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Educational policies in Post-Apartheid South Africa: The National Curriculum and the Social Stratification of Working Class Families

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A research report submitted to the Political Studies Programme, Faculty of Humanities of the University of THE Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Soon after taking office, the post 1994 government of national unity embarked on a programme to reform the curriculum for grades R-12 in line with the new political dispensation. The new curriculum's main objective was to transform the sector in order to create equality in the school system.

Research shows that curriculum reform has failed to achieve some of the desired objectives due to some in-built mechanisms within the education system that limit opportunities for the majority of learners from working class families (disadvantaged groups in society).

This study examined certain of the mechanisms within the education system -- and the curriculum for grades R-12 in particular -- that limit opportunities for learners from working class families (disadvantaged groups in society). The study explored the political transition as well as the economic and social contexts in which the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12 was formulated. It assessed the relative explanatory power of group approaches (that explore how different interests interacted during the transition negotiations and after) and structural approaches that focus on the role of educational systems in the reproduction of class structure. In the most general sense the study is an investigation of government's policy shifts in the education system and in particular the curriculum for grades R- 12 and implications thereof for learners from vulnerable groups in society.

Declaration

I declare that this research was entirely carried out by me. It is submitted to the Political Studies Programme, Faculty of Humanities of the University of THE Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts. It has not been submitted for any degree programs at any other University.

Dorothy Mubanga

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Table of Contents

0.1.0 Historical Background……..

0.2.0 The Political Transition Period 1994-1999……

0.3.0 Definitions and types of policies……..

0.3.1 Post 1994 Policy Making Process in the School system…….

0.3.2 Approaches to policy changes……..

0.3.3 The Structural/ Institutional Approach…….

0.3.4 Group Approach…….

0.3.4 Ideas Approach ……..

0.3.5 Social Economic Approach……

0.4.0 Curriculum 2005……..

0.4.1 Criticism of OBE……..

0.5.0 Conclusion……

Introduction

After 1994 the post-apartheid government initiated a number of policies to transform the various sectors of the economy in line with the new democratic dispensation. The transformation agenda was however more profound in the education system than in other sectors of South Africa's political economy as the school system was at the core of the apartheid rule and was directly used to stratify society along racial, class and ethnic identities. The policy ensured that white schools received more state funding, had a lower pupil to teacher ratio, better facilities and the pass rate was higher than the rest of the schools. The policy on the national curriculum for white schools was also structured in such a way that learners were prepared to take up professional careers in the labour market while those from working class families were prepared to take up subordinated positions which led to the social stratification of learners from working class families.

This study shows that although educational reforms in South Africa have helped to address a number of problems in the school system, they have continued to stratify society along racial and class lines. The study also shows that in certain instances the reforms have disadvantaged the very people that the transformation agenda was intended for.

Studies suggest that although all national governments try to provide mass education to all school going children in the country, the system has inbuilt mechanisms that allow only a few learners from working class families (dis-advantaged backgrounds) to access quality education and have successful careers after completing their studies (Young & Muller, 2008).

This research therefore carried out a critical literature review to examine certain of the mechanisms within the education system -- and the national curriculum in particular -- that limit life chances for learners from working class families (disadvantaged groups in society).

Research Question

What are some of the implications of government's policy shifts in the education system and in particular the curriculum for grades R- 12 thereof for learners from working class families? (disadvantaged backgrounds in society)

Additional questions

Who were the major actors behind the formulation of the national curriculum for grades R-12 during the transition period?

Does the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12 lead to the social stratification of children from working class families?

Relevance of Study

The provision of education in society promotes economic development and acts to enhance the legitimacy of the government. A government's inability to provide access to affordable education "may call into question its legitimacy and threaten its political survival" (Nkinyangi 1991:159)

Although education in South Africa has expanded to unprecedented levels, it's still unevenly distributed between various communities and social groups. The government during the 1990's embarked on a transformation agenda to address the various imbalances and limitations in the school system which was as a result of the deep rooted historical, social and economic inequalities. According to Muller (2002:2) "part of the difficulty is that those most in need of redress will be those whose right to enhancement has been curtailed and who will, by definition, have been deprived of access to 'critical understanding' and, more crucially, to a means for generating new possibilities".

Plank (1990:540) however argues that, "any significant change in the structure and operation of the educational system or in the distribution of educational resources is almost certain to damage the interests of one or more powerful constituencies". It is for this reason that "educational reforms are therefore undertaken only at the peril of a government's survival".

Although governments normally shy away from carrying out reforms in the school system for the above reasons, the South African situation after 1994 needed urgent transformation in order to redress past inequalities. It was for this reason that the government initiated a number of policy instruments during the 1990's to reform the school system in ways that would ensure that both historically advantaged and disadvantaged groups would not be deprived of their right to quality education.

In 1995 the government released the White Paper on education, "entitled 'Education and training in a democratic South Africa – first steps to develop a new system', which was adopted in March 1995" (DoE, 1995:6). The reforms began in 1996 when the government formulated the National Educational Policy (Act 27 of 1996) the Language in Education Policy in the National Education Policy (Act 27 of 1996) and the South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996c). This was followed by the formulation of the National Curriculum for Grades R-12 (RSA, 1997) and the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Act (NNSSF) (DoE, 1998). Dis-satisfaction with the 1997 National Curriculum for Grades R-12 later led to the appointment of a Ministerial Review Commission which addressed discrepancies in the curriculum that resulted in the Revised National Curriculum Statement for grades R-12 (RNCS, 2002). These policy instruments cover six key policy areas underpinning educational reform in post 1994 South Africa.

The intention of this study is to carry out a critical literature review of the implications of government's policy shifts in the school system on learners from working class families (disadvantaged backgrounds). The study focused on the Revised National Curriculum Statement for grades R -12 (RNCS, 2002) and made use of qualitative research methodologies and in particular critical literature review of governments policy shifts in the school system its intentions and some of the unintended outcomes that have arisen as a result of these policy shifts.

The study begins by examining the historical context in which these policy shifts were made in order to understand the implications of these changes on learners from working class families. The study examines specific questions regarding policy shifts in the school system such as which interest groups were behind the formulation of the national curriculum for grades R-12 during the transition period. Does the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R- 12 lead to the reduction of life chances and the social stratification of learners from working class families? If apartheid was socially constructed to privilege certain groups while marginalizing other groups in society how have these policy shifts been formulated to increase the life chances of formerly disadvantaged groups in society who were prepared to take up subordinated positions during the apartheid era?

The study posits the research questions in the group, structural as well as social economic approaches to determine the role that groups, the economy as well as government institutions played in the formulation and implementation of these policies. The rationale for the intended research is that it seeks to add to the existing body of knowledge on the implications of government's policy shifts in the school system on learners from working class families. But more importantly the research uses group, structural as well as social economic approaches to show the problems of policy making process in a country with historical discrepancies which limit the life chances of certain groups in society.

Methodology

There are three research methodologies that are used to research policy matters in the social sciences. Policy research can be carried out as a social administration project to try and improve the organization and functions of the bureaucratic state. The second research methodology used is policy analysis which is carried out as a means of formulating effective policies. The third most popular methodology is the social science project which aims at contributing to the academic discipline rather than improving the bureaucratic functions of an organization or the effective delivery of services to clients (Dale, 1986).

The social administration project was popular during the 1940's to the 1970's and was undertaken for the purpose of improving the organization and bureaucratic functions of the welfare state. Its main thrust was on improving the bureaucratic system in order to make it more efficient and responsive to the needs of the people. The social administration project focused on improving administrative practices of the national system in order to improve service delivery to the masses (Mishra, 1997). The social administration's focus on the national system and on interventions that can be administrated as well as on data collection however led to a neglect of other necessary factors which are important to policy research rendering the accumulation and testing of core knowledge and the development of fundamental theory less important.

Because of the narrow focus of the social administration project on the welfare state researchers begun to look for alternative research approaches that would be used to solve complex policy problems that involved individuals as a way of improving service delivery. This led to the adoption of the policy analysis project which grew in popularity during the 1970's to the 1990's. Researchers using this methodology focused on the need to formulate efficient and effective social policies to improve service delivery. Researchers viewed policy making as a function that only government officials should carry out and they became preoccupied with assessing the effectiveness of the various strategies, methods and policy options that could be used to solve obstacles to formulating effective social policies as well as the outcome of these policies in order to meet the needs of the people. Researchers also focused on governments intentions when making polices, particular polices and their intended outcomes. Like government policy, policy analysis' requires the formulation of strategies to examine government's intentions when formulating policies and the strategies that are used to implement these policies (Dale, 1986).

Dale (1986) observes that the social science project is more concerned about the contribution that is made towards the academic discipline as opposed to improving the lives of individuals or improving the administrative practices of the institution. The researcher's concern for the contribution that is made towards the research community does not imply that he is disconnected from practice but rather that he is focused on improving the practitioners ability to resolve day to day problems and to improve their comprehension of social issues. Researchers using the social science project approach may have the opportunity to influence the policy making process as a way of contributing to their research discipline.

This study used the social science project methodology to examine the implication of the policy shifts in the education system on learners from working class families as a way of contributing to the social science discipline and the body of knowledge on the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12 and class reproduction. The research is of a theoretical

nature and is premised on the view that national curriculums contribute to the social stratification of learners from working class families. The research used the institutional, social/economic and group approaches or theories to examine the implications of the post 1994 policy shifts on the national curriculum for grades R-12. The research explored the political transition as well as the economic and social contexts in which the post 1994 national curriculum was formulated. It assessed the relative explanatory power of group approaches (that explored how different interests interacted during the transition negotiations and after) and structural approaches that focus on the role of education systems in the reproduction of class structure. The research contends that the policy making process is affected by group interests especially of the middle class which limits life chances for the working class while actively pursuing policies that contribute to the reproduction of their own class.

Advocates of group approaches argue that public policy making process is influenced by various interest groups that are loosely formed based on the shared interest on a particular issue. They also argue that members of political parties, bureaucrats and members of the legislature are all members of various interest groups (Sabatier 1999). Group alliances influence and shape the policy making process rather than the institutions themselves (see John, 1999 for an opposing view). The researcher was however aware of certain limitations arising from this theory. For instance the group approach has been criticised for placing importance on interest groups while under estimating the role that is played by bureaucrats in the formulation and implementation of public policy. The researcher further notes that relationships between government officials and interest groups are not always mutually beneficial especially in instances where there are disagreements on certain aspects of policy formulation and implementation (Anderson, 1990; John, 1999). It is for this reason that the researcher also decided to use the institutional or structural approach in the policy making process.

The institutional or structural approach examines the role of institutions in the policy making process by focussing on the formal rules, legal powers, activities and functions of governmental institutions. John (1999) argues that rules and structures affect decision making and the content of public policy because rules and structural arrangements at times tend to favour certain groups over others. This may place the favoured group at an advantage by allowing them to access government support to formulate and implement the type of policies that will benefit their group. Governmental institutions and structures normally play a crucial role in the formulation of government policy which may have important policy consequences on working class families.

The researcher used the institutional or structural approach to examine the implication of institutional arrangements and procedures on the formulation and the implementation of the post- 1994 national curriculum for grades R- 12. This was carried out by examining the documents from the National Department of Education and other relevant institutions related to the formulation and implementation of the new curriculum. The research analysed the documents stipulating the various rules and procedures in the policy making process in the National Department of Education as well as the different roles performed by the national and provincial Education Departments. The institutional approach was used to examine whether institutional rules or structures were used to obstruct or allow certain interest groups to gain advantage over other groups during the formulation and implementation of the national curriculum for grades R-12.

This study also used the social economic approach to examine the role that the economy played during the formulation and implementation of the national curriculum for grades R-12.

Method of Data Collection

The study is a critical literature review that explores government's intentions in the school system and some of the unintended policy outcomes that are as a result of the policy shifts in the national curriculum for grades R- 12. The study mainly focused on the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS, 2002) for grades R-12 and examined the transition period from 1994 -1999.

