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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION**

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

More than half of the world's population, and more than 70 percent of the world's poor are to be found in rural areas where hunger, illiteracy and low school achievement are common (UNESCO 2002). Education for such a large number of people in rural areas is crucial for achieving sustainable development. Considering that many people in the world, and particularly in Africa, live in rural areas, education for this group of people deserves special attention. Their education should not be simply moulded on the urban model, but rather take into consideration the specific characteristics of each rural setting.

The dilemmas of education in rural areas in relation to the social, economic and political structures are clearly evident in South Africa. In September 1997 the Interim Unit for Education and Management Development and the Centre for Education Policy, Evaluation and Management (based in Johannesburg, South Africa) in association with the National Department of Education, hosted a four day conference at White River, Mpumalanga, (South Africa) and the theme was "Developing quality schools in rural areas". Papers dealing with issues such as "*Multiple inequalities and challenges facing South African rural schools*" were presented (Gordon 1997). The conclusion reached at the conference was that the state of rural schooling in South Africa was not adequately addressed and it still needed attention.

On 3 September 2002, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, together with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in support of education for rural people, launched a partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The objectives of this partnership were to:

- build awareness of the importance of education for rural people as a crucial step to achieving the Millennium goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and achieving universal primary education;
- overcome the urban-rural education gap;
- increase access to basic education for rural people;
- improve the quality of basic education in rural areas; and
- foster the national capacity to plan and implement basic education plans to address the learning needs of rural people (*UNESCO 2002*).

Rural education in South Africa is not only of particular importance because of its political and economic dimensions, but also because the majority of Black learners in South Africa receive their education in these areas (Hofmeyer & Buckland 1992:22). The previous government, political forces, the private sector and the international world focused their attention more on education in urban areas than in rural areas (*Sunday Times* 1996:13). The neglected aspect of rural education in South Africa is succinctly highlighted by the African National Congress (ANC) as follows:

The inequalities in the provision of education and training are more acute in *rural* communities. Rural and farm schools are under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment. Students have to travel long distances to school, usually on foot... Teachers in rural and farm schools are more likely to be unqualified and under qualified. The main factor contributing to the disadvantaged position of rural education is the fact that the *state* has abdicated and ceded its responsibility for the provision of education and training in rural Black communities to mostly White farmers and tribal authorities through a system of state-aided schools... The limited role of the *state* is reflected in the fact that the per capita costs, including capital costs, for Black students in state-aided rural schools is some 50 percent less than that at ordinary public schools (ANC 1994[a]:102 – emphasis mine).

To a large extent, rural areas have been neglected in development policies. While the problems that confront rural education in South Africa are largely a result of *state* policies (Hartshorne 1992:111), there is limited research on the influence that these state policies had on rural education. It is therefore imperative to investigate these policies and related legislation from a historical perspective (past, present, future and space) to be able to address the issue of rural education in South Africa.

There is extensive research available on the provision of education for Black people residing mostly in rural areas in general terms (cf Christie 1991; Davenport 1977; Dubow 1989; Hartshorne 1992; Horrel 1963; Lodge 1983; Mawasha 1969; Molteno 1984; Naicker 1996; Shingler 1973). But there is a serious need to attend to rural education and the specific circumstances affecting rural communities. Moulder (1991:37) points out that the challenge facing a post-*apartheid* system in South Africa, is not only the creation of non-racial schools, but also to ensure that rural learners get a better deal than they did in the past. For the present government to be able to understand and redress past imbalances and anticipate the future, proper knowledge and understanding of the past education system is necessary.

A number of factors influenced the researcher to investigate rural education in South Africa and those factors are outlined in the following section.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

During the 1960s and 1970s, a great deal of emphasis was laid on the importance of education as a tool of rural development in Africa and the Third World. The newly independent African countries, freed from colonial political control, had a strong belief in the formal schooling system as an agent of change. This period was normally referred to as 'the first development decade' (1960 -1970). Before the end of 1960, it became common knowledge that this belief was unrealistic because there was already a drastic decline in the provision and the quality of education, especially Black education. Africa, which later on became part of the global world, appeared to have ignored the provision of education and the social and economic needs of the rural poor, which for many years was one of its priorities. Kallaway (2001:22) argues that:

The exclusive emphasis of the new policy formulations on the problems that arise from the global economy and the need for particular kinds of "human resource development" that will encourage effective integration into the global economy, effectively ignore the specific ways in which rural communities are being positioned by its global economy. The policy formulations fail to address educational problems that are specific to rural populations.

These sentiments were shared at the Nairobi Conference (July 1968), where Jolly (1969:23-24) noted that the “inadequacy of the educational system in meeting the real needs of communities and the reorganisation of primary education in rural areas” needed serious attention. A World Bank study conducted by Kevin Cleaver (1997) confirms the fact that “the poorest are often ignored in development programmes” and highlight the notion that the need to establish “safety nets for the rural and urban poorest” is imperative.

The history of Black education in South Africa from colonial times to the *apartheid* era had much in common with the history of colonial and post-colonial education in Africa. In both scenarios, there was a constant emphasis on the need for special attention to be given to the education of rural people. However, in both instances this was not realised. Due to gross inequalities caused by the past political system, South Africa faces formidable challenges in the provision of education, especially provision of education to learners in rural areas. Statements below elucidate these aspects:

South Africa has become one of the countries in the world that experiences high levels of inequality (in all societal forms), and is comparable with the worst, Brazil. Wilson and Ramphela (1989:4) mention that these inequalities were, as a result of past racist policies, more evident in rural areas (Gordon 1997:2).

Rural areas of South Africa are characterised by high rates of illiteracy, malnutrition, disease, poor health-care services, poor housing and underdevelopment. Development in rural areas favoured large-scale White farmers with South Africa’s racial laws disadvantaging the majority of landless Black people (Gordon 1997; Wilson & Ramphela 1989:18).

Comparable with middle-income developing countries, the South African population is generally considered poor. Poverty in South Africa also has a strong rural dimension since nearly 75 percent of South Africa’s poor live in rural areas which are mainly concentrated in the former Bantustans (Gordon 1997:2) developed during former governments.

Inequalities and neglect that are experienced in rural areas are, according to Hartshorne (1992:111), the results of among others, state policies that emerged during various historical epochs. Black people residing mostly in rural areas are where they are today because they

have been marginalized and they had little or no say in the governance of their lives and also because of the fundamental political and economic structures that were in place by then. Sam (1994:54) when referring to this sector of people reiterates:

We cannot afford to allow a situation where a section of our population is so marginalized that they become a burden to this country. The resources which we have should be spread evenly to allow development across a wider spectrum.

The intention to address rural education became a serious concern prior to the 1994 national elections. After the former president of South Africa, Mr FW de Klerk, made major political announcements on 2 February 1990, the democratic education movement, led by the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) within the context of the then negotiations, released a document called *The National Educational Policy Investigation* (NEPI). This was the most comprehensive document within the democratic circles of South African education aimed at addressing backlogs in Black education (*NEPI* 1993). The question of rural education was highlighted in the document, but it had a number of shortcomings. Even though this Report was appreciated by many South Africans, especially Black people, the NEPI document did not adequately address the debate surrounding rural education. As a result, concepts such as 'rural education' or 'rural schooling' were not formally defined. The Report largely concentrated on education in urban areas. According to Lawrence and Paterson (1993:17), this left the notion that rural education would continue to be relegated to provider of 'labour sources' for urban economies as in the *apartheid* past.

Prior to the 1994 national elections, the ANC, one of the leading liberation movements in South Africa (established in 1912), published a document entitled *A Policy Framework for Education and Training* which also aimed at redressing educational backlogs in rural areas (ANC 1995:12). The ANC, as stipulated in the Policy Framework, had strategies to address challenges facing rural education because the previous White governments could not attend to those challenges. The concern that the ANC had with rural education, as stipulated in the policy document, highlights the fact that rural education was a burning issue in the politics of South Africa, since most of the Black people were found in rural areas. What remains unanswered at this point is that after the ANC assumed power, were those strategies, as outlined in *The Policy Framework for Education and Training* implemented or not?



Following the post-*apartheid* era, the South African government became increasingly mindful of and showed an interest in rural education by publishing several related documents. These included *The Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) and *Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity; Notice No 1153 of 1995* which aimed at redressing education backlogs in rural areas (Republic of South Africa 1995[a]:12). In its endeavour to formally redress the inequalities of the past in education, the government introduced a document entitled *The Education White Paper No 2 on Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools*, in 1996 (Republic of South Africa 1996[a]). This document aimed at the distribution of resources for education provision among half of South African families living in poverty mainly in rural areas (Republic of South Africa 1996[a]:9). In 1996, the government published a document entitled *Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education*, which pointed out that 40 percent of families live in abject poverty, with rural Black families being the hardest hit (Republic of South Africa 1996[b]:18). In 1996 *The South African Schools Act, Act No 84* was also enacted by government which reflected steps the South African government wanted to follow to redress imbalances in schooling (Republic of South Africa 1996[e]).

The urban-bias strategy, in general terms, of past dispensations, which confined many resources to urban areas, permeated the entire South African social system and has continued even during the democratic era. This urban-bias of the government, past and present, is confirmed in a number of ways. For example, after the Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, delivered a Budget speech in 2003, the Director of the National Land Committee, Zakes Hlatshwayo and the Director of Mpumalanga Rural Action Committee, Chris Williams agreed that the Budget reveal 'urban bias' and would not go far to change the lives of the rural people and had no significance for rural population (*Sunday Times* 2003[a]:8). It seems as if the ANC government is also failing in addressing the rural education problem in South Africa. In a media report this statement was made with regard to the state of rural education in the democratic era:

[The ANC] Government has promised to provide equal schooling for *all* South Africans but, eight years into democracy, is struggling to extend basic schooling to formally neglected *rural* bantustan regions (*City Press* 2003[a]:17 - emphasis mine).

Statements cited above, prompt issues that constitute general research problems that guide this thesis throughout:

- # What is understood by *rural education*?
- # Which South African legislation introduced during the National Party Government (1948-1993); the Government of National Unity (1994-1998) and the ANC-led Government (1999-2004) impacted (both positively and negatively) on the *provision* of education in rural areas?
- # How did these laws *influence* the administration, governance and management of the provision of education to Black learners in rural areas?
- # What was the state of rural education for Black learners from 1994 onwards?
- # Which legislation was introduced after 1994 with the aim of redressing educational backlogs resulting from past legislation and did it succeed in doing so?
- # What is the response of educationists, liberation movements and politicians to rural education after 1994? Are their reactions justified?

### **1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

According to *The Concise English Dictionary* (1992), the term ‘aim’ means “to direct a course”. For any human activity or involvement in any exercise, to be worthwhile, it must derive its meaning and essence from its aim. Luthuli (1981:10) emphasises that “aims determine the selection, the appropriateness, and the sequence of human activities”. The aim is a general and broad statement and therefore it needs to be broken into smaller parts which are practical to implement. Those small parts emanating from an aim are therefore referred to as objectives. The aim and objectives of this research are elaborated upon in the following section:

### 1.3.1 Aim of the study

The main aim of this research is to outline government legislation with regard to formal schooling in rural areas of South Africa and its impact on Black rural education by means of a historical-educational approach. This entails understanding and investigating government policies, in their historical context (past, present and future), related to the provision of rural education in South Africa.

### 1.3.2 Research objectives

From the aforementioned aim, several objectives emanate:

- # to analyse conceptually the term 'rural education';
- # to identify and evaluate specific government legislation that had a bearing on rural education in South Africa during certain historical epochs. These epochs are the National Party Government period (1948-1993); the Government of National Unity period (1994-1998) and the period of the ANC-led Government (1999-2004);
- # to analyse critically different responses towards the legislation and provision of education provided to Black people living mainly in South Africa's rural areas; and
- # to evaluate rural education and present recommendations and guidelines according to which rural education legislation and policy formulation in South Africa may possibly be structured in future by the government in order to serve the interests of the people living in those areas.

## 1.4 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

There are several factors which motivated this research:

Firstly, in his MEd dissertation on rural education, the researcher found that there were a number of questions that remained unanswered as far as rural education was concerned. The researcher investigated rural education in the Limpopo Province (the former Northern Province) and only a few samples of schools in the province were investigated (Seroto 1999).

A brief historical overview of rural education pertaining to specific schools was investigated. Conditions that prevailed in those schools were critically elaborated upon without looking at detailed causes (e.g. government legislation) of the state of affairs in rural schools. Questions that remained unanswered then aroused the researcher's interest in contributory factors that had a bearing on rural education. Since the researcher investigated rural education up to 1994, the other question of utmost importance is: is the democratically elected government giving rural education the attention it deserves?

Rural education in South Africa is also of a specific interest since there are a number of serious backlogs that the ANC government should address to prove its commitment to providing Black learners with basic and quality education which is a basic constitutional right. According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996[d]) "everyone has the right to a basic education", and rural learners are included in this Bill of Rights. The following are some of the key indicators that demonstrate that the present South African government is faced with a multiplicity of serious challenges with regard to provision of education to people predominantly residing in rural areas:

Among comparable middle-income developing countries, South Africa has one of the worst records in terms of social indicators such as education, infant mortality, sanitation, electricity, roads and telecommunications. Children coming from rural areas suffer from malnutrition and related diseases, which significantly affect their school performance. Approximately two thirds of Black people in Africa are affected by poor public health conditions. More than three quarters in rural areas are affected by these poor health conditions (*NHSHISA* 2000: 2).

Of the 3,6 million people in South Africa infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the virus that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), 35 percent of the affected and infected live mostly in rural areas (Wales 2002:1). In 1998 South Africa had approximately 100,000 AIDS orphans. By the year 2008, 1,6 million children will have been orphaned by AIDS (*IMPACT* 1999:3; UNICEF 2002:1-5). The national government is therefore faced with a big challenge because the HIV/AIDS pandemic threatens South Africa's provision of education to children, mostly orphaned, and particularly residing in rural areas.

In rural surroundings, resources such as newspapers, magazines, electricity and telephones are normally not available. According to Graaff (1995:186), this may have an effect on learners' performance at school since modern equipment such as the use of computers will be hampered. Data from *The South African Schools Register of Needs of 1996* (SRN) reflect that the difference in the resource base of well (urban) and poorly (rural) resourced schools is probably the highest in South Africa and with the latter schools situated in rural areas (Edusource 1997[a]:1).

