a threat to the NHI these questions are very important and the fact that out of this paper

these questions could be borne, so that important things can be brought to life was amazing and left us ecstatic... the feeling was completely amazing, the first thing I experienced [after we submitted the document] was the feeling of being heard, but not only just being heard but, being captured too... so that was satisfying" (Iviwe, 10 November 2018).

"The lack of young people's involvement in large decisions that, at the end of the day will be influencing all communities with young generations... [young generations] that will potentially grow up to become the adults, become the success- become the economy, and [potentially] improve where their ancestors failed- the lack of involvement of young people in that... is heart-breaking... (Anelene, 1 October 2019).

"It is wrong that when it comes to policy, the youth voice is the last voice that they seek" (Enhle, 11 November 2018).

"I think it is important for the youth to take initiative and to be actively involved in making decisions or in seeing how government makes society decisions that will influence us and those that come after us. So it's actually special that there are youth take an active interest and that actually read through the presentation and documents and understand them so that they have an idea of what is going on in our society" (Kyle, 11 November 2018).

"I think some people have a natural tendency to care about these things because they work with people that are in need or those that do not have the resources and may require some help in having their voices heard. Other people are more... self-centred maybe? So they would not get involved unless if you show them how something will affect them. If you don't show them what effect it will have on them personally they will not become involved...and in doing so you could probably show them how and what impact their involvement will havewhat difference their input would make. If people don't see that, they don't bother even making an effort" (Kyle, 11 November 2018).

Workshops, seminars and other platforms for conversation were lead and opened up the space for young people to gain knowledge about NHI and then share their views and concerns about it. From these spaces Iviwe shared how they were able to uncover that young people are hungry for information about NHI at different levels: implementation, planning etc. For her this was evidence in how young people asked many questions following the presentations. Some of these questions revolved around the topics of: job security young people's discontent about not being effectively consulted health security, as well as the anticipation of youth voices in the 'roll out'

stage of NHI. The success of these interactions and resulting articles shared online about them, garnered a response from the National Department of Health which felt that the articles posed a challenge to NHI. According to Iviwe, the advisor to the Deputy Minister of Health made an appearance at one of these platforms where issues and questions around accessibility and questions and consultation were deliberated upon.

"The better the education the better the outcome – the more talk there is the more impact in the future. More education on topic...through life science: health, life choices, life orientation through sports, HIV and incorporate health discussion, HIV/Aids advocacy work, how the public sector work and how medical aid schemes work; being a patient, expectations and basic rights as patients need to be taught in schools. The difference primary, secondary and tertiary hospital needs to be taught in schools- the more all that happens the better the outcome" (Camilla, 25 October 2018).

"Challenging the [NHI] document and frameworks [for participation and inclusion in decision making] is difficult and so it requires the public – which is also a huge challenge [due to shortfalls in communications and social media] because the public has the negative side of the story" (Jared, 10 November 2018).

The lack of feedback is one of the reiterated points in the discussions with all of the participants. Where they have engaged with the revisions of the policy- they do not recognise their inputs as being reflected. Danisha said that, "in fact it would seem that the NHI is going in the opposite direction to what we had anticipated- and that is extremely worrying" (2018).

The attitude of disappointment is a recurring theme further highlighted by Danisha's discussion bolstered by 'the Life Esidimeni massacre' and the general Healthcare crisis acknowledged as a reality by many of the participants.

4.17 Solutions proposed by young people

"I think that South Africa is the best in the world and we are on the right track – but obviously each country has its own issues and that's where the youth give the older people a run for their money. We need young people involved because young people are full of energy with a tendency to get things done...and the general tendency to also demand that they [the decision makers] follow through on their word. So we need more young people to take ownership and become more involved in policy making – there's quite a bit of progress that can be made there. If they are not at the table there will be some serious lack in particular