The research used qualitative methodologies and critical literature review in particular in order to establish whether certain groups were able to use institutional structures during the formulation of the national curriculum for grades R- 12 to their advantage and whether this has in turn directly contributed to a reduction in life chances for learners from working class families. The study used critical literature review of official government documents such as government gazettes, parliamentary reports on the department of education, Department of Education research reports and working papers, the white and green papers, various official reports as well as un official literature such as books, journals newspaper reports and various papers on curriculum reforms post 1994.

The researcher chose to use critical literature review specifically because of some of the advantages that it provides researchers in social sciences. Greenstein et al, (2003:65) observe that this method allows the researcher to "generate new theories and recognize phenomena ignored by previous researchers and literature".

Another advantage of using critical literature review is that documents can be analysed without any form of disruption unlike other research methods which are based on surveys in which respondents may offer inaccurate responses. Strength of this method is that "documents usually provide a source of data that is available in a form that can be verified by others" (Greenstein et al, 2003:66). Content analysis is a popular "method for gathering and analysing the content of text". The "content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes or any message that can be communicated". Content analysis "allows researchers to reveal the content (messages, meanings, symbols) in a source of communication such as a book, article or video". The researcher was however mindful that one of the weaknesses of this methodology is that "it also leaves open the possibility that important issues may be missed out altogether" (Greenstein et al, 2003:66).

The research also used information from South African archives, such as journals and books that have been written about the anti-apartheid struggle, the negotiated settlement, and the economic framework post 1994. The research used the William Cullen Library which has a vast amount of archive material on the above issues. The library's collection of historical papers and journals with information on South Africa's history, political culture and Government Publications was very useful to the research. The research also made use of the literature on interest groups, economic issues and policy related topics from the Wits Management Library. The Education Library provided a lot of useful material from the various journals, books, minutes of meetings, logs, announcements, formal policy statements, and letters on educational reforms post 1994.

The research included information from newspaper reports on the educational reforms; reports on government pronouncements regarding the economic situation post 1994 and its impact on the education reforms; the economic strategies which were adopted such as the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) and its successor the Growth, Employment

and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy to transform and manage the economy and their implications on the implementation of the post 1994 reforms in the school system. The research examined newspaper reports on the policy pronouncements by then Minister of Education Sibusisu Bengu and the debates that followed as a result of these policy shifts. The newspaper reports were obtained through the William Cullen Library research portals/electronic data base.

Chapter Outline

The study is divided into five chapters. The first Chapter gives the historical context of the post 1994 policy shifts in the school system. Chapter two examines the transition period 1994-1999 during which time post 1994 policies in the education system where formulated and implemented. The third Chapter provides a conceptual and theoretical perspective on policies and the policy making process using the group, structural and social economic approaches. It also outlines the economic framework post 1994 using the socio-economic approaches to the policy making process. The fourth chapter examines the national curriculum for grades R-12. It also carries out a review of the formulation and implementation of the national curriculum for grades R-12 by examining the policy shifts in the school system and their implication on learners from working class families. The fifth and final chapter provides a conclusion to the research study.

Chapter One

0.1 Historical context of the post 1994 policy shifts in the school system

In looking at the policy shifts in the education system, it is important to give an overview of events, policies and mechanisms related to the apartheid era as the policy on the national curriculum during the apartheid era was used to stratify society along racial, class and ethnic identities. The educational policies during the apartheid era were based on racial and ethnic identities which led to the marginalization of certain groups in society. These classifications determined which schools learners from oppressed groups in society (which mainly comprised of African's Coloured's and Indian's who were consigned to working class jobs) could attend as well as the type of qualifications they could obtain.

The policy on the social stratification of oppressed groups was adopted by the Nationalist administration in order to prevent them from competing for professional jobs with the white population (Ntshoe, 2002). This was achieved when the National Party formulated the Christian National Education (CNE) policy in 1948 and through the enactment of the Bantu Education Act in 1953 which called for the separation of the various races in the education system. The Christian Education Policy contained ten principles which dealt with separate curriculum, living areas, as well as restrictions on employment for marginalized groups in society (Eiselen 1953, cited in Ntshoe, 2002). The motivation for the National Party's call for separate development was allegedly contained in the biblical principles which called for each specific race to follow its own culture, ethnicity, language, history and religion (Magubane, 2004). The concept of Christian Education was largely influenced by the German theories about race and culture as well as the Netherlands educational policies at that time (Kallaway, 2002).

Christian values were a major requirement for white private schools (Malherbe, 1997). Adopting a Christian character led to allocation of state funding to private schools which were targeted through the official apartheid policy. A number of schools adopted Christian biblical principles, under what was referred to as religious studies in order to access government funding. Christianity was the only religion which was recognized under the Christian Biblical principles. Religions such as Hinduism and Islam were excluded (Beckman, 1995).

The racial classification also entailed that schools for the oppressed groups received less state funding compared to the dominant group. This led to a marked difference in teacher qualification, teacher/pupil ratio and other quality features. Learners from oppressed groups in society (Africans, Coloureds and Asians) were also given an inferior curriculum which ensured they were prepared for subordinated positions in the work place. The policy regarding the African population was "constructed in such a way as to promote ethnic identity while hampering proficiency in the official languages in order to limit access to employment" (Desai & Taylor, 1997:169).

The Bantu Education Policies however had some unintended outcomes which facilitated the process of "social change, political emancipation and democracy" that the government had not foreseen. "That the apartheid government unwittingly designed education policies which

led to the creation of strong resistance movements that challenged the ruling party was something that was unforeseen by the administration when it designed policies on Bantu Education". The "schooling system therefore contributed to the political changes in the country as during the 1970s and 80s education became the centre of political struggle in South Africa when fierce and often violent anti-apartheid protests were held in schools throughout South Africa" (Ntshoe, 2002:64).

The student protests not only contributed to the dismantling of the apartheid system of government, they also introduced a "culture of violence which led to criticism of the curriculum, teachers and eventually to schools as part of the establishment". As a result "many schools failed to function as centres of learning and many were eventually shut down" (Ntshoe, 2002:64).

While some critics have condemned the apartheid educational policies Kallaway (2002:11) observes that there were some positive outcomes that many South African educators can point to. Kallaway argues that the regime "brought mass education to a newly industrialized South Africa". Although the quality and nature of education for the oppressed groups was poor it encouraged the understanding of culture, religion, language and tradition which is important to individual growth. He argues that the use of mother tongue was also beneficial to the African learners as it helped them to learn in a language they understood a principle which was applied to Afrikaner and English learners who were taught in their own languages. While Kallaway argues that the use of mother tongue was a positive feature of the regime's Bantu education policies, Heugh (1995:42) notes that the "principle of mother tongue education was conveniently applied to further the political interests of division amongst all communities". The "sudden change from mother tongue instruction to the double medium or 50/50 policy (English/Afrikaans) caused a great deal of educational backlog among African students and caused major upheavals".

Educational training for teachers was also located in the ideology of separate development which resulted in the introduction of the Bantu Education Act in 1953. The training of teachers was allocated under the four existing provinces at that time. The four racial groups were trained separately in teacher training institutions. The training of African teachers was later undertaken by the various homelands where they were required to be trained according to their ethnic groups. Sayed (2002 cited in Chisholm, 2004:247) observes that teachers were as early as 1970's "trained in racially and ethnically separate colleges and universities". Teacher education was based on the policy on separate development which entailed that teachers were trained according to the geographical areas they lived in. This led to a fragmentation of the training institutions as they were all meant to cater for different racial and ethnic groups.

The racial divisions which were created determined the number of individuals who were trained, posted and where they were posted to. There was no overall "national planning for teacher training as supply and demand depended on the racial and ethnic identities". There were also marked differences in the costs between and within colleges and Universities. By "1994 there were 18 education departments responsible for teacher training education, with 32 'autonomous' universities and technikons and about 105 colleges of education scattered throughout the apartheid/homeland system" (Sayed, 2002 cited in Chisholm, 2004:248).

0.1.1 Summary of Chapter One

The aim of this chapter is to outline educational policies during the apartheid era and to show how they led to a the social stratification of learners from working class families (oppressed groups in society). The chapter looked at the formulation of two important policies; the Bantu Education Act in 1953 and that of the Christian National Education policy which advocated for separate development in 1948. Both policies played a crucial role in the high levels of illiteracy among oppressed groups in society through restriction on learning and employment opportunities.

The chapter also shows how the policy on Bantu Education provided a basis for learners to challenge the apartheid system through violent protests which contributed to its downfall. The historical perspective is important as it explains how the school system during the apartheid era was used to stratify society along class, racial and ethnic identities. The historical context also explains what type of changes needed to be made after 1994 and the relevance of these changes to the broader social and economic development of post 1994 South Africa.

A crucial element in understanding the magnitude of the changes that had to be made during the 1990s is the negative impact apartheid policies had on oppressed groups in society. Education policy during the apartheid era was formulated in line with the social, economic and political developments of the nation which promoted the social stratification of oppressed groups in society. Under apartheid the education policy had to balance the need to maintain discriminatory policies while at the same time creating conditions for human resource development which was crucial to the development of the country's economy.

Chapter two

0.2.0 Political Transition 1994-1999

Soon after the change from apartheid to democratic rule the post 1994 Government of National Unity embarked on a transformation agenda in the school system to redress past inequalities which were based on discriminatory policies which led to the social stratification of oppressed groups in society. The educational transformation in post-apartheid South Africa was meant to instil new values in the school system by replacing oppressive policies with democratic values which would unite the various social groups in society through equity and redress (Harley & Wedekind, cited in Chisholm 2004).

This research identifies a number of problematic issues concerning the policy shifts in the school system. The first is that the policy shifts have not led to equity and redress. The second issue is that the policy shifts have reinforced past inequalities as opposed to bridging the gap between historically advantaged and dis-advantaged groups. The situation is further complicated by the unintended outcomes that have come about as a result of these policy shifts. This chapter therefore takes a closer look at the transition period when the policy shifts were undertaken to specifically look at how the various interest groups interacted and the role that institutions and the economy played in the formulation and implementation of these policies.

They were two main policy networks that participated in the formulation of the national policy on the curriculum for grades R-12 during the transition period. The two policy networks comprised of the ANC government and the democratic alliance on one side while the National Party and its sympathisers held opposing views on what type of reforms should be carried out in the school system. It's important to note that the apartheid administration had attempted to restructure the school system prior to the 1994 elections through its Educational Renewal Strategy. The government at that time made proposals to end discriminatory policies in the school system but to also ensure that the white population was not disadvantaged in the process (Kraak & Young, 2001).

A number of national organizations took part in the policy making process. These included the South African Congress of Trade Unions (COSATU); the Private Sector Education Council (PRISEC) and the National Training Board (NTB); the Educational Renewal Strategy (EPS), National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) and A New Model for South Africa (CUMSA). These organizations represented the ANC government, the National Party, the democratic alliance, the trade unions, and the private sector (Jansen, 2000 cited in Kraak & Young, 2001). Members of school governing boards from former model C schools also took part in the discussions on the new curriculum for grades R-12.

Consultants from international aid agencies also played a major role in the formulation of the policy during the negotiations on educational policies by giving support to the ANC and the anti-apartheid activists which provided them with the necessary information on international trends and models in the school system. The democratic alliance however wanted to introduce a new teaching methodology which was totally different from content based education which was applied in schools during the apartheid era. The alliance initiated the debates on outcomes based education (OBE) which they believed would offer significant changes from the content based education (CBE) that "denied all but the minimum education to the majority of learners from oppressed groups during the apartheid era" (Jansen, 2000 cited in Kraak & Young, 2001: 43).

Jansen (cited in Kraak & Young, 2001:43) notes that the idea to implement OBE in the education system originally came from the National Education & Training Forum (NETF) which approached the first Minister of Education in post 1994 South Africa Sibusisu Bengu to support the initiative to launch OBE in the school system. Jansen observes that "two significant political tensions shaped the first images of curriculum policy to emerge under the new government". The pressure to remove outdated and offensive content from the syllabi, and the pressure to implement the new educational policies within a short period of time as opposed to spending a longer period working out the best policy changes to use in order to implement a new curriculum model.