In a worldwide context, contemporary society has started to show an interest in rural education by engaging in debates and in drafting internationally acclaimed discussion documents (for example, *Journal on Rural Education; Matlhasedi*) that specifically relate to the provision of education for people in rural areas. Educationists have started documenting sensitive issues with regard to rural education which for many years were pushed into the background to be dealt with after issues in the urban areas had been attended to. It is this concern that partly aroused the researcher's interest to investigate the terrain of rural education, and particularly, the effect that legislation had on provision of education to Black learners.

As the process of transformation continues to unfold in South Africa, it is therefore imperative to investigate legislation that regulated rural education in the past and the impact that this legislation has had on rural education. This research is, however, not only concentrating on the impact of previous legislation, but also envisages contributing towards a better and broader perspective on the issue of rural education in South Africa. Before issues on rural education in South Africa are dealt with in subsequent chapters, the importance of this research study will be highlighted.

## **1.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

There are several reasons why this research is imperative. Firstly, this research envisages extending the knowledge-base with regard to rural education in South Africa. Graaff (1988:20) observed that "our knowledge of rural education in homeland areas, both "independent" and "self-governing" is still extremely fragmented". To be able to formulate future policies on any education system, one needs to have an extensive knowledge of what has happened in the past about a particular issue.

As the education provision to Black people, who resided predominantly in the rural areas, was one of neglect, this research will encourage South African society to look critically at ways to bring about fundamental changes in rural education in order to redress past imbalances. To have any great impact on redressing and reforming rural education, it is imperative to document data relevant to the issue.

Secondly, in view of the establishment of a new societal and political dispensation in South Africa, the National Education Department published a number of policies which reflected the democratic nature of the new dispensation (Republic of South Africa 1995[b]:15-16). In 1997 a new curriculum initiative called Curriculum 2005 was introduced. In 2002 the Department of Education introduced a *Revised National Curriculum Statement*. The Revised National Curriculum Statement is thus not a new curriculum *per se*, but a streamlining and strengthening of the Curriculum 2005. It keeps intact the principles, purposes and thrust of Curriculum 2005 and affirms the commitment to outcomes-based education. When introducing the Revised National Curriculum Statement, the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, admitted that the curriculum did not address some of the challenges experienced in rural areas when he mentioned that:

But we must also be realistic about what a curriculum can and cannot achieve. Inequality and poverty still plague the educational experience of too many families and their children. The curriculum is and will be differently interpreted and enacted in diverse context (DNE 2002[a]:1).

The new curriculum emphasised that learners should acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in an attempt to make education more relevant (DNE 1997[b]). The policy does not touch on, for example, the nature of rural economies, and their interaction with education. Nor does the policy give much attention to the ways in which rural school conditions interact with the curriculum and with teaching methodologies. Curriculum 2005 and the Revised Curriculum Statement, need to give attention to methodological strategies that will enable teachers in rural areas cope with conditions in those areas. In most cases learning areas such as Technology, Arts and Culture and Economic and Management Sciences are difficult to plan and implement in rural areas which are not well-resourced. Teachers and learners in rural areas find it a very challenging task to plan activities around these learning areas.

As an educator and a headmaster, the researcher found that teaching and management at a rural school is a challenge. Most of the rural schools are not well-equipped and in subjects such as science, learners tend to memorise facts. Conclusions arrived at after experiments are performed have to be memorised while the actual experiment has not been done. In most cases educators want to go to better-resourced schools. As a result, management processes at school become unstable.

The research will further enable policymakers involved in curriculum development to be better informed and be able to formulate more relevant curricula for South African citizens, especially those in rural areas. The National Education Department also needs information on rural education as it is one of their responsibilities to redress past imbalances. This research is therefore envisaged at making a contribution in that regard.

## **1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY**

The study of Black education is very broad and therefore the researcher envisages at making a careful selection of material relevant to this research in temporal and spatial terms.

### **1.6.1 Delimitation in relation to time**

The period under discussion ranges from 1948 until 2004. Before 1948 provision of education for Black people was predominantly a missionary undertaking. One of the first things that the National Party Government did on coming to power in 1948 was to remove Black education from church control by means of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The National Party used its control as a government to fulfil Afrikaner ethnic goals as well as White racial goals. Without compromise, the National Party government gave fierce expression to its determination to maintain White supremacy by coordinating and extending racial laws and tightening their enforcement. Black people were to be located in their 'own' homelands and the Bantu Authorities Act was passed in 1951 with that effect. In 1953 the Minister of Native Affairs, Dr HF Verwoerd oversaw the passing of Bantu Education Act (Act No 47) which indicated another step by the government in the direction of locating Black people to rural areas.

During the period 1948-1994 several laws, which demarcated the Black people to exclusive rural areas, were enacted by government. This research project, critically investigates the impact of government legislation on rural education since 1948 because the National Party government made its mission very clear that Black people were a rural people and as a result shaped legislation and policies with regard to Black people in that direction.

Moreover, it is imperative to look at the provision of education during the democratic era, that is 1994-2004. In its policy document, *A Policy Framework for Education and Training*, the ANC government reiterated its commitment towards the restructuring of the school system and the introduction of compulsory and free basic education to all South Africans (ANC 1994[a]:10). This research investigates whether after nearly a decade in government, challenges facing rural education have been given adequate attention.

#### **1.6.2 Delimitation in relation to space**

The study concerns the impact of legislation on Black learners in rural areas of South Africa from the time of the National Party government rule in 1948. The provision of Black education, after the passing of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, was removed from provincial control in Natal, Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Cape Province, and from mission churches to a separate Bantu Education Section in the Native Affairs of the Central Government (Union of SA 1955[b]:24; Hartshorne 1992:36). As South Africa was composed of the four provinces (the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, Natal and the Cape), provision of education to Black learners does not concentrate on one province, but on the past four and the current nine. The effects of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, for example, were felt by Black people residing in the rural areas of the past four provinces. Provision of education is investigated also in the current provinces which are classified as rural.



## **1.7 METHODOLOGY**

Best and Kahn (1993:20) define research as “the systematic and objective analysis and recording of controlled observation that may lead to the development of generalisations, principles, or theories, resulting in prediction and possible ultimate control of events”. Because this study aims at a critical review of government legislation that impacted on Black rural education in South Africa from a time and spatial perspective, the historical-educational research method is followed.

### **1.7.1 The historical-educational research method**

Historical research, according to Ary, Jacobs and Razavien (1990:453) is “the attempt to establish facts and arrive at conclusions concerning the past”. A historian systematically and objectively locates, evaluates and interprets evidence from which we can learn about the past. According to Wiersma (1991:203) historical research is a systematic process of searching for the facts and then using the information to describe, analyse and interpret the past based on information from selected sources as they relate to the topic under study.

The historical-educational method therefore “investigates the phenomenon of education by taking the present as the point of departure, traversing into the past with the aim of enlightening the present, and finally making recommendations for the future, based on the findings and conclusions” (Meier 1996). The temporal aspect, that is, the past, the present and future, plays a major role in historical-educational method.

The historical-educational research method, according to Wiersma (1991:206) involves the following four steps:

- identification of the research problem;
- collection and evaluation of source material;
- synthesis and presentation of information; and
- the analysis and interpretation with the formulation of conclusions and the drawing of generalisations.

The research undertaken in this thesis is guided by these steps. These steps tend to overlap and in some instances, they run concurrently.

### 1.7.2 Research approach

In conducting any research, a researcher needs to follow a specific approach which presupposes a particular attitude towards that field which is to be investigated. Lewis (1999:24) points out that an approach to research does not stand isolated from the specific methods and techniques adopted, but is intertwined with them.

In this research a metabletic<sup>1</sup> approach, which attempts to understand the changing educative phenomenon as a human occurrence in the context of time and space, is used. According to Van der Walt (1992:221), “a more acceptable procedure in historiography is to regard and assess historical data in their own historical context, and not the context of later periods with different social and other backgrounds”.

Mora Dickson (1974:22) mentions that:

Looking back from a changed social background a hundred years later, it is often only too easy to be critical of a previous generation's beliefs and presumptions, and of the actions that arose out of them.

Ross (1986:36) further mentions that historians are likely to make a mistake of talking as if the last analysis of ultimate effect was the same as the actual detailed events of history, and by telescoping back (period A - the more recent one) into (period B - an earlier period).

In this research cognisance is taken that the educative occurrence under discussion took place in a different social setting and world-view as that of the researcher (that is the late

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘metabletic’ is derived from the Greek word *metaballein* which means change (Meier 1996:32). According to Van Rensburg and Landman (1979, s.v. “Metabletics”) man is a historic being, who in the course of time has undergone changes, not any fundamental or radical change, but a gradual change of circumstances. This change can also manifest itself in education (Lewis 1999:22).

twentieth century) and historical data is therefore interpreted from a dynamic point of view, taking into consideration changes that took place over time.

### **1.7.3 Collection of relevant data**

The data that was used in this thesis were obtained from both the primary and secondary sources. External criticism, which evaluates the validity of the document and the internal criticism which evaluates the accuracy and worth of the statements contained in historical documents (Best & Kahn 1993:95; Borg & Gall 1989:822; Wiersma 1991:209) have continually been applied in this thesis. All sources quoted are listed at the end of this thesis in the bibliography.

#### *1.7.3.1 Primary sources*

Primary sources are eye-witness accounts. The following primary sources were consulted: original reports, newspaper clippings, journal and periodical articles, documents in archives, minutes of meetings and legislation as enactments and regulations as prescribed by statutory bodies. In addition interviews were conducted with individuals and experts in the field of South African legislation specifically pertaining to rural education.

#### *1.7.3.2 Secondary sources*

Secondary sources are accounts of those events which were not actually witnessed by a reporter (Borg & Gall 1989:814). In this research project, a computer search based on the research topic was conducted. To select relevant, authentic and reliable information a careful selection was made of secondary sources which included textbooks, encyclopaedias, dissertations and theses.

## **1.8 EXPLANATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

Before the research can be undertaken, it is essential to define and to delimit certain concepts fundamental to the study. The following concepts are clarified and regarded as working definitions for the purpose of the study:

### 1.8.1 Education

To date there is no absolute or final definition to describe the concept 'education'. The term 'education' which has a Latin derivation, *educere*, means to lead or nourish (Van Rensburg & Landman 1979:307). Education is as old as humankind and it reveals itself as a human occurrence. Venter (1979) emphasises that not all human occurrences necessarily imply an educative occurrence.

According to Venter (1979:32), an educative act takes place only when there is evidence of assistance to the educand. It takes place also when the learner is led according to a set of norms based on values; if the influence on him/her is beneficial; and if an attempt is made to mould him/her physically and spiritually in such a way that he/she can fulfil his/her life's calling in an independent and reasonable manner. Education is the process by which an individual becomes able to function according to the expectations of his/her society as well as according to limits of his/her capabilities. For education to be meaningful, it must be interpreted and clearly defined in terms of a particular philosophy of life of a people.

From the afore-mentioned it is imperative to point out that education is closely linked to the *political, social and cultural* level of development of a particular community. Lengrand (1970:44-45) argues that education as a lifelong process, should set into place structures and methods that will assist a person throughout his/her life span with the intention of maintaining continuity of his/her apprenticeship and training. The concept 'education' in this study refers to that which is provided to learners with the intention of enabling them to cope successfully with the challenges they will have to face in life.

### 1.8.2 Rural

As the concept 'rural', forms a major aspect of this research, it will be dealt with in detail in chapter two.

### 1.8.3 Legislation

According to *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles* (1964, s.v. “legislation”) the term legislation refers to the “action of making or giving laws, or the enactment of laws”. It consists mainly of laws (also called statutes, acts or regulations) made by the national parliament and other bodies such as provincial legislatures.

### 1.8.4 Black people

In this research the term Black refers to South African citizens other than Whites and it will be interchangeably used with the terms ‘African’, ‘Bantu’, ‘Natives’ and ‘non-Europeans’. Coloureds, Indians, Khoikhoi (Hottentots) and San (Bushmen) are also referred to as Blacks in this study.

### 1.8.5 Afrikaner

‘Afrikaner’ is defined as one who is Afrikaans by descent or birth, and/or one who belongs to the Afrikaans-speaking population group (*Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal* 1950, s.v. “Afrikaner”). These people are for the most part descendants of the Dutch who came to settle in the western Cape as employees of the Dutch East India Company (Dube 1985:87).

## 1.9 CHAPTER DEMARCATION

In Chapter one an introduction and background of the study was presented which includes the statement of the research problem, the aim of the research, methodology, and explanation of key concepts.

Chapter two conceptually analyses the term ‘rural’ as used in this thesis. As this term plays a profound role throughout the thesis, it is necessary to understand it clearly.

In Chapter three a general historical overview of rural education in South Africa from 1652 to 1948 is presented as a backdrop to subsequent chapters.

Chapter four critically investigates South African legislation that had a direct influence on rural education from 1948 to 1960. In this chapter, specific reference will be made to several pieces of government legislation which had an impact on the administration, organisation and management of rural education.

Chapter five focuses on the homeland issues, the question of self-governing states and 'independent' states from 1960 to 1994 and the impact the homeland policy had on rural education.

Chapter six focuses on the education transformation policies and legislation of rural education introduced by the ANC-led Government from 1994 onwards with the aim of redressing past imbalances pertaining to Black education, specifically in the rural areas of South Africa.

In the final chapter, chapter seven, an evaluation of the thesis, focusing on findings, and conclusions is made. Recommendations with the view of finding possible solutions to the present dilemma of rural education in South Africa are presented.