The former quote by Kyle serves as a poster illustration for Donald Kinder's argument in his perspective on Partisanship and Essentialism in Childhood. This is because Kinder specifically addresses the patriotic nature of youth and their 'strong attachment to the nation' as well as their convictions of 'their country and its way of life being best' (Kinder, 2006: 1905). Although Kinder challenges Greenstein's Freudian argument of childhood innocence which he argues does not translate into political innocence, his usage of the term 'children' hauls the paradox of children falling under 'youth' into focus. This is because, although Kyle does show a strong attachment to- and patriotism- for his country, Kyle's subsequent critique of 'serious lack' and 'progress yet to be made in South Africa' contrasts with Kinder's views that children "happily subscribe to conventional stereotypes about black and whites, men and women, and rich and poor" (Kinder, 2006: 1905). Indeed, Kyle's self- confessed belief that South Africa is the best country in the world- one (generally) on the right track- feeds into this illustration of young people but his views also divert the narrative so that the childhood patriotism is compounded with the critical youth angle. Whereas Kinder (2006) challenges the essentialist notion of children being politically innocent, his argument essentially challenges the amalgamation of youth into one bolus for the consumption of those that seek youth for their own convenient purposes. Unfortunately, as already canvassed in Patterson's literary perspectives, youth is seldom viewed with this layered cognizance especially in regard to policy participation. The recommendation here is that, although youth includes a convolution of ages and stages of life, more nuanced approaches –ones more cognizant of these diversities in youth- need to be adopted and applied instead of those which throw all young people in one crucible of youth. In relation to the contributors, Kyle could only share his perspective and not necessarily his experience with them. His views highlight the importance of young people putting their foot in the door and owning their voices in the field of public policy. His opinion aligns with an understanding that some people have a natural tendency to care about the issues that affect them and some people are more self- centered and will not use their skills to do what these young people have done.

This idea links with Jared's celebration of some of his colleagues who he believes are champions in using their voices, skills and experience to share knowledge with young people and to bring about change. Jared said that there were just some people that have a natural talent for advocacy work and they should use that talent to inspire others to get involved in change. His further discussion includes a belief that psychology students are not too well known for their activism and so he hopes that the culture of getting involved in social change can be cultivated with

psychology students as with other (social sciences) students.

Kyle's positive mind-set aligns with him thinking that South Africa is the best country in the world, "we're on the right track but each country has problems". This particular anecdote is an ode to the strong sense of ownership, responsibility and belonging which these young people have with their community. As with Danisha, Kyle's utterances show an affinity with the community to the point of deep emotion in light of what is happening with health in South Africa. This idea feeds into both the Healthy Communities theoretical framework and the African Youth Charter's theory of including young people in development as a way of fostering informed healthy and knowledgeable citizens that fully realise their rights to be involved in their country (African Youth Charter, 2006: 3).

"We need to realise our limitations, involve IT resources (databases- so people do not abuse the resources they have the right of access to) as well as 'clean out' our house (finances, resources and corruption), so that the department is well-run and Integrated Project Delivery (for example) so that NHI can be effectively realised. We also need to be conscious of the social impact of NHI and how the political will affect the social and the financial. NHI will spill into The Department of Transport, Finances and Businesses, Child and Adolescent health and everything so we need clear outlines for 'who will manage what. So work on the system so that we are not impacting negatively on the rest of society" (Camilla, 25 October 2018).

"I've noticed that there's a tendency to vilify the private sector ...which I think is counterproductive because we should be trying to reach towards - the standards in our public hospitals, should be as good if not better than private hospitals...its not to say that the private [sector] is functioning a hundred percent all of the time but it is a standard we should try to reach for" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

"From personal experience, being middle-class does not equal being rich it equals you paying the bills and it does not mean you can shop until you drop — so we need to take this into consideration. We need to be very careful to not put people in who can just survive and we also need to be careful that they do not drop into the poverty level, because the gap between the very rich and the very poor will get larger which will have a huge ripple effect on our employment rate and our economy again" (Anelene, 1 October 2018).

Anelene, in putting forward her concerns on the NHI, portrays the most reflexivity about her

economic status and privilege which she relays with equal frankness and sensitivity. Camilla also stresses the need to take into account the caution against phasing out the private sector as; she maintains that communities need to be allowed to make the choice. She is aware that NHI is based on the ideology that entails the middle-class and the elite basically taking up all the financial responsibility for the poor to not have a co-payment. This is something she feels is being neglected by those making decisions—the real effect that NHI will have on everything.