The new administration based on principles contained in the White Paper on Education and Training (1995); the South African Qualifications Act (No 58 of 1995) and the National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996) formulated the Lifelong Learning through a National Curriculum Framework document (DoE, 1996). The "goal of the White Paper in education & Training (DoE, 1995a) was to provide a genuine document that framed the core values, ideals and philosophy of the dominant view in the state represented by the ANC". This "document in the view of the ANC members of government would constitute the foundation document that guided all subsequent policy and legal action of the democratic parliament" (DoE, 1996). The "White Paper was the ideological steering force for education policy making and practice throughout the country" (Jansen, 2000 cited in Kraak & Young, 2001:44).

The White Paper called for fundamental changes in education and training in South Africa in order to transform the school system. Some of the fundamental changes that the White Paper called for included shifts from content based to outcomes based education. It was hoped that these policy shifts would lead to; "a prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens leading productive, self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice" (RNCS, 2002:4). The National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996) provided for the development of a number of design tools to support an outcomes based approach. Whilst the rationale behind the formulation of OBE is still publicly debated it is a "vehicle for restructuring South African society along democratic principles" (Manganyi, cited in Kraak & Young 2001:44). It is therefore clear from this outline that the ANC and the democratic alliance were behind the formulation of OBE in the school system. What is not clear is why the new curriculum was formulated to disadvantage its intended beneficiaries.

The government carried out three curriculum initiatives in three phases. In the first phase it merged the different educational departments under one department to unify a previously fragmented system of education management under the Department of Education. In the second phase of the reforms the government initiated curriculum revision in which racial and sexist offensive and out-dated content was removed from the syllabuses. The final phase of the reforms saw a shift from content based education to outcomes based education with the introduction of continuous assessment in the school system (Jansen, 2001).

The post 1994 curriculum is a combination of competence -based modular education which was proposed by South African industry; the adoption of Australian and British outcomes based education which was initiated in the policy development work undertaken by the ANC and COSATU since the early 1990's and the inclusion of people's education which was adopted by anti-apartheid activists in the 1980's. These three antecedents have been "merged to create a hybrid educational methodology OBE which politically has sought to go beyond the narrow cognitive confines of people's education". This has created a learning methodology which is "simultaneously radical in discursive practice but behaviourist in assessment methods" (Jansen & Christie, 1999 cited in Chisholm, 2004:200).

A number of researchers have come up with their own theories about why OBE has not created the kind of outcomes that were envisioned by the ANC administration. Fataar (1999 unpublished) for instance argues that unintended outcomes in the policy shifts in the school system are as a result of the political and moral compromises that formed the background to the 1993 political settlement. Fataar points to the unequal participation of different interest groups in the formulation of the education policies as having contributed to the failure of these policies to address issues of equity. He argues that some of the compromises that were made allowed some social groups to influence the policies in such a way as to allow them to retain and protect their interests and privileges at the expense of other parties (Fataar, 1999 unpublished).

Fataar's view is supported by Jung & Shapiro (1995:296) who observe that "some of the compromises, counter-pressures and agreements reached in the negotiated political settlement have affected and constrained education policies adopted to transform the education system including the formulation and implementation of these policies". The two researchers note that the "establishment of the Government of National Unity during the transition period meant that decisions were made on the basis of compromise, negotiation and consensus". The outcomes of the negotiations placed limitations on the government's ability to transform the school system as this had to be carried out in the spirit of national reconciliation as stipulated in the political settlement which ushered in the Government of National Unity.

The transformation agenda in the school system during the transition period was also affected by lack of capacity by bureaucrats appointed by the new administration most of whom were new to the system and therefore lacked the necessary skills and knowledge to implement policies in a competent manner which created problems and difficulties in the formulation and implementation process (Jansen, 2000 cited in Kraak & Young 2001).

Critics also argue that the retention of the bureaucrats who had previously worked under the apartheid regime through the sunset clause during the transition period worked to undermine the redistribution of educational resources (Chisholm 2004, Presidential Review Commission 1997). Christie (1999: cited in Chisholm, 2004:98) for instance argues that bureaucrats from the apartheid regime knew how to "appear supportive while at the same time blocking new initiatives to transform the school system".

Researchers exploring the reasons why the policy shifts have had some unintended outcomes explain the different types of transitions and the consequences of adopting any of these models. Sarkin (2001:145) for instance identifies three broad types of political transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one: reform, compromise and overthrow. Sarkin observes that "when political change is undertaken in a compromise situation, the old government plays a critical role in the shift to democracy as, initially at least, the opposition is weak and the old government determines the type and pace of change". According to Sarkin "in this scenario, the old forces still retain control at some level even though they have allowed a democratic government to come to power". This unequal distribution of power according to Sarkin "is a significant obstacle to exacting transitional policies, and the new government's power to implement the human rights policies of its choice is limited" (Sarkin 2001:145 paragraphs 2).

Sarkin further observes that in situations where a country decides to enter into a political settlement, the old administration and the new government have to make the transition together since they are both equally matched as such neither can make the transition without involving the other party. Such was the case with South Africa which formed a government of

National Unity between 1994 and 1996. This model therefore entails democratization by the combined actions of the former regime and the new government. Sarkin's analysis is supported by Joe Slove in this view;

"We are negotiating because towards the end of the 1980s we concluded that, as a result of its escalating crisis, the apartheid power bloc was no longer able to continue ruling in the old way and was genuinely seeking some break with the past. At the same time, we were clearly not dealing with a defeated enemy and an early revolutionary seizure of power by the liberation movement could not be realistically posed". This "conjecture of the balance of forces (which continues to reflect current reality) provided a classic scenario, which placed the possibility of negotiations on the agenda. And we correctly initiated the whole process in which the ANC was accepted as the major negotiating adversary" (Slovo, 1992:36-37).

Sarkin's view is also supported by Fataar (1999 also see Sayed, 2001:250 for a similar view) who observes that the transition to a "negotiated political settlement circumscribed the ability of the government to give effect to an equity-driven policy agenda". The new administration had to formulate the post 1994 policies in the school system in the spirit of national reconciliation in which both the ANC and the NP had to give up some of their demands. He argues that "contrary to popular perception the negotiated settlement facilitated the displacement of radical transformation objectives by a narrow reform orientation". The "constitutional framework entrenched liberal democratic rights while failing to guarantee the exercise of social rights such as the right to housing, free education and health". These were "relegated to the realm of service delivery given existing capacity".

The ANC and the apartheid government's political settlement of 1994 accommodated the requirement for South Africa to secure its place in the world economy. Fataar (1999 see Nasson, 1990) notes that the apartheid state failure to scrap its race based policies which was a pre-condition for other states to lift economic sanctions failed to secure this position. The change from apartheid to democratic rule in 1994 was a "central element in laying the foundations for capital accumulation and gearing the economy towards entry into the global economy" (Wolpe, 1994:16).

Other researchers like Christie (1997) see the change from a socialist economic strategy which the ANC and anti-apartheid activists adopted during the struggle to the adoption of a capitalist market led economy as having affected the redistribution agenda that underpinned the anti-apartheid struggle. Christie contends that when the ANC government came into power it soon realized that following the socialist strategy it had adopted during the struggle for freedom would retard national development. This therefore necessitated the adoption of a capitalist market led economy in order to encourage domestic and foreign investment. The adoption of RDP and its later successor Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy entailed a reduction in social spending which prevented an increase in educational budget. Christie argues that the economic policies adopted during the transition period constrained post 1994 education policy. The post- 1994 social economic framework helped to shape the school policies during the transition period by limiting social spending on the school system which prevented the implementation of redistributive policies.

Jansen (2000 cited in Kraak & Young, 2001) on the other hand however posits a different argument from researchers like Fataar who blames the politicians in the apartheid government for making changes during the transition period just before the new government came into power which made it difficult for the present administration to formulate viable redress policies in the school system. Jansen (2000 cited in Kraak & Young, 2001:41) argues that the

"first ten years of policy making in South Africa following official moves towards a new democracy hinged largely on the symbolism rather than the substance of change in the education system". The "over -investment in political symbolism at the expense of practical considerations largely explained the lack of change in South African education during the transition years" (from 1994-1999). He sees the formulation of the national curriculum for grades R-12 as a vehicle for achieving symbolic change from a discredited system of government to a legitimate state apparatus which had a wider appeal to the public. The implementation of this policy like all the other policies that were formulated during the transition period was meant to mark the shift from apartheid to a post-apartheid state. The pre-occupation of the state during the transition was to implement policies that were seen to be replacing old practices but without having any serious intentions of changing the system due to implementation costs.

Although Jansen's theory on the role of symbolic policies in transition states like South Africa has some element of truth it however does not explain the huge investment that government had made in order to change a system that had marginalized learners from oppressed groups during the apartheid era. The evidence he provides of studies in the United States on educational reforms by Hess (1997) carried out for their symbolic nature as opposed to the need to genuinely implement viable changes does not fully explain why ANC activist who are now part of the new government which had campaigned against a system which they felt had failed its constituency during the apartheid era would be pre-occupied with symbolic changes.

Jansen also contradicts himself when he argues that lack of resources was not the problem behind implementation problems as studies in the United States (Hargreaves et, al 1998) have shown that availability of resources does not necessarily lead to successful implementation of reforms. His argument that "reforms tend to be symbolically attractive but that governments normally have no intentions of incurring the costs of implementation" (Jansen 2000a cited in Kraak & Young 2001:50) suggests that resources do affect implementation of reforms. This is demonstrated in the studies that have been carried out on outcomes based education (OBE) in South Africa which show that there have been diverse and varied responses to curriculum 2005 (C2005) with historically advantaged schools adapting to the changes with ease due to adequate resources while under resourced historically disadvantaged schools appear to have a lot of problems in this regard (Christie, 1999).

Young (cited in Kraak and Young 2001:4) on the other hand argues that the implementation of OBE was a complete reversal of the values that underpin mass education as it has been known throughout the world with few if any precedents at all. One can therefore argue that such an ambitious program could not have been initiated for symbolic purposes only. It's quite obvious the ANC was trying to change a system that they saw as elitist in nature and was being used to stratify society along racial and ethnic identities during the apartheid era. Difficulties in implementation may be "linked to gross inequalities inherited from the past discrepancies in the educational provisions available to the oppressed groups which a change of government could not overcome in a short period of time". "Implementation of changes in a system with a legacy of social divisions is bound to be slow".

0.2.1 Summary of Chapter two

This chapter set out to critically examine a number of issues regarding the formulation of the policy on the national curriculum for grades R-12 during the transition period. The study found that the formulation of outcomes based education was initiated by the National Education Training Forum with the support of the ANC government as a means of providing educational possibilities to formerly disadvantaged groups in society who were denied professional careers during the apartheid era which resulted in lack of social mobility. The formulation of OBE during the transition period was however fraught with many problems which led to symbolic changes as opposed to the creation of a system that would redress discriminatory tendencies.

Researchers have advanced a number of theories regarding the lack of redress and equity after the formulation of OBE. The study however found that although some of the theories may have some element of truth; most of them cannot be applied to the implementation of OBE. The research found that the problems arising from the implementation of OBE in the school system have more to do with the economic policies that the country adopted during the transition period which were not supportive of the transformation agenda in the school system. The second reason has to do with "building institutional capacity and forms of trust and expertise in areas where they were previously absent" (Kraak & Young, 2001:4). The process of creating new structures of government would not be done quickly regardless of government's commitment to the process.

Chapter three

0.3.0 Definitions and Types of Policies

Policies are formulated in order to create changes in people's lives by increasing their life chances or to change their identities or their way of life. According to Jenkins (1978:15) "policy can be defined as a set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should, in principle, be within the power of those actors ability to achieve". Heclo (1972:85) describes policy as "statements of intent which explain how a particular problem can be solved and which specified actors are in the best position of solving the problem". It spells out "rational arguments and reasoning of intent which show some form of understanding of the problem and how it can best be approached". It "presents what the situation is and how it can be resolved". In democratic nations "policy formulation presents opportunities in which citizens can contribute to solving national problems."