## **1.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This chapter indicated the path and direction taken by this research. The problem with rural education was introduced and it is therefore of principal importance to substantiate further the problem of rural education in South Africa in a more detailed way. Before a detailed historical investigation is done, a brief conceptual analysis of 'rural education' will be presented in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **‘RURAL’ [EDUCATION]: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS**

## CHAPTER TWO

### 'RURAL' [EDUCATION]: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to put rural education into a better perspective, it is necessary to define and conceptually analyse the term 'rural'. Developing such a definition has been a conceptual problem for some time (Falk & Pinhey 1978; Bealer, Willits & Kuvlesky 1965). Gilbert (1982) observed that the definition of the term 'rural' has been in dispute for at least seventy years. This term is often used by sociologists as if it referred to some important, unique, and singular phenomenon. However, precisely what is meant by the term, as Willits and Bealer (1967:165) point out, is often not clear. The lack of a clear, widely accepted definition of the term 'rural' is continuously hampering research, especially in the field of rural education. This is further complicated by the fact that the definition of the concept 'rural' in research studies and policy documents is often implied and not explicitly stated (Halfacree 1993; Pitblado & Pong 1999; USRPRI 1999).

Newby (1986:209) mentions that what constitutes 'rural' is wholly a matter of convenience. This notion is supported by Copp (1972:519) who stipulates that:

There is no rural society and there is no rural economy. It is merely our analytic distinction, our theoretical device. Unfortunately we tend to be victims of our own terminological duplicity...We tend to think of the rural sector as a separate entity which can be developed while the non-rural sector is held constant. Our thinking is ensnared by our own words.

Even though rural sociologists agree that defining the concept 'rural' is problematic, Willits and Bealer (1967:165) point out that researchers need to specify a composite definition wherein measurable component parts are combined and the nature of the combination explicitly rationalised. Therefore in order to arrive at a rationalised view of the term 'rural', one needs to adequately conceptualise (and describe) its definition and measurable components, firstly



from a broader view and secondly in specific terms in the South African context. The objectives flowing from this aim are therefore:

- to critically outline broad approaches towards defining the term 'rural';
- to investigate dominant characteristics/features that are common in rural areas;
- to conceptualise the term 'rural' in the South African context;
- to analyse the definition of the concept 'rural' as shaped by different South African legislation; and
- to analyse and determine a composite definition that can be assessed and be taken as an acceptable definition of the term 'rural' in South African context.

## **2.2 GENERAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERM 'RURAL'**

The term 'rural' is derived from Latin word '*ruralis*' which means countryside or open land. Before 1425 until late into the twentieth century, it was specifically associated with farm work (*The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology*, 1988, s.v. "rural"). It had its early historical roots in America, and it used to refer also to areas of low population density, small absolute size, and relative isolation, where the major economic base was agricultural production and where the way of life of the people was reasonably homogeneous and differentiated from that of other sectors of society, most notably the city (Bealer *et al* 1965:256).

The term 'rural' has variously been used by social scientists to designate characteristics of physical areas or attributes of individual persons, and to refer at least to three substantive aspects. In other words, the meaning of the term 'rural' revolved around an ecological facet, an occupational dimension and socio-cultural component (Bealer *et al* 1965:255-256; Willits & Bealer 1967:165). The three concepts were believed to be empirically linked – even though there was growing evidence, particularly among the American society, that the unambiguous relationships may no longer exist (Dewey 1960:66). Thus, in most cases, to know where a person resided was to know what he/she did for a living (occupational), the pattern of his/her values (socio-cultural), and his/her normal interaction situations (ecological).

It has been a normal practice for many years to refer the term 'rural' to people engaged in agricultural production (occupational). The term 'rural' which denoted an employment category,

was also linked to farming, which included, in most cases, fishing and forestry (Loomis & Beegle 1950:204). The occupational definition of the concept 'rural' as Bealer *et al* (1965:259) argue, is the most limited in scope, since it concentrated only on one aspect, namely, the employment category.

No matter how the term 'rural' has been used historically to refer to the occupational dimension, there seems to be tacit agreement between rural sociologists that the term does not refer simply to a delimited, specific phenomenon (Bealer *et al* 1965:259). Most rural sociologists who ascribe to an occupational meaning of the term 'rural' do not consistently follow it through. Rural sociologists like Slocum (1962), for example, include discussions of religion, delinquency and divorce in such definitions which suggest that the occupational definition had to do also with other factors such as the economy. Such a definition, according to Bealer *et al* (1965:259-260) "flirts with economic determinism". Defining the concept rural from one dimension reflects a restrictive and simplistic approach which will lead to the formulation of a biased definition.

The term 'rural' has also been used as an ecological construct which referred to the distribution of people in space. The most common usage of the term 'rural' throughout history has been to designate regions of small population size or low density as rural (Bealer *et al* 1965:260). The ecological definition, which is also referred to as the 'census' definition conforms to most common sense understanding between rural sociologist and the layman. Although it appears that the term 'rural' defined in terms of size is precise, convenient and easily operationalized, but it is also problematic.

The ecological definition tends to restrict the term 'rural' in terms of absolute qualities. Defining the term in regard to absolute size will lose its actual meaning when the population size changes during various periods. On the other hand, using the term to refer to areas of relative small size and density is also a challenge because in some countries like America, there is a possibility that there will be no areas in future which are small relative to others.

The term 'rural' generally has been taken to refer not only to regions with a small number of inhabitants, but also to isolated settlements with little contact with the more densely populated urban areas. Defining the concept 'rural' in terms of isolation, should take cognisance of what

is occurring in the rest of society. The hinterland cannot be fully defined except in relation to other aspects of the larger social structure. When summarising the ecological definition of the term 'rural', Bealer *et al* (1965:263) say the following:

While defining "rural" in terms of ecological notions of accessibility provides certain advantages, it also has disadvantages...For instance, should isolation be construed in terms of physical distance, commuting costs, availability of communication media, some other factors or a combination of factors? Which population centres should be taken as points of reference in determining accessibility? Questions such as these need to be addressed if we would define "rural" in terms of isolation.

The question of relationship between culture and the ecological interpretation of the term 'rural' remains a thorny issue. Whether there is a relationship between culture and rural ecology needs serious debate. Ford (1978) holds to the theoretical validity of rural-urban cultural differences. He (1978) further argues that rural-urban differences in culture persist because of dissimilar environments. Ecologically, he mentions that small, dispersed, and homogeneous population settlements maintain a traditional rural culture (Ford 1978; Miller & Grader 1979). This analysis of the term 'rural' suggests that settlement types in themselves produce specific forms of culture. This notion fails to acknowledge that in defining the concept 'rural', the distinctive features of the political economy must also be explicitly considered rather than assumed. Many studies undertaken on the definition of the concept 'rural' suggest that there are no significant rural-urban cultural differences (Pahl 1966; Van Es & Brown 1974).

Hoggart (1990:245) observed that differences across rural areas have been recognised, but they have been inadequately theorised. In the following section, an attempt will be made to theorise and conceptualise approaches towards defining the concept 'rural'.

## **2.3 APPROACHES TOWARDS DEFINING THE TERM 'RURAL'**

There are four basic approaches towards defining the term 'rural'. The descriptive definitions, definitions based on socio-cultural characteristics; the locality-based and the social representations theory definitions will be used in the following section to analyse critically what the term 'rural' entails.

### **2.3.1 Descriptive definition**

The descriptive definition of the term 'rural' concentrates upon that which is observable and measurable. Halfacree (1993:23) points out that just as there are 'urban areas', 'residential areas', so too can we define 'rural' areas according to their socio-spatial characteristics (Pratt 1989).

The definition focuses on different aspects of the socio-spatial environment which were based upon census statistics, population, migration rates, housing conditions, land used and remoteness (cf Cloke 1977; Cloke & Edwards 1986). In Canada as well as United Kingdom, statistics are used to define the term 'rural'. The definitions of the term 'rural' are also based on geographic classifications. A geographic area is classified by population size and density; level of urbanization in relationship to urban centres; and principal economic activity (Bollman 1994; Pitblado & Pong 1999; USRPRI 1999). Du Plessis, Beshiri, Bollman and Clemenson (2001:7), mention the following six basic descriptive definitions of the term 'rural' used in Canada:

- Census rural area: These are areas where individuals of 1000 people or more live on the outskirts or places with densities of 400 or more people per square kilometre.
- Rural and Small Towns (RST): Individuals live in towns or municipalities outside the commuting zone of a large urban centre (population 10 000 or more).
- Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) predominantly situated in rural communities: These areas comprise individuals in communities with

less than 150 persons per square kilometre. This includes the individuals living in the countryside, towns and small cities.

- OECD predominantly situated in rural regions: It comprises of individuals living in census divisions with more than 50 percent of the population living in OECD rural communities.
- Non-metropolitan regions: Individuals living outside metropolitan regions with urban centres of 50 000 or more population.
- Rural postal codes: In these areas individuals are allocated "0" as the second character in their postal code.

According to the United States Census Bureau (USCB), rural areas are defined as "those that are not urban". The USCB further defines urban areas as places with a population of 2 500 or more people which qualifies rural areas as areas with less than 2 500 people (United States Department of Commerce 1992). When defining the term 'rural', the United States Department of Commerce encompasses a vast array of geographical, environmental, economic and social factors. It has been noted in the descriptive definition that different criteria such as population size, density, labour market, which have different thresholds, are emphasised.

There are a number of shortcomings that emerge from definitions of the term 'rural' as defined from a descriptive point of view. For example, selecting a definition of the term 'rural' based on geographic scales and dimensions make the defining thereof difficult since geographic variants differ from country to country (Spring 2002:3). The descriptive definitions of the term 'rural' are technically aimed at a specific academic direction. For example, statistical definitions are geared towards socio-economic studies; agricultural definitions towards land use and social relations studies; and population density definitions towards service provision studies. Halfacree (1992:63-66) and Cloke (1985:4) mention that descriptive definitions are all geared towards various planning and academic purposes. Falk and Pinhey (1978:555) refer to the descriptive way of defining the term 'rural' as a "disciplinary myopia". When criticising the descriptive definition, Halfacree (1993:24) argues that:

The [descriptive] 'definitions' are better seen as research tools for the articulation of specific aspects of the [term] rural than as ways of defining the [term] rural. Their methods involve trying to fit a definition to *what we already intuitively consider to be rural*, in the absence of any other justification as to why they should be regarded as representing the rural...Descriptive methods only describe the rural, they do not define it themselves – [emphasis as in the original text].

Another shortcoming with the descriptive method of defining the term 'rural' is that governments in different countries do not use the same statistical criteria for rural and urban populations. In Japan, for instance, any cluster of fewer than 30 000 people is considered rural, whereas in Albania a group of less than 400 inhabitants is regarded as a rural population ( *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1986, s.v. "rural society").

Having outlined the descriptive definition of the term rural, a second approach, the socio-cultural definition, will be dealt with.

### **2.3.2 The socio-cultural definition**

This approach concentrates on highlighting the extent to which people's socio-cultural characteristics vary with the type of environment in which they live. According to Hoggart and Buller (1987), socio-cultural definitions of the term 'rural' assume that population density affects behaviour and attitudes. Whether actual behaviour conforms to values is problematic, for values are general directives while behaviour is specific (Bealer *et al* 1965:264). The genetic, physiological differences in personalities, physical conditions, and such structural conditions as the size of the groups, their number and heterogeneity are being helped by culture to determine individual behaviour.

In the 1930s the social scientist, Louis Wirth, proposed that 'urbanism' represented a distinct way of life. This urbanism was characterised as being dynamic, unstable, mobile in stratification and impersonal with contacts being determined by one's precise situation at the time. 'Ruralism' was characterised by stability, integration and rigid stratification, with individuals coming into contact with the same people in a variety of situations (Halfacree 1993:25; Rees 1950; Williams 1956). In his definition, Wirth suggested that there is a rural-

urban dichotomy. This notion suggested that there is a difference between the concept 'rural' and 'urban'.

The simplistic notion of a sharp rural-urban dichotomy was soon rejected in favour of the rural-urban continuum model developed by Redfield (1941). This is a type of a composite definition, which is based on the assumption that people and places differ from one another in degree of rurality (Willits & Bealer 1967:166). For example, one person may live in an area of low population density, be a farmer, and express 'traditional' values. Another person may live in the same area and farm, but not hold 'rural type' values. When an analysis is made, the former will be classified as the more rural person than the latter. The notion of rural-urban continuum positioned settlements along a spectrum ranging from very remote rural areas, through transitional areas, to the modern city (Halfacree 1993:25; Hartshorne 1989:4; Redfield 1941; Smith 1984:30). This definition suggests that there is a link between rural and urban that blends into each other so gradually and seamlessly that it is impossible to say where one becomes the next.

The rural-urban continuum was criticised by Pahl (1970) when he stated that "we should concentrate on the people living in rural areas rather than rural areas themselves". Concentration was to be focused on various social groups living in rural areas or 'classes' which comprise rural populations. This thesis by Pahl was theoretically flawed. Several studies reflect the penetration of environmental determinism into social science, whereby human behaviour and character is determined by the physical environment in which it exists. Pahl's theory of defining the term 'rural' neglected the important aspect of space or environment, which forms a basic component of defining the term 'rural'. It can be argued that the socio-cultural definition of the term 'rural', just like the descriptive definition of the term rural, is that both demonstrate a more limited conceptualisation of the relationship between space and society.

In their study on an evaluation of a composite definition of rurality, Willits and Bealer (1967) conclude by mentioning that a "solely socio-cultural definition" would be unsuitable in trying to define the concept 'rural'. Whether one decides to define the term 'rural' from a socio-cultural perspective, it should be borne in mind that the meaning of the term 'rural' should better be explored in an analytical rather than a descriptive capacity.

### 2.3.3 The locality-based definition of the term 'rural'

The main criticism that is levelled against the descriptive and the socio-economic definitions of the term 'rural' has emerged from the postmodernist and poststructuralist perspectives. From these perspectives, rural areas are seen primarily as social and cultural constructions, which are increasingly detached from their spatial settings. According to Halfacree (1993:26), these definitions of the term/concept 'rural' fail to conceptualise the relationship between space and society correctly. Castells (1983:4) mentions that "space is not a reflection of society, it *is* society..." However, it should be borne in mind that it is not an easy task to differentiate between space and society. Murdoch and Pratt (1993:423) argue that the use of rigid geographical typologies is inappropriate, as these fail to capture the fluidity of rural communities, within which social relations are constantly being redefined.

The rural locality definition advocates the notion that if rural areas are to be recognised and studied as categories in their own right, they must therefore be carefully defined according to *that which makes them rural* (Jonas 1988; Urry 1986).