"NHI this is not a 7 day, a 1 month or a 1-year project...we need to realistic about it, based on the environment we are in socially and economically and politically, it would seem that NHI is being pushed too quickly, especially when compared to Germany, Canada and Britain who had the backing of resources, knowledge and research to pull off their health systems over a long period of time" (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

When articulating NHI, some of the participants refer to the UK as having "something similar to this". Enhle's inception to the NHI specifically, was through its comparison to the German, Canadian and British health systems as portrayed in the media. However, the more involved and connected she became in the field of public health, was the more aware she became of the context of UHC & NHI in South Africa. The NHI that some of the group members speak of is influenced by their awareness and knowledge of the English National Health Service which provides free healthcare treatment at the point of need for its citizens primarily (Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 2019). Many of the other group members understand NHI to be national medical aid where everyone will be compelled to contribute so that everyone can have equal access to quality services. Danisha extended this conversation by adding that the NHI needs to embody entitlement and social solidarity and a unified single payer system, and in the same breath shared the following: "I would not rely on government right now to pull it off because it [government] is a mess". She argued that NHI should redirect resources from the public to the private sector as there is no competition in the private sector. She was also worried about the direction that the NHI is taking because much of what is under discussion remains unclearespecially the financing model (Danisha, 29 October 2018).

"I just would like to reiterate that I did not contribute to the document I merely supported it and its contents. So my friend told me...we always talk about health issues when we are together... we found something special especially in light of technology [with regard to the NHI] so he invited me to give some input because of that. I wouldn't call it a favour because we came together on that because of our shared interests in public health" (Kyle, 11 November 2018).

Kyle is one of the participants that share how they weren't directly involved with the formulation of the document but merely supported the contents of it. Although he was not directly involved with the document, his discussion on an application for live organ donors and the South Africa's healthcare system showed his aptitude regarding health and the information technology sector. This particular involvement with health and IT he also shared involved some red tape with NHI related information in the company he is working in. Kyle is one of the other participants that was influenced to add his name to the submission by a close friend who recognised his knowledge of health care related issues proves a to be a formidable reason for why his friend sought him for association with the submission. Personal communication with a close ally was important as an opportunity to contribute towards an interest of his. In fact, Kyle also shared how, although he did not regard his involvement as a favour to his friend, his friend did have a huge influence in the addition of his name as support for the document after reading through it; primarily due to their shared interest in public health. Kyle's conversation around the document's contents –more specifically the discussion on the NHI cards, open source and e-health related informationshowed his intimate knowledge of the submission. Further evidence for his engagement with the document was seen in his reference of the questions posed within the body of the submission, to which he mentioned how they received no feedback regarding. His final word on the reception of their submission was regarding how discouraging it is for young people to engage in policy commentary and for their views and submission to not be heeded.

"I attended one or two workshops and met a few people that were interesting and interested in some of my key interests as well, I was also involved with the surveys- the health E-surveys distributed by JUPHASA- which is an interesting topic for me because...I mean it means less paper hassles and more information stored about people" (Kyle, 11 November 2018).

Jared was honest that it was his position in leadership within different professional collegial forms – as well as being closely acquainted with some of the other would be contributors- that encouraged him to be involved in the submission. A semi-social picnic held for the ELPHASA collective –which is also mentioned by a majority of the participants- was one of the efforts which Jared felt was critical in not only facilitating a closer relation between those in attendance but also creating a wider network for different opportunities to be disseminated amongst them. The coming together of all these young people meant a sharing of experiences as a learning curve for each of the group members to learn from each other, and other organisations.

Jared's area of expertise, as well as the language he used to discuss his involvement in the NHI through the submission, reinforced the idea that specific interests need to be communicated to

young people in order for their expertise and capabilities to be activated for the purposes of analysing and (in this case) endorsing the contents of policy submissions.