A policy contains values of intent of addressing a specific problem and is allocated through political authority or power (Odora 1994). Policy is also about power relations, control and discourse. According to Foucault (1981:25) "discourses are not just about what can be said, and thought; but also about who can speak, when, where, and what authority". It is "an instrument as well as an effect of power; but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy". Discourse provides a certain way of explaining policy formulation as well as a means of understanding particular policies because policies are statements of intention of changes that should be made to solve a particular problem. Consequently, policies allocate power and privileges to certain groups in society which are able to speak with authority which is allocated to them through changes in policies.

The policy process can be studied in terms of the series of activities that take place when policies are formulated or by examining the forces that influence the process of policy formulation. An examination of the policy process as a series of activities does not emphasize "the content of public policy to be studied, but rather the process by which public policy is developed, implemented and changed" (Dye 1982:24). The term policy "process in this case refers to specific phases of policy making arrayed through time, namely, agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation and policy assessment".

The policy making process can also be studied by looking at the official and unofficial actor's that influence the policy making process in the country (Anderson, 1990). The official actors comprise of think tanks in government institutions that design and implement policies; legislators; the executive and the judiciary while unofficial actors include interest groups, as well as ordinary citizens. Lindblom (1979) observes that they are a number of approaches used in the policy making process. These include the rational or incremental approaches to policy making. Although it is often assumed that policy makers are bound to follow a rational approach they do not have the time and in some cases the necessary resources to follow a rational approach instead they tend to follow the incremental approach by referring to the previous policy and selecting certain elements that might be useful to the present situation. They make a few changes based on the previous policies and normally muddle through policy making process. They tend to follow the incremental approach as it is a more practical approach than the rational approach due to the complex nature of the policy making process (Lindblom, 1979).

According to Lindblom (1979) there are a number of actors who are involved in the policy

making process. They include individuals from different levels of government as well as various stake holders with different interests and value systems who try to influence the policy making process in different ways. Understanding policy requires appreciation of the role that these actors play, their contribution to the debates surrounding the policies and the values that each hold and how they try to influence the process in their favour or resist the changes which they feel are not in the interest of their constituency. These "struggles and contestations are initiated at the point where policies are originated, are present in the moment of their inscription, are active when policies are mediated to the public, are signally present when they are implemented, and continue to shape the meaning of particular policies when they are subjected to critique in the academy and elsewhere" (Soudien et al, 2001:79) Hence "a number of activities and events take place as policies are formulated and reformulated amidst contestation from various groups". This at "times gives rise to intended or unintended outcomes, contradictions or a misrepresentation of the initial policy objectives".

Public policies fall into two categories; they can either be described as symbolic or material policies depending on what policy makers want to achieve when formulating and implementing particular policies. Material policies are aimed at providing resources to certain groups of people while depriving other groups. Symbolic policies do not provide any resources or benefits to the beneficiaries of the policies. Although symbolic policies promise to create positive changes in people's lives they do not necessarily create what they promise. Most policies are however rarely only symbolic or only material policies (Jansen, 2001).

Policies can also be either substantive which means that they are statements of government's intention to make certain changes in order to transform a particular sector. They can also be said to be procedural policies which means they outline the mechanisms under which action will be carried out as well as who will implement the changes (Anderson, 1990; Parsons, 1995). Policies can also be differentiated on the basis of the nature of their impact on society and the relationships among those involved in policy formulation. They can also be classified as regulatory, distributive or redistributive (Anderson, 1990; Parsons, 1995). Regulatory policies create regulations which limit certain types of behaviour which can create conflict between two groups in which one group is seeking to control another group. Re-distributive policies involve the reallocation of resources to disadvantaged groups which can lead to more transformative changes although these types of changes are often resisted by powerful groups that already possess these resources. Powerful groups often have the means and the power to resist policies that are not in their group interest. Distributive policies involve the allocation of services to broad based groups in society in areas where these services were lacking.

0.3.1 Policy making process in post- 1994 South African School System

This particular section provides a conceptual theoretical understanding of the formulation and implementation of curriculum 2005 and specifically identifies the major actors behind the formulation of the national curriculum for grades R- 12 and why they supported and promoted the formulation of these types of policies in post-apartheid South Africa.

The post 1994 policy making process in the school system comprised of a number of national organizations and international organizations. There was also a large section of the white population which was interested in the policy making process in the school system as it held a large part of the school infrastructure in former model C schools which forms the basis of the public school system in the country.

The initiative to launch OBE in the school system came from according to Jansen (cited in Kraak & Young, 2001) the National Education & Training Forum (NETF) which approached the first Minister of Education in post 1994 South Africa Sibusisu Bengu to support their idea to introduce OBE in the school system. This particular interest group wanted to reform the school system in order to provide access to knowledge to previously disadvantaged groups in society through equity and redress. Jansen however observes that most of the members of this policy network had no previous experience in policy making as they were new to government and were formulating a vision for the school system which was different from what was currently prevailing. Jansen observes that lack of experience on the part of the democratic alliance is what led to un intended outcomes that disadvantaged the intended beneficiaries of these policies.

In South Africa OBE is associated with "learner centeredness, freeing teachers and the idea that everyone can succeed" (Young, cited in Kraak and Young, 2001:33). OBE in South Africa arose out of debates in Australia, Scotland and New Zealand on outcomes based education. The introduction of OBE in South Africa was a major shift in educational policies as policy reforms did not just merely consist of curriculum revision but a total shift from content based education (CBE) model that was practiced during the apartheid era to outcomes based education (OBE). "Under OBE training educators develop curriculum plans and objectives from agreed upon outcomes within a particular context or learning area" (Spreen cited in Steiner – Khamsi, 2004:101).

The post 1994 national curriculum is a combination of competence -based modular education and training which was adopted by South African industry after 1985; the Australian and British out comes based model initiated in South Africa by the ANC and COSATU in the early 1990's and the adoption of People's Education formulated by anti-apartheid activists during the 1980's. This "broad front of educational, student and community organizations developed a campaign for Peoples Education based on a Freirian model". This epistemology allied to Habermas "critical knowledge constitutive interest specifically focused on education as an agent of democracy and transformation". Its "pedagogical techniques involved the validation of prior learning, a democratic relationship between teacher and taught and the problematizing of knowledge". Although it was "used to mobilize the learners it lacked the necessary substance required to contest the curriculum which was developed during the apartheid era" (Harley & Wedekind, 2000 cited in Chisholm, 2004:196). These three antecedents have been "merged to create a hybrid educational methodology OBE which is meant to restructure the school system based on democratic values". Jansen (2000:2) observes that proponents of OBE argue that "outcomes make explicit what learners should attend to;

direct assessment towards specified goals and signal what is worth learning in a content-heavy curriculum". Proponents of OBE also argue that "outcomes can be a measure of accountability; i.e. a means of evaluating the quality and impact of teaching in a particular school".

The controversy surrounding OBE in South Africa was not only about the "changes in teaching and learning but also about its origins and its relevance to the South African schools system" (Spreen –Khamsi 2004:103). Researchers note that policy formulation can be quite problematic when policy formulated to operate in a certain environment or context is borrowed by other policy makers to help solve similar problems in a different set up. "Policy scholars consistently warn of the dangers involved in transferring 'borrowed' programs from one context to another". Deleon (1990) however observes that although policy borrowing can be quite problematic in instances where the policies are developed in a completely different social setting from the one that they were originally designed for, it's important to find out the relevance or applicability of borrowed policies as a means of testing their relevance.

Spreen (cited in Steiner – Khamsi, 2004:102) who has written extensively on the issue of educational policy borrowing with regard to the formulation of the South African educational policies post- 1994 argues that "borrowing strategies were used to gain support for contested initiatives" (OBE) in the educational policy making process during the transition period (from 1994-1999). Spreen argues that although the policy making process in the education system immediately after South Africa gained its independence was outward looking and included a broad spectrum of interest groups, internal experts as well as consultants from developed countries, the ANC administration used policy borrowing strategies to reform the national curriculum for grades R-12 as a "self-referential discursive act to build support for their own system without actually borrowing anything". Policy borrowing according to Spreen is very common in transitional countries like South Africa which is trying to embrace global trends in a "world that is constantly changing due to globalization".

Spreen (cited in Steiner – Khamsi, 2004:102) however warns that borrowing strategies are only appropriate for a certain period of time and normally that is at the beginning of the reforms. After that reference to international trends may become a liability especially if the public cannot identify with the foreign elements in the new policies. It's at this stage that policy makers have to turn them into home grown versions of the borrowed policies to make them suitable for the local environment for them to be acceptable and legitimate in the eyes of the people. In other words policy makers have to show that they are workable locally and that they can be successfully applied in the school system without using international references to prove their applicability.

The educational policy making process post 1994 went through three phases; policy borrowing, negotiation and internal initiative (Sterner – Khamsi, 2004). In the first phase the educational policy making initiatives were first located in international trends as proponents of the policies used external references to lend credibility to the chosen models which they claimed had a proven track record in certain developed countries where they had been implemented. The second phase comprised of "negotiations and displacement of reforms which were initiated by the former administration by ideas, concepts, or models that reflect more modern efficient ways of schooling" (Spreen cited in Sterner – Khamsi, 2004:104). External references were used to convince sceptics not supportive of the new policies about their applicability in the local environment. In the third phase policy makers in the department of education dropped the international claims and used local arguments to convince the public of their applicability and relevance in the South African context as at this particular stage the use of international references was more of a liability than an asset. Policy makers appropriated polices by taking ownership and turning them into a home grown version of the

borrowed policies to ensure their acceptability by the general public. This was done through identifying and resolving problems in the new policies, and showing relevance and applicability of the reforms in the school system in the South African context (Spreen cited in Steiner – Khamsi, 2004).

The three phases according to Spreen (cited in Steiner –Khamsi, 2004:104) "describes the way in which South African's have leveraged international trends and policy borrowing as a strategy to influence educational reforms" in post -1994 South Africa. Although the apartheid government prior to 1994 had formulated policies to reform the school system the new administration succeeded in discarding reforms that were initiated by the previous regime due to loss of legitimacy on their part as such the policy negotiations were broadly constituted and policy frameworks where formulated in such a way that most people could be able to identify with them in order to legitimize their use. The policy framework also had to provide methods of resolving a number of problems that had arisen as a result of the deliberate policies to limit life chances of oppressed groups in society that where formulated during the apartheid era. OBE had to be locally accepted by proving ability to transform, redress, and create equity and access to formally dis-advantaged groups in society. Spreen however argues that "OBE was not designed to be all inclusive educational reform initiative or the central mechanism for transformation; rather it was for the purpose of changing a system with an emerging system of values, world views and a different orientation". This observation perhaps offers an explanation for why OBE has not created educational possibilities for formally disadvantaged groups in the school system.

Although the education policies post 1994 have material, symbolic, and re-distributive aspects, they have had some limitations and some unintended outcomes which have made it difficult for the government to attain the desired goals (Pampallis, 2001 cited in Chisholm, 2004; Sayed 2001). Jansen (2000 cited in Kraak and Young, 2001:43) observes that "from a political perspective, it is important to understand outcomes based education (OBE) as an act of political symbolism in which the primary preoccupation of the state is with its own legitimacy". It is therefore necessary for a "theoretical understanding of educational policy as political symbolism in the context of the South African transition". Another "variant of this view is that policies are never intended to be implemented because they are focused on short-term political considerations such as ensuring electoral victory for the ruling political party". Another possible "position within this perspective is to see policy as a state of fragile consensus in that policy texts speak in a 'single, public, good voice' which is sufficiently generalised to accommodate a diverse set of interest groups or 'stakeholders' as part of politics of compromise, policy becomes anything to everyone" .

0.3.2 Approaches to policy changes

The policy making process can also be examined using different theoretical approaches to the policy making process such as the structural or institutional approach, socio-economic approach and group/ideas approaches. This study has therefore been situated in group/ ideas approach, institutional or structural approaches as well as social economic approaches to explain the role that groups, institutions and social economic factors played in the formulation of the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12. The study explains why the three approaches are relevant to this research.