Rurality is treated as a specific type of space that has a concrete geographic location where its character is objectified in the physical and social attributes of that location. To develop a conception of rural space within the social science in defining the term 'rural' two criteria need to be satisfied. Firstly, there are significant structures operating which are unambiguously associated with the local level; and secondly, looking at these structures enables us to distinguish clearly between an urban and a rural environment (Cloke 1980:197; Cloke 1985:6; Hoggart 1990:248). In this definition, rural locations are observed and analysed in various terms, namely, topographic attributes, social composition of the people living and/or working there, forms of activity, nature of social relations and relations with other spaces of similar or different type in other geographic locations (Halfacree 1993:32).

There are basically three features that assume prime importance in creating a definition which attempt to define rural areas according to that which makes them rural. First there is a link between the rural and the agricultural (Newby 1978), secondly, there is a connection between the rural and issues of 'collective consumption', the key being the effect of low population densities (Urry 1984) and thirdly the space's role in consumption (Halfacree 1993:28).



Certain social scientists like Hoggart (1988; 1990; Hoggart & Buller 1987) wanted to do away with the term rural, as he sees it as a “confusing chaotic conception”, and lacking explanatory power. Hoggart (1990:245) further argues that “rural places are not identical, with any similarities that which they do possess is not being significantly different from any features of ‘urban’ places. Halfacree (1993:29) concludes by saying that Hoggart’s thesis of doing away with the rural does not have the necessary corollary that we have to assign ‘the rural’ to the dustbin of research history. Another means of defining the term ‘rural’, which directs our attention to the realm of discourse and social representations will be dealt with in the following section.

#### **2.3.4 Social representations theory**

According to Moscovici (1981:181) social representations are “concepts, statements and explanations originating in daily life in the course of inter-individual communications“. Their character is essentially collective and members of social groups will share many representations (Moscovici 1982:129). Potter and Litton (1985:82) mention that social representations can be considered as a linguistically based apparatus for actively making sense of the social world.

The theory of social representations attempts to outline how people understand, explain and articulate the complexity of stimuli and experiences emanating from the social and physical environment in which they are immersed (Halfacree 1993). Social representations theory rejects the idea that everyday behaviour involves a scientific approach to objects, people and events, where understanding is merely information processing.

In this theory, Halfacree (1993) emphatically states that the true nature of rurality is best uncovered through lay discourse and focused on personal experience and belief, rather than through academic discourse of the more conventional type. Sayer (1989:267) points out the following about lay discourse:

Lay knowledge or practical consciousness are only atheoretical in the sense that their conceptualisations and claims are relatively unexamined. Since lay knowledge is both part of our object, and a rival account of it, our response to it must not be to dismiss it, but rather to

examine it. There are no philosophical defensible grounds for using the term 'theory' as many (often otherwise sophisticated) social scientists do – where the only distinguishable feature of 'theoretical' terms is their familiar or esoteric character in relation to lay vocabularies...

According to this theory, people act logically, systematically and rationally, not because they are guided by an inner, on-board computer, but because they abstract experience from everyday realities of the social world (Thrift 1986:87). According to Schutz (1970) the social representations theory argues that renewed importance needs to be attached to the 'paramount realities of everyday life'. Gray (2000:31) supports this theory when he mentions that the claimed advantages of this way of defining the rural are that it reveals how people in different social settings express and understand rurality and how different political interests are promoted through the use of rural discourse.

In this mode of social representation, rurality is a de-spatialized cultural concept that has a 'disembodied and virtual character' because it is not linked to a concrete geographical location and thus it 'lacks empirical clarity' (Halfacree 1993:32). In their conclusion on analysis of social representations theory, Potter and Litton (1985:89) stipulate:

...our argument should not be taken as denying the importance of what Moscovici is trying to explain with the notion of social representations. The idea that people draw upon widely shared, linguistically based, resources for constructing, organizing and making sense of their social worlds is a powerful one which has been undervalued in much psychological research. Instead our aim has been to document inadequacies in Moscovici's theoretical conception which led to difficulties when it is used in empirical settings.

This definition of the concept 'rural' from a social representations theory poses a problem that it can not be used empirically. The definition will further hamper scientific venture into the field of rural education. In the section that follows, the definition of the concept rural within the South African context, taking approaches mentioned above, will be outlined.

## **2.4 THE TERM 'RURAL' IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

As indicated above, different countries may have different perceptions of what 'rural' is, making comparisons difficult. Different scholarly approaches were used in America and other developed areas to define the term 'rural' (cf 2.3).

The definition of the term 'rural' in South African context was based on the agricultural and political aspects which were consequently inherent in the occupational, ecological and socio-cultural dimensions. Although the definition of the term 'rural' in the South African context was basically agricultural and political, approaches such as the descriptive, the socio-cultural, the locality based definition and the social representations theory were unavoidably linked with the definition of the term 'rural' from a South African perspective.

### **2.4.1 Defining the term 'rural' in agricultural terms**

Traditionally, the Black people derived all their wealth from land. They cultivated the land, grazed their stock and erected their dwellings on the land. Each family was economically self-sufficient and there was a minimum of barter or trade. The trend was that most Black people moved in the areas which had a lot of rainfall (Union of South Africa 1951: par 69). These areas were predominantly rural and people were classified as rural because of their occupations: people were dependent on agriculture, which can be classified as a definition based on the occupational dimension (cf 2.2). This definition also took into consideration the socio-cultural approach in that to a certain extent concentration was focused on various social groups living in those areas.

There was a shift from defining 'rural' areas simply from an occupational level. It was further based on geographical classification (cf 2.3.1; Union of South Africa 1951: par 69). This definition was descriptive in the sense that it took into consideration census statistics, population size and density. In 1946, for example, in other rural areas the density of the Black population was 0,02 Black persons per square mile and contrary to that, in other rural areas such as Butterworth, Willowvale and Elliotdale in the Cape had a population of over 100 Black persons per square mile (Union of South Africa 1951: par 69 (d)). The descriptive way of

defining the concept 'rural' is flawed in the sense that the 'census approach' changes over time.

It should be pointed out that not only Black people were found in these rural areas as described by means of census. There were still White people farming in rural areas. These areas were normally more fertile than those owned by Black people and this resulted in many frontier wars between the Black people and the White people because of the question of who had the right to land. In 1936, for example, there were 3 million Black people in rural areas as compared to 2 million White people in rural areas (Union of South Africa 1951: Table X). This clearly reveals how people in different social settings express and understood rurality and how different political interests were promoted through the use of rural discourse (cf 2.3.4)

There was a slight difference between those people staying in urban areas. The main urban centres were Cape Town, the Witwatersrand, Durban, Pietermaritzburg and the Natal South Coast. Except for big towns, before 1910, other small urban areas were basically not that much different to rural areas. In this case what is referred to as the rural-urban continuum prevailed since there was a link between rural and urban that blended into each other. Thus, it was not an easy task to say where one became the next (cf 2.3.2). The slight difference was the economic base between rural and urban areas (Union of South Africa 1951: par 72).

From an occupational point of view, rural areas, in the South African context are defined generally as open areas with low settled population densities. A high proportion of the unsettled land area is for primary production (agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries). The residents of rural areas are largely dependent - either directly or indirectly - on these primary production activities as their principal, if not their only, source of livelihood. There was a paradigm shift in defining the concept 'rural' over time in the South African context which will be discussed in the following sections.

#### **2.4.2 Defining the concept 'rural' in political terms**

Different names, based largely on political overtones, have been used for the term 'rural' in various historical periods in South Africa. The oldest, used by the British Government (especially in Natal) and the Union Government (1910-1948) was the 'reserves'. The term

reserve refers to “a place or something that would be used at a later stage for a particular purpose”. Rural areas were specifically reserved places which were a politically inspired attempt by the government to divert reasonable Black economic and political aspirations away from the greater South Africa. This was in line with the government’s ideology of capitalism where private individuals and business firms carried on the production and exchange of goods and services through a complex network of prices and markets. Rural areas were defined in terms of the socio-cultural dimension. This propagated the notion, in defining the concept ‘rural’, concentration should be focused on various social groupings living in rural areas or ‘classes’ which comprise rural populations (cf 2.3.2).

After 1948, when the National Party government came to power, other labels were also used to refer to the term ‘rural’. Dr HF Verwoerd’s first name for the term ‘rural’ was ‘Bantustan’<sup>2</sup>. This was later changed to the concept ‘homeland’, the reason being that the international world could easily accept the idea of Black people developing in their own land. These areas later changed to ‘national states’. During the 1980s, national states were divided into ‘independent’ states (TBVC – Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) and ‘self-governing’ territories (SGT’s – KwaZulu, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, Qwaqwa, Gazankulu and Lebowa)<sup>3</sup>.

Although there is a common understanding of what rural is, a universal definition does not exist. In an effort to better understand the concept of rurality, a *multi-criteria approach*, will be used to define rural areas in South African context. The following are regarded as characteristics or criteria of ruralism in South Africa:

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<sup>2</sup> Area set aside by the Nationalist Party Government after it came to power in 1948, for the exclusive occupation of Black people. During the Verwoerdian era, it was changed in favour of a more impressive-sounding ‘Homeland’ or ‘Self-Governing State’ (*Readers Digest* 1992:486).

<sup>3</sup> The terms ‘National States’, ‘Independent States’ and ‘Self-Governing States’ will be fully outlined in Chapter 4.

- # Geographical isolation.
- # Natural environment dominated by pastures, forests, mountains and deserts.
- # Small communities which have limited access to the usual social amenities and facilities.
- # Community with low population density and limited range of employment possibilities.
- # Communities which are traditionally administered.
- # Communities that are politically, socially and intellectually on the periphery, whether in relation to the former homeland centres or to the industrial heartland of South Africa.
- # In these areas, there are large settlements without an economic basis for activities and resources are generally few (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1986, s.v. "rural society").
- # Accompanying the low standard of personal living in rural areas, there is a low standard of public services as compared to those provided in towns (Griffiths 1968:13).

The multi-criteria approach of defining the concept 'rural' was also adopted by the democratic government after its inception in 1994. A number of policy documents, among others the *Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity of 1995* and the *Rural Development Strategy of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)* of 1997 were introduced in order to conceptualise and understand the term 'rural'. The following were mentioned as characteristics of the rural sector (Republic of South Africa 1995[a]:9):

- # high levels of poverty, especially among those in female headed households;
- # agricultural dualism, both in land use and support services;
- # spatial chaos and stark contrasts between the former homelands and the surrounding areas, in terms of settlement patterns, land ownership and use, transport and other infrastructure;

- # historical restrictions on entrepreneurial development and poor support; and
- # new local government structures set up in 1995, with no history or experience of planning , democracy or service.

The policy on *Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity* further defines rural areas as:

...those areas that have the lowest level of *services*, and the average distance to the nearest service points. They include large scale *farming* areas, much - but not all - of ex-bantustan areas, and small municipalities with little potential to raise taxes sufficient to meet the costs of services (Republic of South Africa 1995[a]:13 [emphasis mine]).

*The Rural Development Strategy of the Reconstruction and Development Programme* defines rural areas as:

sparsely populated areas of the country in which people *farm* or depend on *natural resources*. These areas include the villages and the small towns that are dispersed throughout the *remote* areas and which may have the *potential* to provide the focus for service provision and entrepreneurial development through the *creation* of markets (Republic of South Africa 1997:22 [emphasis mine]).

The above-mentioned definitions both agree that people in rural areas are dependent on agriculture and lack basic resources. The definition further acknowledges that rural areas are composed of different characteristics. There are also numerous shortcomings in trying to define the term 'rural' by policymakers in the democratic order. Both definitions do not adequately conceptualise the term 'rural' and the following can be mentioned in this regard:

- # These definitions are descriptive (cf 2.3.1) and generally geared towards a specific social direction - service provision. They fail to appreciate the arbitrary nature of classifications of settlements related to their spatial settings.
- # Aspects such as statistics, population size and density, and level of urbanisation are not elucidated in these definitions. In essence, the term 'rural' is not analytically defined with the aim of trying to arrive at a more conclusive definition.

- # The definitions do not touch on aspects of the rural-urban dichotomy or the rural-urban continuum, which play a role in trying to define analytically the term 'rural'.

What then is the acceptable definition of the term 'rural' in the South African context? The approach should therefore be inter-disciplinary, although defining the term 'rural' from a descriptive approach is also necessary to get a better understanding of the South African situation. Without this approach it would have been difficult to identify these areas easily. However, it becomes problematic when emphasis is only placed on the descriptive approach since this will be a selective approach. One must not lose sight that some of the characteristics which are indicated as being found in rural areas, are also evident in urban areas. To arrive at a more acceptable definition of the concept 'rural', one needs to look at it holistically, from the descriptive, socio-cultural and a locality-based approach.

It is also of primary importance that the personal experience and beliefs of a layman, as advocated by social representations theorists (cf 2.2.4), should not be undermined when defining the concept 'rural'. The researcher also acknowledges that experience extracted from everyday realities, are of advantage as they reveal how people lived and interacted during various historical periods. In the South African context, the majority of people, Black or White, resided largely in rural areas (cf 2.4.1). If a standard definition of the term 'rural' was to be derived from information gathered from these laymen only, it would have been a very challenging task to arrive at conclusive definition since every person would have given information of what rurality is from a different historical and political background. Given the many ethnic and racial groups South Africa is comprised of, the task of defining the term 'rural' from a layman's perspective would even be more difficult. According to Bob Smith (1984:30) there is no typical rural community, but what exists is a complex, multi-dimensional collection of possibilities. Therefore, no standard model of rural education is likely to fulfil such serious needs.

When looking at different definitions of the term 'rural', the following general characteristics remain dominant:



- # a space where human settlement and infrastructure occupy only a small share of the landscape.
- # poor economic base resulting in poor resources.
- # geographical and political isolation; and
- # poverty.

Hartshorne (1985:5) states that the most marked characteristic of the areas classified as rural in South Africa is poverty. Smith and Martin (1997:15) agree that both in developing and developed countries one common feature found in rural areas is the issue of a high poverty rate.

As mentioned above, poverty in the South African context firstly needs to be understood, from a political viewpoint. One characteristic of the history of the Black people in South Africa is the issue of racism and its link to poverty-stricken rural areas. Before a detailed analysis of the main feature of rural education in South Africa, namely poverty, is elucidated, it is imperative to look briefly at the underlying thinking and practice of racism.