Many of the contributors proposed multiple solutions and recommendations to address their concerns. Some of these included the need for awareness programs with a greater appeal to how the NHI will affect each individual, including advocacy efforts relaying different perspectives on UHC so that people can make informed decisions for engaging effectively in the conversation (Francois, 7 November 2018). The group emphasised how we need thought leaders and more money to be fielded into research on the meaningful participation of the public. Concerns about the conversation primarily being replete with more senior members of society, or 'the old farts' as Danisha referred to them, permeated the interviews. The concern here was that the 'old ways' of doing things will be repeated- a perspective operating from the school of thought that the health inequalities of today are directly influenced by old practice. This can be related to van den Heever's argument that old systems foster inequalities. Enhle believed that there was an opportunity for further engagement with civil society and as such, suggested the initiation of an NHI technical task team with youth representation (preferably more than one person), so that young people's voices need can be represented in the design of the NHI. She brought in the neoliberal tenet by stating that organisations would need to be commissioned to do citizen hearing and that youth-led organizations be contracted for the youth engagement aspect of such hearings. She also reckoned that, at the implementation stage or level an age-appropriate tool kit could be developed for a knowledge specific interaction with the youth. Some of her questions included concerns for the NHI's accommodation for HIV positive unemployed persons. Her sentiments were in line with her views that young people need to be allowed to have ownership over NHI as a way of having ownership over their health and wellbeing. François, on the other hand, spoke of an NHI Think Tank based at the University of Cape Town which, he reckoned required more awareness or marketing o so that insights could be shared with the other students and lecturers interested in NHI. Despite his insights and interest in youth involvement in the NHI, Francois shared how he would love to be involved further in NHI however it was not a priority in his line of work.

4.18 Conclusion to the Research Findings and Interpretation Section

This data analysis section sought to expound on the insights shared by each research participant, as a way of eliciting rich detail on the topic of youth participation in public policy. Although the perspectives of each participant were captured in great detail and under specific headings, duplication was inevitable yet also critical in revealing the different ways in which

particular moments were interpreted by each of the participants. From this data analysis the following points were explored:

- Social order, influence and networks in youth participation in policy
- Tertiary institutions and their role in youth and public participation in policy
- The distinct perspectives and concerns of young people
- The youth submission: The document, the politics and the emotions
- The questions and concerns of the youth collective
- Education as a boon and a barrier in policy submissions by young people
- Overcoming internal restrictions and barriers
- More internal barriers and politics within the group
- Expanding the concept of youth participation
- Internal personal conflict, privilege and group tension
- Voluntaristic action and collegial formations
- The different seats at the policy table
- The meaning of youth participation
- The dissolution of the JUPHASA committee
- All work and no response on the submission
- Solutions proposed by young people

As stated in the genesis of the section, phenomenological practice justifies the inclusion of recommendations and conclusions during the data analysis stage as an entry point for including other forms of triangulated data in conversation with the direct quotes mentioned.

The merit of this approach can be seen in how the contributors to the YPR showed great dynamism, diversity and layered responses to simple occurrences such as the usage of the Twitter

social media platform. The researcher's inputs were also incorporated in the insights along with the synthesis of the literature. The following section provides the closing remarks on the project with reference to the limitations to the study and recommendations for policy and future research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to look at youth participation in public policy, with specific reference to the National Health Insurance policy submissions process. A single submission by a group of young professionals was identified as the only submission made in the interests of the youth; this submission and its contributors were therefore treated as a case study in the objective of this research. Interviews were conducted with the majority of the participants to gain phenomenological insights on the process of their submission. A state resource and a non-state resource were incorporated into the analysis of the data as a manner of triangulating a response to the research questions.

Due to the fact that the data analysis section entailed a great deal of synthesis and theorising, I will now provide a conclusion by way of reflecting on the limitations of and recommendations from this study.

5.1 Limitations to the study

Some of the limitations to this study included an almost shallow engagement with the political elements recognised throughout the research process. Although critical theory with political tenets was foundational to this study, to successfully discharge a political analysis would require a researcher to converse with multiple individuals that have experience in receiving submissions on public commentary on policy. In doing this, the dialogue would be elaborated upon and expanded trends around (youth) participation in policy, instead of extrapolations based on the personal perceptions on the young professionals themselves. The primary endeavor of this study was however phenomenological and so the thin political conversation justifies. In using Societal Constitutionalism, the theory might be developed to reflect on the South African context more aptly, for a simpler application during field work.

One of the participants, aptly named Generosity, was the briefest and most tension filled interview because the participant wanted to be involved but then declined various calls for an elaboration on the conversation with time being a huge factor coupled with a hesitance which might be linked to the anxiety of the dissolution of the ELPHASA committee. Despite this, the interview schedule was provided to the participant, which elicited short responses that do not lend themselves to the phenomenological element of this study. Her input was therefore more of a lesson in engaging with participants rather than in expanding the conversation. This form of

engagement is evidence of why sending questions prior does not really unearth the value of what is said. Whereas, with the other interviews the same questions unearthed an hour's worth of engagement, this interaction only totaled a response of 50 words. Her response could be defended by the time constraints that limit young people from committing to demands beyond their professional responsibilities. Another slightly apprehensive interview was with Enhle, who was stilted and did not really warm up to me at all. This is perhaps due to the timing of the interview or study so close to the time of the dissolution of the committee, which rendered many of the participants weary about a conversation on the voices of young people in general.