0.3.3 The Institutional / Structural Approach

The institutional or structural approach examines the role of institutions in the policy making process by focussing on the formal rules, legal powers, activities and functions of governmental institutions. John (1999) argues that rules and structures affects decision making and the content of public policy because rules and structural arrangements at times tend to favour certain groups over others. This may place them at an advantage by allowing the group to access government support to formulate and implement the type of policies that will benefit their group interests. Governmental institutions and structures therefore normally play a crucial role in the formulation of government policy which may have important policy consequences on certain groups in society.

The institutional approach does not offer an adequate analysis of how institutions perform their functions as well as the role of institutions in policy formulation (Dye, 1982). However by studying institutional functionaries behaviour and their participation in the policy making process which is governed by rules and regulations which persist over time one can be able to understand how institutional rules and regulations influence decisions that are made during the policy making process (Anderson, 1990). Government institutions have a tendency to favour certain groups of people over others hence institutions have important policy consequences on how resources are allocated. The institutional approach was adopted to explain the role institutions played in the formulation and implementation of the national curriculum for grades R-12. The research carried out a critical literature review which examined the institutional rules, regulations and procedures and what effect they had on the policy on the national curriculum for grades R-12.

The study begins by looking at some of the important documents that are used in policy formulation. The policy formulation process begins with a think tank in the relevant department coming up with certain ideas which are circulated within the department on the green paper. When these ideas are accepted by various committees the information is then released on what is referred to as the white paper. The White Paper defines the Department of Education as: “part of the organisational structure of the public service, which is constitutionally required to execute policies of the government of the day in the performance of its administrative functions. The Department of Education is headed by the Director–General, who is responsible for the efficient management and administration of the Department, and is accountable to parliament for the funds voted to the Department in the budget. The Director-General is accountable to the Minister for the execution of policy, and in

practice also makes available the professional resources of the Department for the development of policy as directed by the Minister" (Department of Education, 1995:7).

Although they are three levels of government (national, provincial and local government) the national department is the only institution tasked with the role of policy formulation while the provincial and local government is involved in the implementation of policies. This does have an adverse effect on service delivery in the education sector as at times there is lack of cohesion when formulating and implementing policies at national and provincial governments which at times has led to selective implementation of policies as well as misinterpretation of particular norms and regulations. The fact that funding for education is allocated in provincial legislature means that the national department has no powers over decisions made on educational spending. Although the Department of Education has put measures in place to improve spending such as the creation of new structures and management systems to monitor spending these measures have not improved the situation in the provinces (Department of Education, 1995: 7).

Critics (Christie 1999, cited in Chisholm, 2004:98) observe that the formulation and implementation of policies during the transition period were hindered by the desire by some members of staff to protect their group interests. It is alleged that bureaucrats from the apartheid era knew how to "appear supportive while at the same time blocking new initiatives to transform the school system". Some of the bureaucrats from the apartheid era who were skilled and competent to handle the workload were still bent on continuing the old apartheid practices while members of the democratic movement who were knowledgeable in democratic practices lacked the necessary skill in policy formulation and implementation. Corruption and other vices have also affected the implementation process especially in poor provinces where the majority of disadvantaged groups reside and where redress is most urgent. Other problems which have already been highlighted elsewhere include the implementation of the RDP and its successor the Growth and Redistribution GEAR strategy which led to reduced social spending on education expenditure which contributed to inability to redress the past discrepancies in the education system. The introduction of school fees as a means of mobilizing additional funding for schools to supplement government funding has also led to increased social inequalities.

0.3.4 Group approaches to policy changes

Interest groups refers to "any group that on the basis of one or more shared attitudes makes certain claims upon other groups in society for the establishment, maintenance or enhancement of forms of behaviour that are implied by the shared attitudes". Interaction in groups "leads to certain common habits of response which may be called norms, or shared attitudes". These afford the participants "frames of reference for interpreting and evaluating events and behaviours". Galperin (2004:160) observes that "interest groups, preferences are typically determined by its long-term economic interests, the amount of resources at its disposal and its membership". Because policies affect the "distribution of resources among market actors, it is logical that these actors attempt to influence policy outcomes in a variety of ways".

Some theorists (Gray and Lowery, 1996; Lowery, 2007) note that politicians normally only pay attention to interest groups which are in a position to influence the outcome of their political careers through the amount of financial contributions they make as well as the ability to deliver votes during elections. On the other hand most interest groups main objective is survival. Recruiting a large membership and acquiring a large amount of resources is a key element to survival of the group. The researchers (Galperin 2004:161) argue that "all other goals of interest groups are secondary since survival is the pre-condition for achieving any of the other objectives".

The interest group approach shows how competing groups jostle to have their policy position adopted in a bid to gain economic benefits. Advocates of group approaches observe that public policy making process is influenced by various interest groups as a result of informal patterns of association. Party officials, bureaucrats and members of parliament are all members of interests groups and often use group alliances to influence and shape public policy in favour of their groups. Group interest therefore tends to have more influence in shaping public policy than the institutions themselves (see John, 1999 for an opposing view). Olson (1971) for example observes that the formation of trade unions, lobby groups, NGO's and various other interest groups is made with the view of participating in policy making process where there are more economic benefits to be gained.

Interest groups work towards increasing their membership as well as financial resources to support their preferred policy outcome. In certain cases financial resources are used to pay politicians to manipulate the outcome. In other words policy outcomes are a "function of the power that each interest group is able to amass and wield in support of its preferred outcome" (Burstein & Linton, 2002:385). Politicians tend to support policy positions of interest groups which can deliver votes as well as financial resources to support their candidature. Interest groups that are able to demonstrate the power to deliver both resources as well as electoral victory are most likely to influence the outcome of the policies (Posner, 1974; Becker, 1983). Burstein & Linton, (2002) however argue that the power of political parties to influence the outcome of policies is usually greater than that of interest groups. On the other hand the pluralist view is that although government officials and members of political parties are also to some extent members of interest groups, they are supposed to be neutral as their role is to facilitate the policy making process between various competing groups (Krasnow & Longley, 1978), while neo-Marxists (Schiller, 1982) believe public officials tend to support the interests of powerful groups in society. Both pluralists and neo-Marxists focus on "how public officials try to balance power between various interest groups" (Burstein & Linton, 2002:386). Translating "preferences of various interest groups does not present problems since state

actors are often in a weak position and have to react to regulatory demands from interest groups in a way that is also economically beneficial to them". It is argued that "powerful groups manage to get government to protect their interests through legislation".

Policy makers however have to take into account the economic interests of the stakeholders and how the public will be affected by the policy changes or new policy initiatives. Researchers therefore need to understand the "economic interests at play and the distributional effects of alternative courses of action in order to understand government action" (Galperin, 2004:161). Although policy studies shows that policies are often about competing interests where powerful groups are able to influence the outcome of the policies, there are instances where policy is introduced to reduce the influence of certain powerful groups in society such as labour unions or certain powerful monopolies (Vogel, 1996).

The above analysis shows that the group approach has certain limitations which do not explain why government will favour certain interest groups over others. One can however argue that policy makers tend to make preferences that are not necessarily always in the interests of powerful groups in society (Weaver & Rockman, 1993). It is therefore important to see government officials as being separate from other interest groups. In short state actors are not always there to cater to the needs of powerful social actors but have to follow government procedures and various rules and regulations when formulating policies despite pressure from powerful groups in society.

The policy making process in the Education Department in South Africa is made up of the national and provincial executive members of the national and provincial governments. They are responsible for initiating new policies as well as policy changes in the department. Their policy initiatives are passed on to the Heads of Department Committee (HEDCOM) which after deliberations pass on their recommendations to the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) for approval. Their recommendations are assessed by Cabinet for implementation through parliament or through the Executive through an Executive order (DoE, 1996).

Educational policy making process in post-apartheid South Africa has been inclusive and broad based. Unlike during the apartheid era when the state was the only player in the policy making process the new administration has involved the major stakeholders in formulating educational policies (Kraak & Young, 2001). The government has created various structures and forums to facilitate the participation of stakeholders in the policy making process such as commissions of enquires which are set up by the Department of Education; statutory bodies and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) which allows groups as well as individuals to participate in the hearings on educational policy.

A number of organizations in the democratic alliance which were influential in shaping ideas on educational polices during the early 1990 became less involved in the process during the transition period as "leading members became divided in loyalties between building the ANC internally or keeping the momentum of the NECC going as a separate organisation" (Chisholm and Fuller 1996:702).

As the dynamics of the negotiations changed a number of organizations which became less influential such as student bodies and teachers unions became preoccupied with their own internal re-organizations which left room for more influential players to engage in debates that would shape policy outcomes on the educational policies in post 1994 South Africa. Different groups had their own interest and vision of what education policies where to achieve after 1994. While those in the mass democratic movement where interested in transforming the system those from the private sector wanted policies which could redress and create equity as well as meet the needs of industry. The National Party on the other hand wanted policies

which would not disadvantage its constituency while at the same time would remove race as a basis for formulating school policies.

There were a number of organizations which worked with the ANC to develop various policy positions during the transition period. The ANC worked with the NECC which was an "alliance of students, labour and teachers". The NECC later launched the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) which unfortunately encountered a number of problems which made it less effective as "NEPI researchers had limited access to the inner workings of the education bureaucracy and the kinds of legislation and practice governing policy formulation on a day-to-day basis" (Sayed & Jansen, 2001:18). The NEPI was also inexperienced in policy formulation and had to give way to other bodies such as, the Centre of Education Policy Development (CEPD) a group that was launched in 1992 and was sustained by funding from the Canadian government (Wolpe, 1995). The CEPD was a professionally independent body which worked with the ANC and the democratic movement to provide well researched policy positions to support their debates on educational policy and to help produce a policy framework which could be implemented once they were in government. CEPD also helped to organize workshops to train the democratic movement on all aspect of educational policy making in order for them to participate more effectively in the policy debates and to enable them to formulate educational policies after 1994 in this view;

"The organization worked to prepare a plan to be used by the central and provincial governments that will take office immediately after the elections. It is intended "to form the basis for action by ministers in the new government and enable the new executive and administrative authorities to act quickly in putting new policies to work". IPET "will not stand on its own but form a part of the overall Reconstruction and Development Programme" (The Education Policy Unit, University of THE Witwatersrand, 1994:12, Chisholm & Kgobe, 1993).

Although educational policy making process after 1994 was broad based and included all the stakeholders, there was however concern that some groups were excluded from the process and that there was a lack of broad based consultation with the intended beneficiaries especially those from dis-advantaged groups as well as the teachers who were supposed to implement the policy in the classrooms. Concern was also raised regarding the influence that academics, researchers and ANC elite had on policy making to the exclusion of certain groups (Education Policy Unit, University of THE Witwatersrand, 1994).

0.3.5 Ideas Approaches to policy formulation

The policy process is influenced by ideas about the best solutions to a particular problem and what course of action should be taken to resolve the issue. In a plural society competing groups with different value systems and ideas of what course of action should be taken are given a chance to present their policy positions which results in a struggle between various groups all competing to have their ideas adopted. Interest groups normally comprise of academic experts, bureaucrats from government departments, politicians, and various organizations interested in the policy outcomes. These groups all struggle to get their ideas adopted. The ideas approach places emphasis on the role that ideas play in the policy making process. According to John (1999:145) various interest groups and policy networks try to influence decision makers to adopt their ideas on the best course of action to take hence "advocacy is a causal factor over and above the effects on policy of political institutions and interests".

According to Majone (1982:2) political institutions, interest groups and advocacy all have the ability to influence the policy process. He observes that policy making cannot be solely understood by examining power relations, group interests and the role played by institutions without looking at ideas that are being advocated by the various social actors in the policy process. He argues that "we miss a great deal if we try to understand policy making solely in terms of power, influence and bargaining to the exclusion of debate and argument".

Advocates of the ideas approach observe that decision makers have to weigh the different policy options presented by various interest groups in order to come up with the best solutions to a particular issue. Although resources from interest groups and the ability to deliver votes are all factors that tend to influence decision makers choice of what policies to adopt, the ideas presented also play a vital role in the policy process (John, 1999).