## **2.5 RACISM IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The terms 'prejudice', 'racism', 'discrimination', and 'stereotypes' have become emotive concepts in South Africa's history. The issue of race, on various levels and numerous forums nestled at the heart of not only the global debates, but also of national and local concern. Since the history of racism has been well documented in literature, it is therefore not the intention of this section make a detailed analysis of racism in South Africa, but only salient aspects that had a bearing on rural education will be highlighted.

### **2.5.1 Defining the concept 'racism'**

Defining the term 'racism' is a difficult endeavour, since it is subjected to many different historical interpretations (Lewis 1999:110). To be able to put the term 'racism' into perspective, it is imperative to define other related terms such as 'prejudice' and 'stereotypes'. 'Prejudice' refers to preconceived attitudes or opinions about other people. The term 'prejudice' usually refers to negative attitudes toward other people solely based on their membership in a specific group (Encarta 2002 s.v. "racism").

The term 'racism' is derived from the word 'race'. 'Racism' is a form of prejudice based on perceived physical differences and also refers to hostile attitudes toward people perceived to belong to another race. One cause of prejudice and racism is the human tendency to form stereotypes - generalised beliefs that associate whole groups of people with particular traits (Encarta 2002 s.v. "Race"). According to Klein (1993:4) the term 'race' refers to the socially imposed categories of human beings in terms of ethnicity, skin colour and other visible differences. The categorisation of people into different racial groups is further made on the basis of language, religion, customs and cultural heritage. Steyn and Waghid (2000:73) agree with Klein when they mention that racism occurs:

(1) when one metes out differential treatment to people solely on the basis of their race and makes arbitrary distinctions between people on the basis of irrelevant differences such as people's ethnic, national or cultural origin, and (2) when institutional policies and procedures operate to facilitate access for members of the dominant sub-culture while effectively and unjustifiably denying access to members of other ethnic and cultural groups within society.

Dube (1985:88-89) mentions three ways in which racism manifests itself, namely, overtly, covertly and reactively.

- # *Overt racism* is the form of racism that is most often labelled as racism, which manifests itself in the form of racist and racial behaviour. This form of racism is practised in the open and their practitioners demonstrate it publicly.
- # *Covert racism* is a subtle form of prejudice which often escapes the label of racism because it is not easily identified.
- # *Reactive racism* is very seldom acknowledged in literature as another form of racism. This type of racism is often practised by people who themselves have been or may still be victims of racism. Lewis (1999:111) further mentions that these people themselves are guilty of racist attitudes and behaviour since they make use of the same restrictive strategies as those who practised racism against them.

According to Slabbert (2002:162) the concept of race is a human invention. Banton (1988) observed that there have been physical differences between humans for thousands of years, but these differences have only been conceptualised during the last two hundred years. In

order to be able to put the concept 'racism' into context, a number of theories that emerged over the years, need to be perused, namely the religious perspective; the geographical perspective and the selective preservation perspective (cf Banton 1988). Even though these theories are 'outdated', they were generally held theories which were previously clung to by many who formulated policies which impacted on Black people living in rural areas.

#### *2.5.1.1 The religious perspective*

The religious perspective (Hamitic theory) postulated the notion that all humans had descended from Adam and Eve, and were similar until God altered the appearance of the descendants of Ham. This perspective was most prevalent during the Middle Ages. Physical differences were often interpreted by Western cultures as a sign of punishment by God because it was believed that the descendents of Ham were punished with a dark skin (Sanders 1969). The perception that Black people were different on the basis of religious conceptualisations, was aimed at propagating the view that certain groups were more superior. It has been used as tool to rationalise economic and political situations, and was not even regarded as in conflict with prevailing Christian cosmology (Sanders 1969:521-523).

The view that Black people were to be differentiated in terms of their having a 'pagan' religion, having their geographical proximity to the most human-like animals, their libido as well as their 'savage' behaviour (Milner 1975:12; Lubbe 1989:419-420), was to be used later during the twentieth century as the basis of racial segregation during the era of the Union government in South Africa. Dubow (1995:87-88) mentions that the Hamitic theory was also used extensively to argue for, and against, racial segregation and equal political rights when Union debate was raging in South Africa.

#### *2.5.1.2 Selective preservation perspective*

This theory stipulates that variations that occur at random in the course of conception are selectively enhanced in consequent generations (Slabbert 2002:162). This perspective is based on the theory of evolution, which questioned the validity of fixed and permanent biological species. The theory was initially proposed by Charles Darwin, but its origin can be traced back to the writings of the French political philosopher, Montesquieu, in 1721 (Lewis 1999:121).

The theory of Social Darwinism holds that the young, born to any species compete intensely for survival. Those young that survive to produce the next generation tend to embody favourable natural variations, and these variations are passed on by heredity. According to Van Niekerk (1992:98), Social Darwinism saw to it that race could be ranked on an evolutionary scale. Consequently, the idea of 'race' was reiterated especially within the political context. It further postulated that there was a 'fight for the fittest' among the different human 'races' whereby those with the least intelligence and capacity for civilisation would eventually disappear (Lewis 1999:121).

Social Darwinism's laissez-faire attitude towards evolution distinguished it from the aggressive policies of the eugenics<sup>4</sup> movement, which sought different ways to intervene in human behaviour to maintain 'racial health'. Social Darwinism espoused a competitive model of species evolution summarised in the belief in the 'survival of the fittest'.

The Social Darwinism theory, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, has been used by governments, consciously or unconsciously as a baseline to explain the philosophical rationalisation behind racism and capitalism. Difference in physical appearance had something to do with difference in the behaviour, attitude, intelligence or intrinsic worth of people. These beliefs promoted racism, prejudice or animosity against people perceived to belong to other races.

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<sup>4</sup> The philosophy behind the eugenics movement is that intelligence, health and social behaviour are determined solely by genetic makeup. The eugenics theory dismisses the influence of social and economic factors on human behaviour and advocates policies aimed at maintaining the 'fitness' of a 'superior' racial stock. Eugenics was explicitly concerned with the institutionalisation of methods to ensure the continued improvement of the White race (Encarta 2002 s.v. "Eugenics").

### 2.5.1.3 Geographical perspective

This view essentially holds the globe was divided into a series of natural provinces, with particular types of people being allocated to these regions as a result of their compatibility to the particular region (Slabbert 2002:162). In South African context, racism had to do with, among others, territorial segregation which demarcated people into different areas based on racism.

The other important aspect of racism, especially for this study, is reserve-based segregation strategy. One of the theorists to outline reserve-based segregation strategy was JH Pim<sup>5</sup> who argued that it was essential for Black people to remain in (rural) reserves rather than being established in (urban) locations surrounding industrial areas (Dubow 1995:148). It was the intention of Pim to demonstrate that territorial segregation was compatible with the development of industry and that such a strategy would help to ensure the preservation of social order (cf 2.3.2; 2.3.4). The interpretation of Pim's theory of reserve-based segregation was further informed by Darwinian ideas of evolution (cf 2.5.1.2). He took for granted that physical differences were merely "outward signs of mental and moral differences" and Black people were regarded as people lacking a sense of responsibility and who have arrest of mental development and distinctive mode of thought (Dubow 1995:149).

The question of territorial segregation was further given attention by Edgar Brookes in well-known research work entitled *History of Native Policy in South Africa*. In the conclusion of his thesis, Brookes (1924:497) argues that the geographical segregation was:

[the] way out between the Scylla of identity and the Charybdis of subordination. We have seen it in the administrative, in the legal, in the political, in the economic, in the religious and in the social sphere as not merely a plausible or advisable, but as the inevitable, solution. In trying to arrive at a general formula, we are in no doubt that differentiation is the formula to be accepted - differentiation, without any implication of inferiority.

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<sup>5</sup> JH Pim was born near Dublin and came to South Africa in 1890 as a chartered accountant with Rhodes' British South Africa Company. He devoted himself to a variety of social welfare activities and as a prominent figure in liberal circles, attached also to Institute of Race Relations, he was referred to as a champion of 'Native Rights' (Dubow 1995:170).

In general, Brookes propagated that there was a need to preserve the independent existence of the White and Black races (Brookes 1924:500). Brookes (1924:503) further points out that differentiation between the Black and White people was unavoidable, but that the policy “must not be one of differentiation only but differentiation with co-operation”. Differentiation coupled with co-operation meant that whereas Black people were placed in different, possibly rural reserves, the need for a certain amount of Black labour (cf 2.5.1.4) would always be necessary in the South African economic life. Differentiation meant that the Black people were to be located in the reserves which lacked a number of resources. These areas were further struck by poverty and that is one of the reasons why most Black men sought better salaried jobs at the mines.

According to Stacey (1966:50) territorial segregation in South Africa meant also stopping the flow of Black people from the reserves to the White areas. All forms of territorial segregation involved the separate economic development of the Black reserves. Unfortunately, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, generally most of these areas were not economically viable.

#### *2.5.1.4 Reproduction theory*

The main proponents of the reproduction theory are Althusser (1971), Bowles and Gintis (1976), and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) amongst others. For the sake of this research study, a brief outline of the major contribution by Bowles and Gintis will be made. Althusser (1971) in his work entitled *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus* mentions that in order to produce there must be preconditions of production, for example, for survival, capitalist society must institutionalise mechanisms for production. The capitalists should be able to ensure that materials, capital resources and, more importantly, a passive labour force was in place.

The main focus of the reproduction theory is realised in the school. Schools were not only expected to produce skills required in production, but also socialise learners into the requirements of their future work situation. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) in their work entitled *Reproduction in education, society, and culture*, bring to the fore another aspect of reproduction theory, namely, “cultural reproduction”. The theory of cultural reproduction sees the principal function of schooling as to reproduce the hierarchical relations between groups or classes in the society and to legitimise those relations. Giroux (1983:267), with regard to cultural reproduction, notes:

Schools are seen as part of a larger universe of symbolic institutions that do not overtly impose docility and oppression, but reproduce existing power relations more subtly through the reproduction and distribution of a dominant culture that tacitly confirms what it means to be educated.

In their most popular book entitled *Schooling in Capitalist America*, Bowles and Gintis (1976) developed a model of the system of social relationships (or structural correspondence). The dominant factor is the issue of capital accumulation and the demands for the reproduction of the capital, which is labour. For the labour force to be efficient, it should possess certain characteristics which are imbued in it through schooling. Bowles and Gintis (1976:131) argue that the structure of social relations in education not only inures the student to the discipline of the work place, but develops the types of personal demeanour, modes of self-presentation, self-image, and social class identifications which are the crucial ingredients of job adequacy.

Bowles and Gintis (1988:18) reiterate the fact that the current relationship between education and the economy is ensured not through the content of education but its form, namely the social relations of the educational encounter. The correspondence theory further postulates the idea that like the division of labour in the capitalist enterprise, the education system is a finely graded hierarchy of authority and control in which competition rather than co-operation is emphasised.

The reproduction theory provided an alternative mode of analysing the South African situation in general, and its education system in particular. Christie and Collins (1984:162) advocate the notion that the preferred analysis is a Marxist one, which postulates that the system can be fully understood only if an analysis is situated within the broad set of economic interests underlying the present structure, namely class analysis.

The reproduction theory sees the State as an important tool in the hands of specific interest groups in society, usually the rich and the powerful, who use it to advance the interests of those groups. Kallaway (1987:33) mentions that:

[T]he provision of schooling by national governments in an era of industrial revolution and mass urbanization, is seen to be essentially about the need of the middle class to politically control large numbers of people, to enforce new codes of conduct and socialization appropriate to the

new urban and industrial context, and to ensure the subservient position of workers in the bourgeois industrial state.

The reproduction theory dealt further with the construction and reproduction of hegemonic ideology within capitalistic society as it was about the need to inculcate acceptable modes of behaviour among the working class. Schooling was used as a vehicle to ensure that provision of skills in keeping with the needs of the workplace was adhered to (Kallaway 1987:33).

#### *2.5.1.5 Other factors*

There are other factors that should be examined for their influence on the understanding of the term 'racism' in South Africa. Lewis (1999:141-148) supports this fact when he mentions that in order to understand the racial discourse in South Africa, one needs to take into cognisance other factors that influenced the ideology of 'racism'. The following were mentioned:

- # The cultural perspective that was held by the colonisers in the Cape that the indigenous people of South Africa - the Khoikhoi - was the lowest of the savage races.
- # Calvinism as the predominant religion at the Cape due to Dutch colonial influences.
- # The *Generale Vereenighde Nederlandse G'octtrooijeerde Oostindische Compagnie's* (VOC) economic policy of monopoly and mercantilism, which did little for both the White colonists and the indigenous people (cf 3.3).
- # The distinction between four status groups (officials, free burghers, indigenous people and slaves) which later contributed to a racial disposition in which the land-owning class was to be exclusively White.
- # The VOC's employment and immigration policy was such that it only appointed White persons as officials which gave rise to a White-Black/master-servant relationship. Historians, such as SM Molema (1920:260), points out that aspects such as attitudes and behaviours emanating from slavery which were eminent during the Dutch rule contributed to the development of racial attitudes in South Africa. Crijns (1959:13) and



Lubbe (1989:427) mention that these policies ensured that the White people became the dominant economic and political group.

- # Notions of the expansion of the frontier which did not only result from the development of capitalism but also depended the constant historical struggle of forcing back and vanquishing the San and the Black people as well as the total subservience of the Khoikhoi, led to feelings of superiority on the part of White colonisers (Crijns 1959:39).

As poverty forms one of the significant criteria (cf 2.4.2; 2.5.1.3) in rural South Africa, it shall therefore be dealt with saliently in the following section.

## 2.6 POVERTY IN RURAL SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is categorised as one of the most unequal countries in the world. The distribution of income and wealth in the country is among the most unequal in the world. The already wide gap between the poor and rich is ever increasing. Approximately 40 percent of South Africans are poor and 75 percent of these poor people live in rural areas (Gordon 1997:2), which are generally seen as poor regions.

The plight of Black rural areas in South Africa, in which poverty is embedded was highlighted by the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela when he stated that:

*Rural people, and rural women in particular, bear the largest burden of poverty in South Africa. If we can change the inequalities and inefficiencies of the past, rural areas can become productive and sustainable (Republic of South Africa 1995[a]:5 - emphasis mine).*

To be able to put this common characteristic of rurality into perspective, it is imperative to define adequately what it entails and therefore the following section will deal with this aspect.