Generosity directly contrasted with the commitment showed by Interview Hannah- who although restricted by travel and time, appealed to creative ways of getting the interview done: Through WhatsApp Voice Notes. Her accommodating mien is an extension of the comments shared about her colleagues on her strength, passion and determined 'activist' character. Upon analysis, one can see how this method was useful, not only in getting answers from the participants, but also getting the answers completed at the convenience of the participant. This can be evidenced by the fact that ten voice notes submitted by the participant after supper around 20h00 on a Monday. Even long before the data collection, the WhatsApp voice note was already an intended back up plan for interviews that could not be conducted via calls. To verify the information communicated through the voice note, a member-checking of the answers provided was concluded through a follow-up call with the participant. The deficit of the method is in line with the concern of the recall bias raised by the participants. Whereas the other participants had to reflect on the questions in a short space of time during the interview in real-time, this participant had the luxury of a bit more time to muse and reflect the reality she preferred sharing as responses to the question. Comfort can be sought in the fact that her responses were not too remote from those gleaned from the participants interviewed via WhatsApp calls.

The other limitations to the study included the very sample of young professionals as the primary contributors to the fleshing out of the topic. Although enriching, the views they shared emanated from an elite group of young people with acute levels of interest in the health sector and connections gleaned primarily from their academic networks. Notwithstanding the clinical nature of this sample, their methodology for collecting insights from different young people all over the country as well as their reflectivity in relation to their positionality in society made for a nuanced and plural input on youth participation in public policy.

At the time of writing this report the NHI is now but one Bill in the multitude of policies processed and promulgated by the current South Africa government regularly, and so insights on different policies may portray varied opinions on youth participation in public policy. Perhaps including various key informants in conversation or relation with youth or policy, would also enrich a similar study seeking to understand young people's participation beyond a case study methodology. A media analysis of Twitter in relation to youth participation in the "NHI Corps hashtag" might have made for a deeper understanding of the youth space as well as a critical analysis to help the group assess the strengths and weaknesses of their Twitter efforts.

5.2 Recommendations

From this study we saw many theories and perceptions fall apart: that young people do not participate because of apathy toward their own realities and futures and that the youth is a category of people that can be merely theorised upon. The truth is that in this age of information, there is a competition for attention span of which both the government and civil society ought to engage with more deeply; especially when dealing with young people who are developing their interests and seeking to find areas to showcase their skills whilst exercise their rights. More importantly, in the effort to gain the inputs of young people- should this be a sincere endeavor- the packaging of information needs to be done with due consideration of the legalistic nature of policy which requires an appeal to other forms of engagement, not just for young non-professionals but other collectives constrained by linguistic barriers. In the same vein, this packaging of information needs to be tailored so that young people (and other collectives sure to benefit) are not excluded on the mere basis of their inability to comprehend. The onus for this cannot be specified to one group or entity, the consideration of this is more important and needs to be acknowledged in policy participation discourse. The idea here is not that this will ensure the participation of all young people – but, with more young people gaining knowledge, contributing recommendations and seeing their efforts reflected in policy – more young people could be recruited into the formal policy commentary landscape. The possibilities of this are both ideological and theoretical yet supported by personal experiences of a youth collective with experience in this terrain. The realisation of this should heed an informed population contributing creative solutions to some of the issues that may arise, not only in health, but in society in general and for the benefit of our society. In as far as technology and social media are concerned; the hope for government to prioritize social media in spreading knowledge and validating the contributions of young people was expressed as an aspiration of the YPR contributors. The success of such an endeavor would have great potential- should the caution against 'Hashtag Hoeism' be heeded in the effort of realising an expanded conceptualisation of 'Meaningful Engagement'. Indeed, the email submission method for receiving submissions is justifiably practical; however, the restriction to this one mode of communication means the restriction to the type of voices that are present in the conversation. This is not to endorse WhatsApp submissions merely because of the successfully challenged 'professionalism of the platform'; however, other options could be explored such as the announcement for the call for comments on social media with request for submissions via email. Such aspirations do compel a double-edged response to youth participation where: young people are held responsible for their involvement and planning, whilst efforts are made to recognise and support their engagement in public policy. This would require due consideration to be paid to the (political) influences which impact youth involvement in policy; with direct steps being taken to facilitate this participation. What this study has managed to achieve is to provide a platform from which to view the experiences of but one group of youth that provided their insights and assessment on the NHI White Paper for South Africa. Future Research can do well to engage with submissions in greater detail as well include the expert voices of state officials in response to (or conversation with) the experiences of young people. This can be initiated so as to provide a more tangible comprehension of the submissions process so as to address the shortfalls in the system with the marginalized in mind.