Interest groups and lobby groups often use experts to deliver well-articulated arguments to influence decision makers. The ability to present well-articulated arguments, rhetoric and some form of scientific evidence is vital to the process as public policy making requires the presentation of research based evidence to influence the adoption of policies. Advocacy, however, "elaborates and stylizes such arguments while not challenging their rationality" (John, 1999:155). Research has shown that analysis of policy ideas plays a vital role to the policy process even if it tends to hide the real interests behind the ideas it helps to create a better understanding of the problems and solutions that are being presented. Sabatier (1999) observes that groups with shared value systems in the policy process tend to form coalitions with experts to help them articulate their policy positions based on claims about having expert knowledge on how the problem can be resolved. Academic experts, technical staff and researchers are often incorporated in policy networks to investigate and present policy ideas in a way that would influence decision makers.

Ideas play a vital role in shaping policies because they tend to help define political actors understanding of particular problems and their view of the various policy options (North, 1990) especially when they have no experience with the new policies as was the case with OBE which was largely unknown in the South African context. In the contexts of historical discrepancies it was important for decision makers to have the critical understanding of what solutions could be used to create the necessary changes (Steiner – Khamsi, 2004). Ideas help to explain policy positions which can later be translated into government plans to effect changes in order to solve problems or to improve certain aspects of service delivery. Ideas do not normally come from without. They are groups of individuals in organizations and government departments who carry out research on new ideas which are later passed on to

groups with vested interest in policy changes to advocate for the implementation of these ideas. In government departments, universities and research stations think tanks act as vehicles for the formulation and passing of ideas to effect changes.

Although there are always a variety of competing groups jostling to get decision makers to adopt their ideas, government departments recruiting practices are used to assist personnel to filter ideas into the policy making process through personal networks between decision makers and interest groups (Hall, 1986). This analysis shows patterns by which policy ideas are formulated and how they are disseminated to decision makers for adoption and how action is taken to implement the policy options.

The Democratic alliance therefore used international and local experts to explain borrowed ideas from Western countries about an unknown teaching methodology to influence the adoption of the policies (Steiner – Khamsi 2004, Majone 1982). Members of the Democratic Alliance visited a number of developed countries to investigate educational policies to borrow ideas on modern teaching methodologies being applied in Western countries. The government used policy borrowing strategies to introduce outcomes based education in the school system as a way of breaking from the past but also in order to introduce new values in the school system. This teaching methodology was deemed to be more responsive to the needs of learners in modern day South Africa.

The formulation and implementation of OBE in the school system was opposed by a number of organizations but more especially researchers and academics who felt that OBE would not succeed as a pedagogy because it was imposed on the education sector by politicians who were more intent on realising the political vision while ignoring the stark realities of the inequalities that still existed in the school system.

Ideas are therefore crucial to the formulation of new policies. Ideas play a vital role in groups and networks as ideas are used to shape, constrain and influence how new policies could be formulated and implemented. The ideas that are advanced and debated by competing groups help to influence decision makers in the policy process.

0.3.6 Social Economic Approaches

Educational transformation is a complex social political process which is carried out by a number of social actors from the bureaucracy and various interest groups. The internal players comprise of bureaucrats, politicians and state legislators whereas the external players include parents, teachers, unions, and the private sector. Education policy making process has to take into account the broader social economic issues affecting the country such as the gross, national product, the rate of inflation as well as the various economic indicators (Jansen, 2000).

Education is a key contributor to national development. Research shows that developed countries have achieved high levels of economic development due to heavy investment in the education system. Based on these studies analyst believe that investing heavily in the education system in Africa is bound to lead to a significant improvement in the GDP of African countries. It is therefore assumed that African countries can solve their economic problems and reduce the high levels of poverty by investing heavily in the education system (Fiske & Ladd, cited in Chisholm 2004).

The post -1994 administration was faced with the major challenge of ensuring that the education and training sectors were linked to the employment needs of industry. The government therefore created an enabling environment which allowed the public; the private sector as well as various stakeholders to participate in the formulation of the national educational policies. Organizations as well as individuals participate in the process for various reasons. They also participate in a number of ways which differ in approach as well as strategy from other social groups. But more importantly the policies have to be formulated in line with the available resources as well as in line with the country's economic policies (Jansen, 2000).

The government adopted the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) an economic strategy to transform the economy through redistribution policies. The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) is an integrated, socio-economic policy framework to transform and develop the South African economy and various government structures in line with the transformation agenda (RDP, White Paper 1994).

The RDP on education aimed at improving school standards by rehabilitating dilapidated schools while at the same time constructing new schools in order to provide quality education for the 12 million learners in the South African school system. The RDP plan for the education system aimed at improving both primary and tertiary level in line with the country's industrial requirements (RDP, White Paper 1994).

Although the RDP program required massive human resource development in order to produce individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive the economy, it was soon realised that the state could not afford to allocate more money to the school system because of the economic downturn. After "re-assessing its options the government decided to adopt a more pragmatic approach to economic development by adopting a macroeconomic stabilisation and an export led growth strategy which was key to economic development" (Sayed 2001:260).

Lemon (1994:101) argues that "initially the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Program did infuse significant new money into the education system but since the introduction of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR) in 1996, the macroeconomic environment has inhibited the kinds of redistributive educational policies which the government still claims to promote".

The Growth, Employment and Redistributive (GEAR) strategy is a "neo-liberal macro-economic programme of deregulation, privatisation and fiscal restraint". It has been argued that the "RDP agenda was too complex to implement as the re-direction of resources, establishment of cross-department initiatives, and stimulation of grass-roots economic activity could not be achieved, unless it was in tune with the global climate of neoliberal capitalism, hence the ANC made the political choice to attune its macroeconomic policy according to market-led economic growth" (Lemon 1994:101: see Weber, 2002). Economic problems in the mid 1990's "spurred on by a sharp depreciation in the currency", necessitated an economic response that would "reprioritise the budget towards social spending; an acceleration of the fiscal reform process; the gradual relaxation of exchange controls; the consolidation of trade and industrial reforms; expansionary public sector restructuring; structured flexibility with collective bargaining; and a social agreement to facilitate wage and price moderation" (GEAR White Paper 1996, Sayed et al, 2002).

The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy is aimed at "providing stability in the economy and securing resources for greater distributive justice" (Dielties and Motimele 2001; Nicolau 2001). GEAR is meant to stimulate economic growth through exports as well as by attracting foreign investment through a reduction in the tariff barriers. GEAR did not attract the required foreign investment as expected and the economy did not grow as anticipated despite the various stringent economic strategies that GEAR encompassed that was meant to create opportunities for growth and foreign investment. The need to maintain fiscal discipline through a reduction in government spending meant that there would be no additional funding for the education system. Although the amount of resources that the education department receives from government is inadequate, the education system receives the largest share of the national budget at 24%. The pre-primary, primary school and secondary schools receives the largest share of the allocation (GEAR White Paper, 1996).

Inadequate social spending on the education system prompted government to hire experts to investigate other ways of raising funds for educational needs. The Hunters commission which was tasked with this duty recommended the introduction of school fees as a means of enabling schools to acquire additional resources. Following the recommendation the Department of Education through the 1996 South African Schools Act allowed schools to mobilize extra funding by charging school fees (Nicolau, 2001). The South African Schools Act provides for a "uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools; to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools; and to provide for matters connected with the school system". One of the contentious issues contained in the South African Schools Act 1996 is the issue of funding for public schools. The post- apartheid government's decision to introduce user fees is seen as a strategy that was meant to stop the learners from middle class families who provide a political support base for the state education system from leaving the public schools for privately set up institutions of learning. By forestalling learners of the middle class from moving to private schools, the government avoided the creation of another "bifurcated education system in South Africa". Fiske and Ladd (2002 cited in Chisholm, 2004:79) observe that "the architects of post -apartheid South Africa understood that a restructured state education system would be just as critical to the building of a new and democratic social order in South Africa as its predecessor had been to the sustaining of apartheid".

Proponents of school fees managed to convince the democratic movement which was not in favour of this policy by claiming that government school fees paid in wealthy neighbourhoods would free up government resources which would then be used to fund schools in poor neighbourhoods (Donaldson 1992, Pampallis, cited in Chisholm, 2004). The recommendation for partnership funding is "contained in the Hunter's report which called for a combination of obligatory fees and voluntary contributions to supplement public funding of schools for non-personal purposes". The collection of obligatory fees was meant to help poor students who

attend schools in poor neighbourhoods where it's difficult to raise money for school fees. The fees would go towards the payment of school fees for poor students to enable them to attend public schools in wealthy neighbourhoods rather than being restricted to schools in poor neighbourhoods which do not charge school fees.

According to Fiske and Ladd (2002) the extra money that comes from the payment of school fees goes towards hiring teachers through the school governing board (SGB) which helps to improve the school outcomes especially at metric level. They note that wealthier schools have a higher pass rate than those in poor neighbourhoods because the schools are able to raise more money to pay for extra teachers. SGB teachers contribute to a lower pupil teacher ratio; the quality of the teachers also contributes to quality education.

Fiske & Ladd (2002:198) further note that the "assertion of international experts that giving schools the authority to set fees would allow the former white schools to retain much of the quality they enjoyed during apartheid appears to have been accurate". The "maintenance of quality in turn would well be a major explanation for the low rates of flight to the private schools". They also argue that "variations in both publicly-funded and privately-funded resources affect school quality and that it is important to maintain strong public support for education funding, particularly for teachers". Decentralization of school finance and governance is another strategy the government has used to create social changes in the school system.

The National Norms and Standards for School Funding regulations on the other hand (DoE 1998) has set up regulations which offer exemption to learners who are unable to pay school fees not to be excluded from public schools. The regulations were formulated also as a strategy to deal with inequities in the education system. The introduction of school fees in public schools has received mixed reactions with some researchers arguing that most countries have abolished school fees in public schools because it discourages poor people who can't afford to pay school fees from enrolling their children in public schools. Fiske & Ladd (cited in Chisholm 2004:67) however argue that the introduction of school fees in South Africa does not seem to have had a negative impact on enrolment of learners neither does it appear to be a deterrent to learners ability to access schooling. They however observe that while this may be the case for learners in primary schools, there appears to be a high dropout rate in secondary schools especially after grade nine when learners are supposed to pay school fees.

The "major challenge is that the Norms and Standards of School Funding do not redress personnel costs in favour of poor schools, the way it does for non-personnel costs". The budgetary allocation to poor schools is also not sufficient in reducing inequalities. Wealthier schools ability to mobilize more resources has placed them in a more advantageous position compared to schools in poor neighbourhoods as more resources are also allocated to schools that qualify for "additional staff based on broader subject choices" (Fiske & Ladd, cited in Chisholm, 2004:67).

Researchers observe that one of the weaknesses of the education policy post 1994 is that the transformation agenda has not brought an "end to the racial inequalities in the school system that led to poor basic literacy levels and numeracy in historically disadvantaged schools" (Edu-source Data News, July 1996:20. The researchers note that the quality of educators in historically disadvantaged schools is still poor; the schools still lack facilities and equipment and there is still a gap between historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools.

The government through GEAR strategy is addressing school inequalities by reducing the subsidies that are allocated to the historically advantaged schools while increasing resource

allocation to the historically disadvantaged schools. It also aims to improve school quality by allocating more resources to the provinces "to target resources more effectively and accurately towards needy schools which should be provided with adequate infrastructure, including teachers' salaries, materials, and textbooks" (Edu-source Data News, July 1996:20).

0.3.7 Summary of Chapter three

Chapter three carried out a critical literature review of the institutional/ structural, group/ interests, social economic and ideas approaches in the policy making process. The chapter specifically looked at the role that group's, institutions the economy and ideas played in the formulation of the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12 and the implications thereof for learners from disadvantaged groups in society.

The study found that unlike during the apartheid era when the state was the only player in the policy making process, post 1994 policy making involved a number of organizations which included the trade unions, the business sector, the ANC and the democratic alliance on one hand and the National Party, the teachers and parents from former model C schools as well as their sympathisers on the other hand. A number of consultants from a number of aid agencies also took part in the process. The ANC and the democratic alliance succeeded in displacing the apartheid administration reforms with new trends and models that were being implemented in a number of developed countries. The government used policy borrowing strategies to introduce outcomes based education in the school system as a way of breaking from the past but also in order to introduce new values in the school system. This teaching methodology was deemed to be more responsive to the needs of learners in modern day South Africa and as a vehicle for increasing social mobility in working class families from previously oppressed groups in society.