### 2.6.1 Defining the concept 'poverty'

The definition of the concept 'poverty' is multi-dimensional. However, it is not the intention of this chapter to go into a long discussion of definitions of the concept. Instead, poverty will be discussed saliently.

Poverty will therefore be defined in relative and absolute terms (Alcock 1993: 57-62; Brown & Jackson 1990:457; Butler & Kondratas 1987:41-50). Absolute (or basic) poverty refers to people living below a certain standard or minimum living level (MLL). According to this definition, a certain minimum income<sup>6</sup> must be calculated. Everyone with an income below this line is to be considered poor and will not be able to survive on this income in the long run. Some distinctive characteristics of the absolute poor identified by Lichthelm (1993:7-8, 21-22,35,45) in 1989 were that these people were typically situated in the former national states (especially the rural areas where 63,3 percent of the Black population fell below the minimum living level).

This absolute approach towards defining the concept 'poverty' is not without problems. For example, Whiteford and McGarth (1994:64) stated that 50 percent of the South African population could be classified as poor. However, when the MLL is calculated, statistics are taken from urban areas and this may not apply to rural areas. In most cases, people in rural areas can survive with an MLL lower than that which has been calculated for rural areas. This suggests that when MLL is to be calculated, data should be collected specifically from people residing in rural areas.

Relative poverty refers to the use of relative norms, for example, the average per capita income in a certain country or region. It focuses on the position of individuals in the income distribution of a country. Measurement plays an important role in defining the scope of relative poverty. Indicators such as access to pure water, electricity, basic literacy, unemployment, life expectation and expenditure patterns are used to determine relative poverty. Over 70

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<sup>6</sup> This minimum income is referred to as minimum living level (MLL) of households. MLL is defined as the minimum financial requirements of members of a family if they are to maintain their health and have acceptable standards of hygiene and sufficient clothing for their needs (*Bureau of Market Research* 1995:6).

percent of rural African households in South Africa live under conditions which are inadequate or intolerable in terms of their access to shelter, water and sanitation, criteria used in relative terms (May 1998).

However, given these conceptual debates, for the purpose of this research the following relative definition of the concept 'poverty' is viewed as appropriate:

...poverty in South Africa is linked with high unemployment, hunger and malnutrition, inability to pay for – or lack of access to – health care and basic services, disintegration of families, vulnerability, risk of homelessness, and sometimes despair (Republic of South Africa 1995[a]:3).

The definition mentioned above takes into consideration a number of factors: It addresses the question of descriptive aspects that are common in rural areas which ultimately lead to high a poverty rate. It also takes into consideration what exists at the locality and factors which make a place poverty stricken.

## 2.6.2 Poverty and inequalities in South Africa

The following are some of the key statistics of poverty in South Africa as prepared for the office of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) by the World Bank (RDP 1995), based on data from the South African Living Standards and Development Survey (SALSDS 1993), Central Statistical Service (CSS 1997) and *The School Register of Needs* (DNE 1996):

- # About 18 million people live in the poorest 40 percent of households and are thus classified as poor. Ten million people live in the poorest 20 percent of households and are thus classified as ultra-poor.
- # Poverty in South Africa has a strong race dimension. Approximately 95 percent of South Africa's poor are African, 5 percent are Coloured, and less than 1 percent are Indian or White.
- # Poverty in South Africa has a rural dimension. 75 percent of South Africa's poor live in rural areas.

- # Poverty in South Africa has a regional dimension. Nearly two-thirds of South Africa's poor live in three provinces, namely, the Eastern Cape (24%), KwaZulu Natal (21%) and Limpopo Province (18%). The Eastern Cape and the Limpopo Province are composed largely of former rural homelands and, for example, in the former Transkei homeland, the poverty rate was as high as 92 percent.
- # Unemployment among the poor stands at 50 percent, compared to only 4 percent among the richest 20 percent. The unemployment rate is high among the rural population. Most of the people in rural areas depend on pensions for disability and old age as the main source of income.
- # About 61 percent of children in South Africa live in poverty and amongst Black people, more than 70 percent live in poverty. Over 45 percent of the poor are children younger than 16 years and are mostly found in rural areas.

Statements cited above highlight the impact of poverty on the lives of the majority of Black people predominantly residing in rural areas. Furthermore, facts mentioned above shed light on the issue of a specific type of prejudicial attitude and behaviour that former governments demonstrated especially towards Black people.

One of the reasons why poverty is rife among Black people, in (South) Africa is the absence of or the difficulties of access to education, as well as its total inappropriateness to rural realities (*The Teacher* 2002:11). Since the provision of education is the responsibility of the State, the inappropriateness of rural education can be ascribed to legislation enacted in Parliament (cf Chapter 3; 4 & 5).

## **2.7 THE LINK BETWEEN EDUCATION AND POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The analysis of poverty and inequality in South Africa has a long history. It is bound with social and economic developments, particularly in the form of racial capitalism. It is also linked to political power. According to Wilson and Ramphela (1989:4,204) poverty in South Africa is a 'special case' because it is the result of deliberate government policies, reinforced by racist

ideologies that have been an assault to human dignity. Wilson and Ramphele further argue that underlying all strategies against poverty there must be clear recognition of the necessity for a fundamental redistribution of power. A brief look at this aspect will further place this link into perspective within South African historiography.

In 1922, the American Carnegie Corporation sponsored a study on poverty in South Africa which was mainly focused on the 'poor white' problem. This fed into the subsequent policy framework for the eradication of poverty amongst White South Africans. There were a number of reasons that resulted in the impoverishment of White Afrikaners. The earlier conquest of land had established uneven patterns of White dominance and racial segregation. The development of capitalist agriculture marginalized many Afrikaners as well as Black people into landlessness and poverty. Rural hardships drove both White people and Black people to seek work in towns (Christie & Gordon 1992:400). It was in this context that the First Carnegie Investigation into poverty was conducted.

After a thorough study of White poverty had been made, a five-volume report was published. The Report covered economic, psychological, educational, health and sociological aspects of poverty amongst White people. The report on education was written by a leading South African educationist, Dr EG Malherbe. In this report, Malherbe found that there is a close connection between poverty and education. He mentioned that there are poorer retention rates, higher failure rate and more frequent repetition of grades among poor Whites than White people in general (Malherbe 1932:191). In the joint recommendations of the Carnegie Inquiry, education was regarded as the remedy in alleviating poverty. This investigation was based on human capital theory<sup>7</sup>. Education was seen as the way out of poverty.

The problem of White poverty was taken seriously, not only by education authorities, but the then government regarded it also as one of its priorities. Christie and Gordon (1992:404) emphatically mention that the poor Whites were uplifted from poverty in the long term by the political power of the franchise, mobilised on ethnic nationalist lines. After 1948, and for the following forty years, the Nationalist Party government systematically advantaged (poor) White

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<sup>7</sup> According to human capital theory, education is seen as investment capital without which rapid economic growth cannot occur. The theory holds the view that educational expansion can reduce income disparities (Ashby 1960; Blaug 1965).

people and restricted most (poor) Black people by introducing segregatory acts of parliament. Not surprisingly, its recommendations sought to promote strategies for improving the position of the poor Whites, very often at the expense of Black people. One of the striking features of the First Carnegie Investigation into poverty was the racialisation of poverty which illustrated that Black poverty was not regarded important by government of the day.

Fifty years later, in 1983, after South Africa had vigorously adopted the National Party Government's *apartheid* policies, the Carnegie Corporation sponsored a Second Inquiry and investigation into poverty amongst South Africa's Black population and highlighted the appalling conditions in rural areas of South Africa (Christie & Gordon 1992:1-3; May 1998; Wilson & Ramphela 1989). One of the causes of Black poverty in South Africa was attributed to government's deliberate racial policies which invariably impacted on education. Wilson and Ramphela (1989:204) mention that "special policies pursued by the National Party government...have done much to impoverish millions of South Africans". Policies such as the 'separate development' and the transformation of existing reserves into 'homelands' were examples of such policies.

In the Second Carnegie Inquiry, which was undertaken according to the reproduction theory paradigm (cf 2.5.1.4) in sociology of education, the outlook was less optimistic (Christie & Gordon 1992:399). Nasson (1990:97-98) was doubtful that educational expansion could reduce income disparities and that a more equitable social order could be achieved through educational reform in a society structured by unequal relations of class, race or gender.

Obviously, the two Carnegie Reports stood in strong contrast. The First Carnegie enjoyed the support of the government and social institutions such as the Afrikaner churches, whereas the Second did not because in many instances it was opposed to the state racial policies. The Second Carnegie Report did not advocate compromise or cooperation at all with existing government structures. Even though the two Reports were in agreement that there was a link between education and poverty, they did not look at the link from the same philosophical perspective. The First Carnegie looked at the link at the level of performance of learners, the Second Carnegie looked at the level of educational provision for learners by government.

It should be mentioned that from a human capital perspective, the First Carnegie Report viewed education as one of a range of measures to alleviate poverty in rural areas, whereas the Second, based on the reproduction and resistance theory, denied the power of education in social change short of total transformation and disruptive measures. The educational authorities and the government, needed to move beyond these theories (the human capital and the reproduction theories) to be able to formulate educational policies which would adequately address the poverty issue for rural learners.

Having outlined an important aspect of rurality in South Africa, it is imperative to further place rural schooling into perspective. In the following section farm schools, will be dealt with as an aspect of rural education and homelands schools, as they form the gist of this research project. Homeland schools will receive thorough attention in subsequent chapters.

## **2.8 TYPES OF RURAL SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Rural schools in South Africa are composed of schools in the former Black homelands and those on the largely White-owned farms, but emphasis will be laid on homeland schools since the majority of Black people received their education in these areas. Before a detailed discussion in this section and in subsequent chapters is made on rural education, a brief exposition of farm school education will be presented.

### **2.8.1 Farm schools**

Before the Bantu Education Act of 1953 was introduced, there was no legal framework of the so-called farm schools. Those schools situated on farms operated the same way as any other missionary school, and were regarded as on the same basis as state-subsidised schools. They were set up by an agreement between the mission and the individual (generally White farmer), who once he had given permission for the setting up of the school on his land, usually had little to do with the school as it was under the management of the missionary superintendent of schools (Hartshorne 1992:5).

Formal farm schools came into being after the Eiselen Commission (1949-1951) made several recommendations to the then Nationalist government. The Commission

recommended that “all possible steps be taken to encourage the growth of educational facilities for the large Bantu population at present on European farms” (Union of South Africa 1951:par 954). By means of the enactment of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 [15(l), (m) and (n)], the National Party government established a system where farm schools were removed from the control of mission churches and were placed under the owners of the farms on which the schools were situated (Graaff 1995:193; Graaff & Gordon 1992:209; Hartshorne 1992:137).

There were regulations in place to inform farmers what to do and what not to do. Among others, they were the following:

A farm school must be established primarily to provide facilities for the children of bona fide *employees* on the farm concerned. If children from surrounding farms are admitted it must be with the permission of the *owner* of the school and also of the *owners* of the surrounding farms (Union of South Africa 1955[b] – emphasis mine).

The Bantu Education Act allowed farmers to prevent teachers and pupils from attending the school and to dismiss teachers, even though they were government appointees. Conditions at many farms schools till the late 1980s were still far from adequate as farmers continued to dominate and control labour on their respective farms. There were a number of schools which were erected on these White-owned farms. Farmers, as an extremely influential group in the political sphere of the farm dwellers, had much to say on the erection of school buildings, administration and control on their premises. Serious problems arose when a farmer decided to discontinue the school or when a farm was sold and the new owner was not prepared to take on the new responsibility (Bot 1988:57-58; Van N Viljoen 1987:4).

This system reflected and enhanced the power of farmers over their workers. The rationale behind the establishment of farm schools by the government was, according to Gordon (1997:6) that they (schools) would help to retain women and children on the farm by providing the children with some schooling whilst they and their parents worked on farms. Farmers benefited from being able to maintain a stable workforce, and the legislation helped maintain labourers' ties to the farms (cf 2.5.1.4).



White farmers interests were protected by law. They were given political powers to control their workers and farm schools. Until 1980, the protection of farm-workers against abuse by farmers had not been addressed by the government in power. Ball (1990:53) summarises the state of farm life by stating the following:

Farm workers were explicitly *excluded* from the protection afforded by the industrial relations machinery like the *Labour Relations Act*, the *Wage Act*, the *Unemployment Insurance Act*, and the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act* [emphasis mine].

From the afore-mentioned, it is of primary importance to note that the government intervention in the education of Black people in rural farm schools was detrimental. This section of rural population was disadvantaged by the laws which basically favoured White farmers.

The following were problems that were normally encountered by the farm schools (ANC 1994[a]:102; Graaff 1991:221-231; Nasson 1988:18-30):

- # many buildings were in a dilapidated state;
- # basic facilities such as desks, chairs, libraries, playgrounds, books and essential apparatus were not available; essential services such as running water and electricity were also not available;
- # educators were generally unqualified and/or under-qualified; and
- # education for Learners with Special Educational Needs (ELSEN) was not provided for handicapped or physically challenged learners.

When commenting about the state of rural education on the farms, the ANC (1994[a]:102) emphatically stated that:

...the main reason for the disadvantaged position of *rural* education is the fact that the *state* has abdicated and ceded its responsibility for the provision of education and training in rural Black communities to mostly white farmers and tribal authorities through a system of state-aided schools [emphasis mine].

The state of rural education in farm areas remained unsatisfactory until the democratic era dawned. The ANC-led government is still, however, faced with the challenge of raising

educational and moral standards of both parents and learners in farming communities. The present government is faced with a problem of redressing the position of rural people, not just by abolishing discriminatory legislation, but in instituting measures to right historical imbalances.

### **2.8.2 Homeland or Bantustan schools**

In 1955, the Tomlinson Commission identified seven ethnic heartlands based on Black reserves which were created in the colonial era in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and confirmed by the Union government after introducing the 1913 Land Act (cf 3.5.1).