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APPENDIX

Letter of informed consent



Consent letter and Consent form

Dear participant

My name is Naledi Mpanza (student number 13208544) I am a Masters candidate at the University of Pretoria's Sociology department conducting a study titled 'Youth participation in public policy making: A critical analysis of young people's involvement in the National Health Insurance policy submissions', for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements for my Master of Social Science degree.

Below are the aim and the objectives of my study.

Aim: This Masters study seeks to understand how this particular group of young people interpret their role in the NHI submissions process.

Objectives:

- 1. Examine the legal frameworks that enable participatory democracy
- 2. Explore the nature and characteristics of the young people that submitted recommendations for NHI
- 3. Investigate the influences and the context within which this participation occurred
- 4. To explore their understanding of their role in the public participation process of NHI

Please note that your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and that you can

withdraw your participation at any point in the process- should you agree to participate. There

are no consequences associated with withdrawing from the process; if anything, your decision

will be respected; however, your engagement would be highly appreciated.

The study entails a discussion centred on the topic of NHI and youth participation- and more

specifically the Young People's Recommendation (YPR) document submitted in the NHI

submissions process. This discussion will be conducted through a series of semi-structured

interviews which, with your consent, would be recorded for the purposes of transcription for

the write-up of my mini-dissertation. I will treat our discussion confidentially; as such, you have

the choice of not having your name but a pseudonym used in the mini-dissertation.

Only I, the researcher, as well as my supervisor, Professor Catherine Burns, will have access

to the recordings, field notes and other information shared between us during the process of my

study. For the purposes of confidentiality, these transcriptions will be saved separately from

the consent form which will confirm your participation in the study.

This study is approved by the University of Pretoria faculty of Humanities research ethics

committee; as such, the department of Sociology is required by University regulation to store

these transcripts for 15 years.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or my supervisor should you wish to inquire about any

parts of this process at absolutely any point.

Naledi Mpanza: Naledi 1507@gmail.com

Cell phone number: 0658125070

Catherine Burns: cath.burns@org.za

I do thank you,

Naledi Mpanza

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Formal acknowledgement of Consent I_______. On this date of_______, agree to be interviewed for the Masters –degree research study of Naledi Mpanza. I am fully aware that I will be asked questions and that the interviews will be recorded with my consent. I give the researcher permission to re-use the information at a later stage. I agree for the researcher to use my real name in the study I do not agree for the researcher to use my real name in the study Research participant's signature: Date: Researcher's signature:

Date: _____

<u>Interview schedule</u>

Aim: The study seeks to understand how these young people interpret their role in the NHI submissions process.
Objectives:
1. Examine the legal frameworks that enable participatory democracy
2. Explore the nature and characteristics of the young people that submitted recommendations for NHI
3. Investigate the influences and the context within which this participation occurred
4. To explore their understanding of their role in the public participation process of NHI
The questions to engage upon are therefore:
Please tell me about yourself, your name, credentials and what you are currently involved in How did you first hear about NHI?
What do you understand NHI to be?
How involved are with NHI at this point?
How did you get involved in the Young People's Recommendations? What inspired you to become involved?

What was your unique input regarding the YPR?

What do you think about Young People's involvement in the NHI? How do you think we can get more young people involved in NHI?

What are your hopes and aspirations in relation to NHI and young people?

<u>List of interviews</u>

Pseudonym	Date interviewed
Anelene	1.10.2018
Bronwyn	3.10.2018
Camilla	25.10.2018
Danisha	29.10.2018
Enhle	11.11.2018
Francois	07.11.2018
Generosity	19.10.2018
Hannah	08.10.2018
Iviwe	10.11.2018
Jared	10.11.2018
Kyle	11.11.2018