The formulation and implementation of OBE in the school system was opposed by a number of organizations but more especially researchers and academics who felt that OBE would not succeed as a pedagogy because it was imposed on the education sector by politicians who were more intent on realising the political vision while ignoring the stark realities of the inequalities that still existed in the school system.

The study found that the institutions mainly the education departments played a major role during the formulation and implementation of these policies. During the formulation of the policies the bureaucrats had to translate the policies in to home grown versions of the borrowed ideas in order to make them more applicable to the South African context. The education departments were also tasked with the implementation process through training programmes to all the teaching staff to introduce them to the new curriculum. The study found that the implementation process was fraught with many problems as some of the teachers were not properly trained and the bureaucrats from the ANC were not very familiar with the administrative practices which led to contradictions and lack of cohesion in the implementation process. Some bureaucrats from the apartheid era were also un supportive of some aspects of policies which did not serve the interests of the white population. Institutions were therefore used by the various interest groups to advance their group interests which led to un intended outcomes which dis-advantaged the intended beneficiaries of these policies.

The study found that social economic factors also played a major role in the formulation and implementation of these policies as the policies had to be formulated in line with the economic strategies that were adopted by the new government. The adoption of GEAR in particular meant that there would not be any additional funding to the school system unless the economy grew by 6 %. In order to prevent children from middle class families from leaving former model C schools the government introduced fee paying in the school system. Although this strategy worked to improve the standards in the middle class schools the situation remained the same in historically disadvantaged schools for working class families as the money that can be mobilized through fee paying is limited.

The study also found that ideas played a major role in the formulation of the policies on the national curriculum. The democratic alliance was influenced by new trends and models that have been implemented in a number of developed countries. The alliance used policy borrowing strategies to appropriate policy models that reflected a more modern way of teaching learners which is skills based but is also seen to be responsive to a world that is constantly changing due to globalization. Although these ideas were seen to be successful as a political project a number of researchers felt that they did not take in to account the historical discrepancies in historically disadvantaged schools. Researchers therefore felt that the reforms would not create the necessary changes that they needed to make in order to create equity and redress and more especially create conditions for educational opportunities for learners from historically dis-advantaged groups in society.

Chapter four

0.4.0 C2005 Outcomes based education

In order to establish why the present government supported the introduction of outcomes based education in the school system it's important to examine the curriculum that was formulated during the apartheid era and the problems that disadvantaged groups in society experienced regarding this curriculum which led to lack of social mobility on their part. A comparative analysis of the two curriculums will help to establish the need for drastic changes in terms of policy shifts after 1994.

The curriculum for people of colour was formulated in such a way that it prevented learners from acquiring the necessary skills for them to have professional careers in the labour industry. The curriculum was structured to provide a minimal education which could only be used to work in subordinated positions in the work place. Learning was centered on rote learning memorisation, examinations and was oriented towards a heavy content which was not very useful for the preparation of learners for the working environment. The curriculum essentially did not contribute to the growth of an individual. Learners from working class backgrounds only went up to high school with the majority dropping out in primary school. The content was also skewed towards encouraging individuals to have an inferiority complex as it was full of sexist, racist and dogmatic material which taught learners to have negative perceptions of self (Pillay, 1990).

The curriculum was also steeped in promoting racial and ethnic identities (ANC Policy Framework on Education and Training, 1995). Curriculum during the apartheid era was not dynamic enough to adapt to a changing environment as the material and the lessons did not change. Parents were not involved in the learner's education apart from providing school fees and learning materials. During the apartheid era the curriculum was formulated by the state with no participation from the stakeholders. The formulation of a curriculum which was irrelevant to the needs of the learners from oppressed groups in society led to frustration and school boycotts which culminated into violent protests throughout the South African schools. Other unfair practices in the school system have already been highlighted in the earlier chapters.

The change from an authoritarian regime to a democratic dispensation required urgent transformation in order to remove the historical discrepancies and to promote democratic values in society. The new administration saw the need to use the school system and the curriculum in particular to create new social values in society based on equality and respect for different cultures (Harley & Wedekind, cited in Chisholm 2004). In the face of the social historical and economic inequalities which were perpetuated in the school system the democratic alliance initiated the debates on outcomes based education as a way of providing the type of education in which learners would acquire the necessary skills that would enable them to have professional careers in the labour market. The democratic alliance wanted to formulate a curriculum which would provide equal access to education, promote skills development and be relevant to the needs of the individuals.

The post 1994 curriculum was a shift from content to assessment with the introduction of continuous assessment (CASS) in schools in 1996 (Harley & Wedekind, 2000:197). Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was launched in March 1997, and was implemented in Grade 1 in 1998 and Grade 7 in 1999. It was later on introduced throughout the other grades by 2005.

The new curriculum is outcomes based with an integrated knowledge system. School 'subjects' were included with eight learning areas introduced for Grades 1 to 9. Curriculum reform also included the promotion of learner centred theory (Harley & Wedekind, cited in Chisholm 2004:198). The National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996) "provided for the development of the following curriculum design tools to support an outcomes-based approach; critical cross-field outcomes; specific outcomes; range statements; assessment criteria; performance Indicators notional time and flexi-time".

Harley & Wedekind (cited in Chisholm 2004) observes that C2005 was imposed on the education system by politicians who felt that it was the most appropriate pedagogy to transform the school system in post-apartheid South Africa. Teachers had to implement a new curriculum which they had not helped to formulate which led to a mixed response from the very schools that are supposed to be benefiting from the policy shifts.

Although all South African teachers were expected to adapt to the new curriculum shifts from text book teaching to using specified design tools many found it difficult to cope with the heavy workload. Complaints from teachers, education officials and the general public resulted in the appointment of a Ministerial Review Committee in 2000 to resolve a number of problems that had arisen as a result of the implementation of outcomes based education. The Ministerial Review Committee carried out a review of C2005 for General Education and Training (GET) Band which comprises grades R- 9 in 2000. At the end of the review the committee called for the simplification of the language and a reduction of the design features from nine to three to include critical and developmental outcomes, learning outcomes and assessment standards. It also observed that there was need to align the curriculum with assessment. The changes were released through the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002 (DoE, 2002a). The curriculum review for the Further Education Training band (Grades 10-12) followed shortly after the curriculum review for grades R-9 was completed.

According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS 2002) the learning "outcomes specify 'goals to strive towards' and 'goals to be attained' that express different levels of expectations on pupils performance when they finish schooling". These two levels are derived from "learning outcomes and assessment standards, which are built on the critical cross-field outcomes applied throughout the entire educational landscape in SA from primary school to university". The critical "cross-field outcomes provide a description of the general knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for entry level into the labour market". They are divided in two "distinctive groups / categories of outcomes in South African curriculum: critical outcomes focusing on core life skills of learners (communication, critical thinking, information management, etc.), and developmental outcomes, they include enabling learners to learn effectively and to become responsible, sensitive and productive citizens" (DoE 2002). According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNSC, 2002) learners must be able to achieve the following outcomes

- be a creative and critical thinker who can recognize and solve potential problems and should acquire the necessary skills to be able to make sound decisions
- be a team player who can work well in any kind of environment
- be a self-disciplined, self-motivated responsible person
- possess the necessary skills to carry out research
- possess the necessary communication skills

- acquire scientific knowledge and use it responsibly to protect the environment
- acquire a better understanding of how the world works and possess the necessary skills to solve complex problems

According to the developmental outcomes learners should also be able to:

- identify innovative ways of improving their grades
- become responsible members of their communities, organizations and local environment
- be aware of cultural differences and apply that knowledge in the social context
- strive towards making use of opportunities in the educational system to find better careers and develop entrepreneurial skills.

Learning outcomes describes the type of skills or knowledge learners should be able to possess or demonstrate at the end of their studies. Learning "outcomes should ensure integration and progression in the development of concepts, skills and values through the assessment standards". Learning outcomes do not prescribe content or method (Lawson & Young 2007:41).

Assessment Standards describe the level at which learners should demonstrate their achievement of the values, skills and knowledge of the learning outcome(s) in various ways according to the specific grade. Learning outcomes differ from assessment standards in that they describe the skills and knowledge that learners have acquired in a specific grade whereas assessment standards describe what learners should know and be able to do in terms of the skills and knowledge that they have acquired in a particular learning area. Assessment standards change from grade to grade as expectations of what learners should achieve change the higher the grade (Spady, 2007: 41 cited in Lawson & Young 2007). The Revised National Curriculum Statement for Grades R-9 (Schools) adopts an inclusive approach by specifying the minimum requirements for all learners. "Learning programs are structured and systematic arrangements of activities that promote the attainment of learning outcomes and assessment standards for each phase. Teachers are responsible for the development of their own learning programs" (Spady, 2007:41 cited in Lawson & Young, 2007.

Lawson & Young (2007:3) who have carried out a lot of research on outcomes based education in Australia observe that "outcomes-based education is not a single idea or set of procedures. As such countries that have adopted outcomes based education have adopted their own home grown version to suit the needs of their learners. Outcomes-based education according to Lawson & Young is like "democracy –there are many different versions practised in different ways in different places, all with the label outcomes-based education".

Proponents of OBE (Spady 2007:7) criticise content based education for placing emphasis on a school year "rather than achievement on an agreed standard". According to Spady, achievements for learner's outcomes should vary between students rather than basing it on a time frame. He argues that the use of "norm referenced systems of grading and student – comparative evaluations as dominant forms of assessment guarantee that some students will emerge from their schooling as failures" which defeats the purpose of schooling.

Jansen (1999) observes that curriculum development and formulation of C2005 was carried out by politicians instead of the experts in the education system who have a better understanding of what is applicable and practical pedagogy. He notes that the politician's choice of curriculum received a mixed response as most educators had no idea of how to

implement the new curriculum in the classroom as it was merely imposed on the school system. This resulted in "lack of cohesion between policy and practice undermining policy the very instrument of political vision" (Harley & Wedekind, 2000 cited in Chisholm 2004:103).

Research shows that educational policies cannot be imposed on the people even though they are supposed to further the objectives of the ruling party. Curriculum formulation according to Kallaway (1998) should involve all stakeholders especially the teachers who are the implementers of a new curriculum. If the teachers are not well informed about the nature of the curriculum and how they are supposed to use it in the classroom the pedagogy is likely to fail.

Studies shows that although C2005 has succeeded in furthering the political goals of the ruling party it has not succeeded in bringing an end to the social inequalities in the school system. It has been observed that instead of narrowing the gap the new policies have in fact widened the gap between the historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools (Christie, 1999). Studies have shown that historically advantaged schools have found the implementation of C2005 quite easy compared to the historically disadvantaged schools. The researchers note that lack of resources in poor neighbourhood schools is one of the reasons why historically disadvantaged schools are having problems implementing the new curriculum (DoE, 2000).

0.4.1 Critics of Outcomes based education in South Africa

Studies suggest that there have been diverse and varied responses to C2005 with historically advantaged schools adapting to the changes with ease due to adequate resources. Learners in inherited advantaged schools also in general have high levels of communication skills which make it easier for teachers to implement the new curriculum while under resourced historically disadvantaged schools appear to have a lot of problems due to lack of resources and generally un developed communication skills in learners. It has been observed that instead of narrowing the gap the new policies have in fact widened the gap between the historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools (Christie, 1999).

Harley & Wedekind (cited in Chisholm 2004) note that lack of resources has negatively affected historically disadvantaged schools ability to implement the new curriculum. Lack of resources includes inadequate classroom space which is a pre-requisite to the development of a new curriculum, inadequate support from the department and a lack of teaching aids. Researchers blame lack of resources in poor neighbourhood schools on government's adoption of structural adjustment program which has led to reduced social spending and observe that equity and redress cannot be achieved unless there is an increase in the educational budget (Czerniewicz, Murray and Probyn, 2000). Studies also suggest that inadequate supply of text books and a lack of school libraries in under resourced schools have made the implementation of the new curriculum even more difficult. Harley & Wedekind (2004) observe that some teachers in under resourced schools felt implementing C2005 requires learners to have high levels of communicative skills which the majority of learners in under resourced schools do not possess.