From 1955, as will be seen later, South African land was systematically consolidated to create a number of ethnically divided Bantustans or homelands for Black people. Although Butler, Rotberg and Adams (1977:26) also referred to the homelands as “nations for convenience (convenience of a dominant power)”, Legassick (1975) points out that they were also products of a twentieth century racialism (cf 2.5) that served the interests of a capitalist economy (cf 2.5.1). The homeland system was not only the outcome of genuine, nationalistic movements confronting the colonial power, as Butler *et al* (1977:43) argue, but the products of South African government policies designed by an entrenched oligarchy for both political and economic reasons (Adam & Giliomee 1979:27).

The classification of people into race groups and the allocation of space for occupation by these groups led to the rural-urban dichotomy. At the heart of this dichotomy was the South African policy of racism (cf 2.5.1). The South African society as a result, comprised of major urban and industrialised centres that were predominantly occupied by White people, Coloureds, and Indians. The Black people were divided into separate ethnic groups (cf 4.3.3; 4.3.4) and confined to less developed and overcrowded rural areas (Platzky & Walker 1985). According to Graaff (1995:182), the concept ‘rural’ in rural education in South African context, is not so much about how far these schools are from towns and cities, or about whether they are in farming areas or not, but rather that they are disadvantaged communities with little political power. The majority of Black schools were found in these areas and continued to exist even after the democratic government took power.

## 2.9 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL SCHOOLS

It is impossible to produce an adequate typology of rural communities. Hence some combination of most of the characteristics of rural schools will be presented below since the line between the concept 'rural' and 'urban', 'developed' and 'undeveloped' continuously becomes blurred. Khattri, Riley and Kane (1997:89-91) mention the following characteristics of rural schools within developed countries.

- # *Size:* Due to isolation and low population density in rural communities, rural schools are typically small compared to schools in more populated communities.
- # *Location:* In sparsely populated rural areas, pupils often travel long distances to attend school.
- # *Budgets:* Rural budgets are small and do not adequately cover the considerable costs of operation.
- # *Course offering:* Many rural schools are unable to provide the types of courses needed to prepare learners for further studies.
- # *Availability of special programmes and technological resources:* Programmes and extra-curricular activities offered in rural schools are limited and affect learners' opportunities to learn.
- # *Staff qualifications and preparedness:* Teachers' experience and the recruitment and training of teachers are frequently cited as major problems in rural areas.

In the South African context, there are other characteristics such as lack of infrastructure and resources, overcrowded classrooms and rural poverty which present a unique mix of obstacles to gaining a sound education for rural learners. At the heart of all these obstacles, lie the government policies on provision of education to rural learners.

## 2.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter dealt with the concept 'rural' from different conceptual points of view. The definition of the term 'rural' is relative because it depends on what is being used (tool) at a particular period. This chapter also indicates that a single, well-accepted definition of the term 'rural' does not exist. Different definitions of rural areas use different criteria, different levels of analysis, and different methodologies. Any research project on rural areas will, therefore produce different results based on the tool which is used to define the term 'rural'. A multi-criteria approach was used to identify different characteristics of rural areas which may differ from country to country.

It has also been indicated in this chapter that rural education was, and continues to be linked with legislation introduced by previous governments. The 'interference' of government in the provision of education to Black people, as positive as it was, also had negative results.

Having dealt with the definition of rural [education], a brief historical evolution of rural schooling from the colonial period to the beginning of the National Party government rule will be presented in the following chapter as a precursor to a detailed investigation on rural education as from 1948.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK RURAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW (1652 - 1948)**

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### **THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK RURAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW (1652 - 1948)**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The beginnings of rural education can be traced back three centuries ago in South African history. This period was characterised by government colonial powers who used legislation to separate races into urban and rural communities. However, although not the focus of this study, it is necessary to place this education within a historical context, in order to fully understand this research.

The aim of this chapter will therefore be to present a synoptic historical overview of background information for a more detailed discussion in subsequent chapters, on rural education in South Africa and specifically the impact government legislation had on rural education. The objectives developing from this aim are therefore:

- # to give a historical overview of rural education during the colonial period (1652-1910);
- # to briefly look at pieces of legislation that influenced territorial segregation and as a result demarcating South Africans into “urban” and “rural” communities during the Union Government (1910-1948); and
- # to critically identify and evaluate the South African legislation and the impact it had on the provision of education for Black people in rural areas during the period 1652-1948.

To be able to understand Black rural education in South Africa, it is vital to comprehend its development and contextuality – social, cultural, religious and political dimensions that influenced it. In the South African context, rural areas are largely the result of segregatory laws and policies that were introduced for both political and economic reasons by White-dominated governments. Before the provision of education to Black people during the Dutch rule is presented, the following section will briefly outline the pre-colonial period in order to shed light on the origin of the Black people in South Africa.

### 3.2 PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

Many scholars of South Africa's history tended to use the start of colonial rule as the beginning of South African history. Although colonial rule marked a new phase in history, pre-colonial South Africa was occupied by several Black communities which today form part of groups which make up the country's population.

Prior to the arrival of European settlers in 1652, there were several indigenous peoples living a nomadic life at the Cape of Good Hope. The hunter-gatherers later known as 'Bushmen' or 'San' and Khoikhoi (Hottentots) herders lived around the Cape (Cameron 1991:37). The Xhosa-speaking Blacks lived in the present Eastern Cape whereas the Nguni and Sotho lived respectively in Natal and the interior<sup>8</sup>. These groups of people depended much on cattle and animal rearing. They also grew crops (Christie 1991:30).

Christie (1991:30) points out that even if there was no formal education during this era, that did not mean that there was no education taking place. Vos (1976:23-28) mentions that the type of education that was received during this era was normally referred to as traditional. The education basically consisted of the following stages:

- # firstly, the child was formally educated by members of the family at home; and
- # secondly, every three, four or five years, boys between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one were gathered into regiments to undergo the rites of circumcision. These boys were isolated for a period of three months under the supervision of older men who lectured them on tribal traditions and customary laws. Girls also, between the ages sixteen and twenty, were isolated for a corresponding term as boys, under the austere matrons, who taught them rudimentary principles of motherhood (Molema 1920:122-123).

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<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that the notion that Bantu speaking peoples arrived as immigrants on the highveld of the former Transvaal at about the same time as the Europeans first settled in Table Bay, has been declared a myth on the basis of archaeological research (Davenport 1977:8-9).

The responsibility for the education of youth was not limited to their biological parents, but all adults with whom children came into contact with were also responsible for the provision of informal education to Black children (Luthuli 1981:54-55; Nkuna 1986:93). Later on, the European settlers arrived at the Cape which reflected a turning point in the lives of the Black people since it was from this period that attempts were made to educate Black people formally. There was no rural-urban divide as is known today.

### **3.3 DUTCH RULE (1652-1806)**

On 5 April 1652, the Dutch people under Jan Van Riebeeck settled in the Cape Colony. These European settlers were part of a trading company called the Dutch East India Company (DEIC)<sup>9</sup>. The Cape Colony served as a halfway station for trade for European settlers on their way to the East. One of the major reasons why the Dutch settlers found it necessary to establish a station at the Cape was that it could serve as a refreshment station and to supply passing ships with fresh food (Boucher 1991:61; McKerron 1934:14).

In time, interaction between the colonists and the indigenous people became problematic. The Khoikhoi realised from the building of a stone castle and settlement of farmers on the land that the Dutch instead intended to stay at the Cape. They began to resist bartering with the colonists and started fighting off attempts by the DEIC expeditions to take their livestock by force (Davenport 1977:26-29). The Dutch gradually overwhelmed the Khoikhoi by seizing their streams, land and cattle, and incorporated them as peons onto their land or into their militia. As the White population grew at the Cape, the conflict between the community of Dutch farmers, Khoikhoi groups and the Xhosa tribe continued. Their early skirmishes set the stage for later animosities. Frederikse (1986:7) states that, "South Africa has been a country at war with itself since the seventeenth century, when White settlers landed at the Cape and began robbing the indigenous people of their land". Molema (1920:238) does point out that even though there was a conflict between the colonists and the Khoi people, the Dutch authorities never seriously thought of passing legislation for this indigenous group any more than evangelising them.

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<sup>9</sup> In 1602 a number of Dutch rival merchant companies amalgamated to form a chartered company, the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC or DEIC). The supreme power of this Company was vested in a body known as the Chamber of Seventeen situated in the Netherlands (Cameron 1991:59).



The DEICs needs for labour was so urgent that they also brought in slaves from their eastern empire, and from regions on both sides of Africa, within the first decade of their settlement at the Cape<sup>10</sup>. Racial discrimination, based on a rigid division of labour, had hardened into a set pattern (cf 2.5.1.4). Townsmen and farmers had much in common when it came to slavery. Both cited scripture to justify slavery and colour-class discrimination (cf 2.5.1.1). They claimed that the White race had an exclusive right to education, positions of public responsibility, ownership of land and wealth based on Enlightened mindsets of racial superiority<sup>11</sup>. The slaves at the Cape never fused into a single community or acted in concert to liberate themselves while under Dutch rule.

The period under discussion was characterised by the fact that little had been done with regard to education, especially Black education. On 17 April 1658 the first public school for slaves was established, and it focused mainly on the slave's intellectual, religious and moral welfare (Behr & MacMillan 1971:357; Du Plessis 1965:29-30).

There are different perceptions with regard to the aim of the establishment of this school. According to Le Roux (1998:99), there was a dual purpose for establishing this school - to benefit the DEIC by teaching the slaves to speak Dutch and to facilitate conversion to Christianity. Du Plessis (1965:29-30) saw the reason for its inception as a move by Jan Van Riebeeck in the direction of doing something for the slaves' academic and moral well-being. According to Molteno (1984:45), the introduction of this school was to be of benefit to the slaves' masters, and it was therefore driven by capitalist needs – a so-called Marxist interpretation (cf 2.5.1.4). According to Lewis (1999) Molteno's interpretation is selective because it does not also take cognisance of the fact that the motive by the Dutch colonists to establish a school should be understood in light of its historical context at that particular period (Van der Walt 1992). The early settlers were predominantly Calvinist. In Europe at the time, the Bible and the Christian religion played a major role. Emphasis was placed on how to read and write. The primary aim of learning to read was to be able to read the Bible (*Education*

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<sup>10</sup> The Cape slaves came from many parts of India and Eastern Asia, as well as from Madagascar and the African mainland (Boucher 1991:70).

<sup>11</sup> The Enlightenment period was characterised by reason during which the human mind was perceived as the only independent authority in all areas of life. Phenomena were basically explained in rational terms, and one such example was an explanation for racial differences (Lewis & Steyn 2003:102)

*Bureau* 1981:1) and to be able to communicate with White settlers in both the workplace and the church which made communication for purposes of materialism and religion easier. Capital motives were only one possible reason for this phenomenon.

Apart from the slave's school which was established in 1658, there were other schools established at the Cape. Most schools were established for White learners mainly residing in what was then considered 'urban' areas of the Cape situated in established towns. In 1688 a school for French Huguenots was approved by the Council of Policy in Netherlands and later it was to amalgamate with Dutch learners (Theal 1882:292). In 1707 Dominee Engelbertus Le Boucq submitted a request to the Council of Policy to attend to the deplorable state of education at the Cape (Le Roux 1998:109). This concern of Le Boucq focused on White schools already established in 'urban' areas and did not concern White learners and Black learners residing in the outlying 'rural' areas.

In the early years of White settlement at the Cape, there was no formal segregation on the basis of colour or race in schools (Behr & MacMillan 1971:105). The first attempt at separating non-European and European learners came about with the introduction of a policy of segregation in 1676 by the Dutch Reformed Church Council. The Church had a profound influence on education during this period and so therefore influenced the process of policy making (Malherbe 1925:33-35) as the two went hand-in-hand. The Council requested that a separate school for the slaves be established in the slaves' quarters mainly located in the 'rural' areas outside Cape Town (Behr & MacMillan 1971:105). The plea to establish schools for the slaves in the rural areas of Cape Town was supported by Commissioner Hendrik Andriaan van Rhee in 1685 and no White children were to be permitted to attend the school for the slaves (Le Roux 1998:107). This was clearly indicative of the role those in authority positions would play then and in coming years to support the idea that non-Europeans belonged to the remote areas and that their education should therefore be driven in that direction (cf 2.5.1.3).

Educational work amongst the Black tribes, more notably the Xhosa, was started in 1799 by London Missionary Society missionaries, Dr JT van der Kemp and Read, in what is now King Williams' Town (Behr & MacMillan 1971:364; Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 1). It is in these rural areas, of what is now the Eastern Cape, where most Black people were found in those days. There was basically not such a stark contrast between 'urban' and 'rural' settings during

this period since agricultural activities were both practised in the town and in the remote areas (cf 2.4.1). What existed was a rural-urban continuum and the line between the two was blurred (cf 2.3.2). Nevertheless these schools, since they were geographically isolated and economically not viable, lacked basic resources (cf 2.4.2) as colonists focused their attention on notions of capitalism, which were to be accomplished through free trade without government interference (cf 2.5.1.4).

Formal schooling during this era was focused largely within the Dutch 'urban' environment. The indigenous people, who resided mostly in the 'rural' areas outside the Dutch settlement did not generally receive much formal education and generally received an informal type of education largely by means of cultural transmission (Lewis 1999:247). Christie (1991:33) contends that even though there was little going on with regard to Black education during the DEIC period, education that was provided was enough to meet the needs of that specific society.

### **3.4 THE BRITISH RULE (1806-1910)**

As South Africa during this period of time, was fragmented, a brief historical background of Black education under British rule, in the former Cape Colony, the Transvaal, Natal and the Orange Free State will be presented in the following section.

#### **3.4.1 The Cape Colony**

In 1792 Britain was engaged in a war against France and this led to the British occupation of the Cape in 1795. After the French invasion of the Netherlands in 1795, a British force was dispatched to the Cape and landed at False Bay. The British came to occupy the Cape Colony for strategic purposes because it feared the Cape might fall into the hands of the French enemy (Davenport 1977:36). In 1803, the British handed the Cape back to Holland (Batavian Republic, as the United Netherlands had become known) and the British authorities withdrew. Apart from some useful administrative reforms, the Batavian Republic's short interregnum of three years produced few notable changes.