Although lack of resources and a lack of high levels of communication skills have been identified as major problems in under resourced historically disadvantaged schools, the complexity of the new curriculum, the sheer workload, the new innovations and complex curriculum terminology are said to have equally contributed to implementation problems in under resourced schools . Some researchers suggest that teachers have problems coping with numerous curriculum changes that have been made within a short period of time. For instance teachers are expected to play eight other roles under the new curriculum which is almost impossible due to time constraints and other problems cited above (Young cited in Kraak & Young, 2001).

While implementation problems are seen to be the main problems under mining policy, practices in the classroom also suggest that changes from content based to outcomes based education may interfere with the learner's ability to acquire school knowledge. Critics (Bertram cited in Chisholm 2009:46) observe that "there appears to be the danger that the logic of outcomes, the need to attain assessment standards and the strong focus on skills-based subjects may lead to a focus on generic comprehension skills rather than a conceptual understanding of the content and its constructed nature".

Young (cited in Kraak and Young 2001:33) however observes that South Africa is the only country on the African continent that has adopted this teaching methodology and that only a few developed countries have replaced CBE with OBE. OBE provides a different learning pathway to content based education which is said to be based on memorisation, passive and rote learning which is reminiscent of the apartheid curriculum. Young however believes that

integrating school and everyday knowledge interferes with learners opportunities to learn new ideas in a different context and that at "institutional level; it represents an attempt to reverse the whole history of mass schooling that has been based on quite opposite assumptions". For example, "the assumptions of most school curriculum are that; learning is best organized in school timetables that bear no direct relation to the everyday life of learners; subjects are ways of organising knowledge based on pedagogic practice proven by long experience". Young contends that although the new administration has been trying to break from the past by introducing new social values based on democratic principles and respect for human rights it's difficult for South Africa to escape from its past "in the same way the United Kingdom cannot escape from its colonial history, and the peculiarities of its social class structure".

Anti-apartheid activists who advocated for changes in the national curriculum argued that the change would bring about human resource development which would have a positive impact on the South African economy. According to Jansen (cited in Kraak & Young, 2001) there is no relationship between human resource development and improvement in the national economy especially in third world countries where economic problems are as a result of problems which are not related to academic achievements.

Spady (2007:6) and a number of researchers who are behind the ideas that underpin the development of OBE as a teaching methodology however disagree with the critics of OBE. Spady in particular sees OBE as a teaching methodology which enables all the learners to succeed in "achieving the outcomes established by the education system by following their own different paths". He believes that teachers are expected to guide the learners by helping them to individually acquire competences and qualities which will assist them to succeed in their endeavours' to acquire academic qualifications. Spady who is very critical of non OBE teaching models argues that "national standardized testing closes of rather than expand, opportunities for students". He argues that the "implications of norm-referenced assessment for students' self-efficacy, achievement, goals and self-theories of intelligence must also be taken into account" (Spady 2007: 8).

He observes that OBE is premised on the belief that traditional teaching methods entail that schools (and teachers) control the conditions that determine whether or not students are able to pass their exams which results in high numbers of school drop outs and failure to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. By involving learners in the learning process both the learners and teachers have a shared responsibility towards the process of acquiring school knowledge (Lawson & Williams, 2007). Proponents of OBE also suggest that there is need for learners not only to acquire intellectual knowledge but also competencies necessary for use in the work place.

Spady (cited in Lawson & Williams, 2007:7) observes that "in order to prepare young people for life and work in a rapidly changing world, education and training systems need to be re-oriented to impart a broad range of life skills". These "skills should include the key generic competencies and practical capabilities that cut across fields such as ICT, the ability to learn independently, to work in teams, ethical entrepreneurship, civic responsibility and awareness to diversity".

Critics of OBE find Spady's notions on learning problematic as some outcomes appear to privilege certain groups of people in the same way traditional teaching methods privileges learners from middle class families.

0.4.2 Summary of Chapter four

This chapter looked at the introduction of OBE in the South African school system in order to understand what changes have been made and the relevance of these changes to society. The study found that the introduction of OBE has some positive effects on the school system and has been well received by former model C schools. Although OBE is a superior teaching methodology to what was prevailing in the classrooms during the apartheid era many schools in the townships and rural areas have struggled to implement these changes for a number of reasons. The schools still lack adequate classroom space, text books and school libraries. The pupil teacher ratio is also high compared to the former model C schools. Lack of resources has also been a hindrance in the implementation process. Other problems include difficulties by teachers to implement the curriculum due to under developed language skills in the majority of learners as well as the heavy workload and the belief that learners have to play catch up all the time. Lack of extra teaching staff to teach specialized subjects like mathematics and science have also created problems in historically disadvantaged schools in society.

Chapter five

0.5.0 Conclusion

This research set out to examine the implications of government's policy shifts in the education system and in particular the curriculum for grades R- 12 thereof for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds in society by carrying out a critical literature review of the apartheid educational policies and the policy shifts which were implemented in post 1994 South Africa. It also set out to find out which interest groups were responsible for the formulation of the post- 1994 national curriculum for grades R- 12 in order to determine why the curriculum has had some un intended outcomes that disadvantage the intended beneficiaries of the policy shifts. The last question aimed at addressing the issue of social mobility by looking at whether the new curriculum has created the necessary conditions to remove the barriers to social mobility which were imposed on oppressed groups in society during the apartheid era. The research used group, structural as well as social economic approaches to determine the role that groups, the economy as well as government institutions played in the formulation and implementation of these policies during the political transition.

In looking at which interest group was responsible for the formulation of the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12 and the implications thereof on vulnerable groups in society, the study found that groups, institutions, social economic factors as well as ideas all played a major role in the formulation and implementation of the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12. The study found policy networks and interest groups participated in the debates on the new curriculum to ensure that their group interests were accommodated. The ANC and the democratic alliance in particular ensured that their group interests prevailed when they introduced the debate on OBE which they felt would make the school system more responsive to the needs of their constituency by offering them a more modern way of learning which would enable them to acquire the necessary skills needed in the job market.

The study also found that groups also used institutions to protect their group interest during the formulation and implementation of the new curriculum by either appearing supportive of the polices while at the same time obstructing the implementation of aspects of policy that threatened their group interests. Social economic factors however had a more negative impact on these policies as it was difficult to implement these policies in the absence of increased social spending through budgetary allocation.

Although the ideas that were used to formulate the policy were borrowed from developed countries which have also had their own set of problems, the education department produced their own home grown version of OBE which is appropriate to the South African school system.

In looking at the implications of the policy shifts on the national curriculum on the historically disadvantaged groups in society it's important to look at the problems historically disadvantaged groups had with the previous curriculum. Research shows that the curriculum for oppressed groups in society was irrelevant to the learners as it was too simplified and did not impart any skills which were useful in the labour market. The curriculum was also filled with racist, sexist and gender stereotypes that created a distorted sense of self in the learners which led to an inferiority complex. The old curriculum for the oppressed groups did not include mathematics, chemistry, physics, environmental science and other specialized learning areas which enable learners to acquire specialized skills which offer lucrative returns.

The study therefore found that the policy shifts in the school system has positive implications

for the learners as it offers them access to the type of knowledge that was previously denied to them. The problems however lie in the way in which the curriculum was designed and the ideas that form the basis of OBE such as learner centeredness, skills based and assessments all of which have negative implications on vulnerable groups in society. Studies (Young & Muller 2008:75) show that because of the differentiatedness of knowledge, teaching approaches that only focus on content or skills only "gives some subjects short shrift, as well as having implications for the distribution of educational opportunities and achievement". Second, "recognizing the differentiation of knowledge makes explicit that concepts, skills and content are all important and must be stipulated in the curriculum". Failure to do so "undermine the project of providing equal opportunities to all learners in the school system as it has negative implications for both social justice and the viability of knowledge- based economy in the future".

There are also a number of problems that render the new curriculum un responsive to the needs of learners in formally disadvantaged schools. Most historically disadvantaged schools still lack proper school infrastructure to support the curriculum. The schools still have a high rate of teacher/ pupil ratio, inadequate classroom space as well as a lack of teaching aids such as text books and school libraries; lack of resources have also presented difficulties in the implementation process.

The study also found that the formulation of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy which is aimed at economic stability and mobilizing resources for greater distributive justice (Dielties & Motimele, 2001; Nicolau, 2001) do not support the curriculum reforms in the school system. GEAR is meant to stimulate economic growth through exports as well as by attracting foreign investment through a reduction in the tariff barriers. The need to maintain fiscal discipline through a reduction in government spending meant that there would be no additional funding for the education system. The introduction of school fees has also not improved funding in historically disadvantaged schools as the amount of resources that can be mobilized in historically disadvantaged schools is inadequate compared to historically advantaged schools. In responding to the first research question one can therefore state that the new curriculum does not adequately provide conditions for social mobility for learners from working class families for the above mentioned reasons.

On the other hand the study found that the unintended outcomes in the policy shifts in the national curriculum for grades R-12 are not as a result of the political and moral compromises that formed the background to the 1993 political settlement. There is no substantial evidence to show that the post 1994 government had failed to formulate viable redress policies in the school system as some researchers have alluded to (Jansen 2000, Sayed cited in Chisholm 2004, Fataar 1999 unpublished). There is also no evidence to show that politicians from the former apartheid government had a wider influence in the formulation of the post 1994 national curriculum for grades R-12. Following the political transition from apartheid to democratic rule the ANC government initiated the policy shifts in the national curriculum for grades R-12 by replacing the apartheid policies & practices with a system with new social values. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) "provided the basis for the vision of a core national curriculum which would integrate academic and vocational skills" (Young cited in Kraak & Young 2001:18). The ANC government used the NQF to provide the basis for the transformation of the education system to create a totally different system which would replace the apartheid system which was structured on CBE (Harley & Wedekind, cited in Chisholm 2004, Kraak & Young 2001, also see Spreen, cited in Sterner – Khamsi 2004). The new administration hoped that OBE would not only provide a break from the past but would also increase the life chances of learners from dis-advantaged groups in society. The new

curriculum C2005 is based on new social values to which all learners could subscribe to. Although they were discontinuities with the past, they were also continuities as there are some inclusions of some elements of proposals made by the pre-1994 National Education Department in its 1992 curriculum model for a new South Africa (Kraak & Young, 2001).

The study has however identified a number of problems and contradictions between the post 1994 policy on the national curriculum for grades R-12 and other polices. In addition to the problems arising from OBE, the study found that there are a number of contradictions in the National Education Policy Act 1996 (Act 27 of 1996), the South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996c) and the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Act (NNSSF) (DoE 1998) which is undermining and contradicting government's transformation agenda in the school system. For instance although the National Education Policy (Act 27, of 1996) and the South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996c) provides for the right to education, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Act (NNSSF) (DoE, 1998) contradicts the two policies as its structured in such a way that only those with resources can access quality education.

There is also a lack of cohesion between the various education policies and GEAR which calls for fiscal restraint and has led to limits on social spending on education and other social services. Economic strategies adopted in post 1994 South Africa do not support the goals of equity and redress in the school system (Sedunary, 1996; Centre for Education and Policy Development, 2000). This has escalated inequality in the school system as historically dis-advantaged schools in poor neighbourhoods are unable to access the kind of resources that historically advantaged schools in rich neighbourhoods are able to mobilize (Ota, 1997; Sayed 2001; Soudien, Jacklin & Hoadley 2001). The study therefore observes that the unintended outcomes in the national curriculum for grades R-12 are as a result of the type of policies formulated which are contradictory to each other thereby limiting the ability to redress and create equity in the school system. Inequalities in schools will most likely result in a lack of social mobility for the majority of learners from historically disadvantaged schools as quality education which provides a path way to social mobility can only be accessed by those with the means to do so.

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