With the resumption of hostilities in Europe by Napoleon in 1805, the Cape again lay open to seizure, as a strategic base of value to any power which needed to secure its access to the

east. Consequently, in 1806, the British occupied the Cape again (Davenport 1977:37; Republic of South Africa 1986:37). The seizure of the Cape in 1806 led ultimately to the emancipation of slaves, the subjugation of the Black people, and a cultural dualism among the Whites that developed into rival nationalisms.

The first Governor at the Cape, the Earl of Caledon, governed by proclamation, legislated by proclamation even on important matters, and held supreme authority over all branches of government. However, as Davenport (1977:38) correctly puts, he took advice from men with official experience at the Cape. With the establishment of the British rule, several normative changes were experienced – the abolition of slave trade, and the laying down of rules to govern Khoikhoi. Amongst the changes the British brought at the Cape, they introduced a system of public education for White children and paid missionary societies small subsidies for educational work among the Coloureds and Black people (Thompson & Prior 1982:29). The political system at the Cape Colony had always been dominated by the White inhabitants whose political groupings tended to correspond with Afrikaner-British division.

Prior to 1821, the White settlers in general showed little interest in the education of the Black people who resided primarily on the eastern frontier and beyond. As a result, the responsibility of providing education to Black people still fell into the hands of the missionaries who were willing to accept this endeavour for evangelical purposes.

There is a general agreement by historians in South Africa that formal education was introduced into South Africa by missionaries (Haile 1933; Horrel 1963; Horrel 1964; Shepherd 1941; Thompson & Prior 1982). Writers such as Du Plessis (1965) and Behr (1952) do not clearly differentiate in their work between religious instruction and formal education. Pells (1938:12) rightly points out that “until the British permanently occupied the Cape in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, formal education was synonymous with the Doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church, in Bible history, psalm singing and reading and writing were sufficient for qualification for church membership. The only subject was a little simple arithmetic. Statements such as these clearly reflect what transpired in most of the Black schools with regard to curriculum. A conclusion can safely be arrived at that missionary education, which was not formal education *per se*, did not focus on the needs of the rural Black people as they were largely an agricultural and hunting community.

Mission schools, intended mainly for Black people, were largely located in the 'rural areas' with government legislation playing a large role in differentiating between 'urban' and 'rural' schools. In the *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education (1935-1936)*, it was mentioned that:

...*rural* Native schools were not regarded as deserving a place within the existing schools system, the fact remains that up to 1855 the official lists of 'Mission Schools' aided by the Education Department contain hardly any schools providing education specifically for Natives. The few that did secure aid were the Fingo schools at the *urban* centres of Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown and Uitenhage, and one or two others on or near the Kat River (Fort Beaufort), at which many of the pupils in attendance were probably Coloured rather than Native (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 10 - emphasis mine).

The statement above indicates that the rural-urban dichotomy (cf 2.3.2) was promoted by the British government in South African education as early as the eighteenth century. This dichotomy was not only geographical or cultural, but it was also based on racial prejudice (cf 2.5.1; 2.5.1.3).

In 1861 Langham Dale assumed duty as Superintendent-General of Education at the Cape Colony. In 1863 he appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Mr Justice EB Watermeyer. The Commission, among others, was mandated to seek a policy suitable "for all classes of people" (Cape of Good Hope 1863:iii-v). When the Commission reported in 1863, it reported that there were patterns of segregation in government schools where other schools were exclusively for White children (Lewis 1999:184). It was recommended by the Watermeyer Commission that the government should intervene with regard to the provision of education. This resulted in the introduction of series of legislation policies in order to control education provided to Black people. The Education Act No 13 of 1865 (Cape of Good Hope 1865:1015-1017) was one such example. According to this Act, schools were divided into three categories, namely "A" schools (mainly for the White community); "B" schools (mainly for church controlled schools attended by poor Whites and Coloured pupils) and "C" schools attended mainly by Black pupils, ie mission schools (Behr & MacMillan 1971:379; Lewis 1999:185). An objective of this regulation was to deter missions from opening their schools to all, regardless of colour. This statement is supported by the *Interdepartmental Commission on Native Education (1935-1936)* when it mentions that:

separate and unequal schooling helped to rigidify racist lines of division which up until the development of capitalist industrialisation had still been somewhat loose. Differential schooling for blacks and whites was aimed at moulding the children to their respective dominant and dominated places (Union of South Africa 1936[a]:par 458).

Racial divisions ironically enough also reflected a geographical division (2.5.1.3) with type “C” schools being situated largely in the rural areas of South Africa as these were the areas where the majority of Black people were found (Seroto 1999:22).

Most of the mission schools did not receive any state subsidies from colonial sources prior to 1841 (Cook 1949:350; Scholtz 1975:209). The establishment and erection of buildings, furniture and other periodic expenditure posed a serious financial demand to mission societies (MacKenzie 1993:51). In most cases missionaries depended much on overseas finances and they used converts to labour on the mission stations, the perception that Lewis (1999:259) rightly points out as being perceived by reproduction theorists as contributing to Western capitalism (cf 2.5.1.4). Nevertheless, mission schools ran out of funds and eventually some of them closed.

A turning point came in after 1939 when a Department of Education was established with mission schools coming under its charge. The main motive for such a step by the government was to gain some sort of control of these schools. To Behr and MacMillan (1971:378) “subsidised schools had to be concluded to the satisfaction of the Superintendent-General, who had the right to inspect them and call for returns”. Even though the move by the British government to subsidise Black education was commendable, it was not without hassles. During the period from January, 1855, to December, 1862, a total amount of some £49 000 was expended on Black education by the Department as compared to £80 000 spent on White education (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 14). The initial poor financing goes to show the general lack of commitment by the government to do anything to improve the education of Black people. Inadequate funding has been one of the major characteristics of rural schooling (cf 2.8) and, as is shown, already had its roots in the nineteenth century.

The poor payment of Black teachers did not begin during the *apartheid* era, but it had its roots during the British rule. Langham Dale recommended that the Head Teacher (European male) be paid £100 as compared to a qualified Black teacher who was to be paid £40 (Union of South Africa 1936[a]:par 18). This clearly shows that the status of the Black teacher was lower

and unfortunately most Black teachers were predominantly found in mission schools in outlying rural areas.

Dube (1985:91) summarises the racial prejudice that existed during the British rule as follows:

- # Missionaries were playing an active part in the education of the Black people and the White conservatives feared that integrated education would threaten White supremacy.
- # The settlers realised that educated Black people could be in a better position to bargain and choose from a range of employment opportunities and tended to have more resources than uneducated Blacks, or knew how to manage their resources better.
- # If Black people were to be given the best educational opportunities, they would compete with White people economically.
- # Educating Black people in the same schools as White people would result in a multiracial society where White people would be minorities and, politically dominated by Black people.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa even though it was commendable for economic reasons (Christie 1991:44), contributed towards rigidifying the rural-urban dichotomy. According to Davis (1969:80), most of the mineworkers in Kimberley came from outside the Cape Colony. Most of the mineworkers came from their respective rural homelands, for example, tens of thousands of the Pedi tribe in the rural areas of the present Limpopo Province headed for the diamond fields in the late 1880's (*Readers Digest* 1992:164). The number of Black people employed in the goldfields on the Witwatersrand increased from 14 000 in 1889 to 97 000 ten years later. About one-fifth of these mineworkers came from the present Limpopo Province, while the rest came from the Cape Colony and the former rural Transkei (in the present Eastern Cape) and Natal (Robertson 1935:15-17; Van den Horst 1942:136-140).

On the Rand as in Kimberley, racial segregation and discrimination were the hallmarks of the mining industry. Black mineworkers did unskilled work whereas White people did skilled jobs,

at higher rates of pay (cf 2.5.1.4). Thompson (1990:118) mentions that the White skilled operatives commanded high wages, and their White overseers coming from colonial society already structured on racial lines, were able to carve out an intermediate and sheltered niche for themselves. However, the Black manual labourers, drawn from societies with no previous experience of industrial labour and having no say in the political system, did not receive equal treatment.

Obviously, the mining industry led to the formation of a new social class. This social class was not only focused on racial discrimination but it also accentuated the rural-urban dichotomy. Urban areas became centres of viable economic activities whereas rural areas remained sites of underdevelopment. In most cases Black mineworkers who had homes in the rural areas left their families for several months or years at a time and some ended up establishing 'other' families in urban centres. Family life became disrupted for long periods, and women became responsible for the economic and social management of households, which exacerbated the rate of rural poverty (cf 2.6.2).

### **3.4.2 The former Transvaal**

As early as 1836, some of the White colonists at the Cape showed that they were not in favour of the policies of the British government and as a result decided to move into the interior of South Africa. These citizens were referred to as *Voortrekkers*. According to Chonco (1987:106) the Boers in the former Transvaal permitted no equality between Coloured people (including Black people) and White citizens; neither in State nor in church. Land in the Transvaal was the chief capital asset before the discovery of gold. The attitude of the *Volksraad*<sup>12</sup> generally towards mission schools already established in the Transvaal was that they wished to have complete control over activities of any mission society working within their borders. Until 1903, Black education in Transvaal was exclusively a mission venture, being carried without any financial aid from the State.

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<sup>12</sup> The *Volksraad* was a Council in the former Transvaal which was competent to take binding decisions in respect of matters which concerned the locality where it met, but needed ratification on matters dealing with other regions (Davenport 1977:77).



The principle of separate schools for White people and Black people, became entrenched after 1903 when the first Education Ordinance of 1903 was implemented (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 95). The government drew up a 'scheme' for Native education. This scheme provided for grants-in-aid to approved missions, the aims were:

- # to give instruction in the ordinary mission school in the elements of speaking, reading and writing the English language, in simple arithmetic and in other elementary subjects up to a stage corresponding to Standard III (currently Grade 5);
- # to encourage the combination of manual training for both sexes with ordinary school instruction; and
- # to assist in the training of Native teachers on the lines of a syllabus issued by the Department.

There were a number of mission schools that were established in the former Transvaal during this period. These included; the Hermannsburg Mission Station at Phokeng; the Berlin Mission among the Pedi and Venda speaking tribes in the North of Transvaal and among the Zulu in the South East of the Transvaal; the Swiss Protestant Mission among the Tsonga (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 87-88). The 'scheme' referred to above did not generally work because "the aided schools were poorly equipped. Teachers were poorly qualified for their work or not qualified at all" (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 100). Conditions at most of these schools which were in rural areas were still not up to an acceptable standard.

The passing of the Education Act of 1907, empowered the former Transvaal government to establish, maintain and aid institutions belonging to Coloured people, but Section 29 of this Act prohibited Black people to have access to schools for White people (Union of South Africa 1907:Sec 29). Many Black people in the former Transvaal could not attend White schools, since strict segregational policies were followed. These schools were mission schools and were mostly located in rural areas. Pells (1938:141) observes that until the Union of South Africa was established in 1910, there was scarcely any schooling for Black people in the former Transvaal.

### **3.4.3 Natal**

Although Natal was initially discovered by the Portuguese as early as 1497, it was only recognised as a British territory in 1843 (Cameron 1991:172; Botha 1962:164). Between 1834 and particularly 1840, large numbers of *Voortrekkers*, under the leadership of Piet Retief and Gerrit Maritz and others, left the Cape Colony for the interior of the land (Thompson 1990:97). This movement arose mainly from the unwillingness of the Dutch colonists to be ruled by a foreign power (British). Most importantly, the *Voortrekkers* had a desire for independence (Eybers 1918:xiv). Some of the trekkers therefore moved into the region of Natal. On 10 May, 1843, Natal was formally annexed into the British Empire, the *Volksraad* giving its formal consent in August 1844. For the next two and a half years, Natal was in a state of curious transition.

Natal was engulfed and surrounded by vast and increasing number of the Black people. It was estimated that during the transition period, not less than 80 000 Black people entered Natal and subsequently became permanent residents in the Colony (Brookes 1927:25; Muller 1975:214). Thompson (1990:97) mentions that one of the reasons for this influx of the Black people into Natal was disturbances in the Zulu kingdom where factions between Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi, sons of the Zulu chief, Mpande, were formed. These factions were in conflict about who was to ascend to the monarchy. In 1856, Cetshwayo defeated his brother and his rival faction fled across the Tugela river to Natal.

When the British government took office in 1845, it was faced with the problem of ruling over 100 000 Black people and with the problem of discontent of the Dutch people about the British government (Brookes 1927:25). Facing the major problem of Black settlement, the Natal colonial government tried to place the Black people into reserves (also called locations), leaving the rest of the Colony available for White settlement (cf 2.5.1.3). The situation in Natal was described by Brookes (1927:25) in the following way:

Natal had once again become largely a Native Territory; and the problem now was how to *rule* and *control* the vast Native population without police, without money and with but a small military garrison (italics mine).

The idea of establishing 'native reserves' in Natal in which Black people could be confined, was part of the British government intentions to rule and control the majority of the Black people in

the Colony. Also, one of the Acts of the *Volksraad*, the People's Assembly of the new Boer Republic of Natal, established in 1838, was to legislate for their customary distinction between themselves and the non-Whites (Muller 1975:170). The non-Whites had no rights to be in the settled parts of the *Boer* Republic at all, except as servants of the White people, and then were not permitted, among others, to own land. In 1848, the *Volksraad* decided that not more than five Black families could remain as labour tenants on each farm, and that all 'surplus' Blacks should be placed in certain areas (Rogers 1973:2). The *Boer* Republic of Natal did not actually put this Act into effect, but the British government, which took over shortly, established this arrangement in scattered remote rural areas, which in the early 1960's formed official homelands for the Black people.

As Black people were scattered all over Natal, in some cases having squatted everywhere, even on *Boer* farms, the British government in Natal established a Location Commission which was appointed on 31 March 1846. This Commission recommended that a number of locations or reserves should be established for Black people. By 1864, there were forty locations, with an area of 2 million acres, and twenty one mission reserves, with 175 000 acres, out of a total of colonial area of 12,5 million acres (Thompson 1990:97). Although only a small proportion of land, which was mainly located in remote areas, was appropriated to the Black people, the farmers looked upon the locations not only as a threat to their peace, but also as an evil which drained Black labour from the farms (Van Zyl 1975:217; Walker 1957:274). The dissatisfaction of the farmers was also driven by their racial attitude of the master-servant relationship (cf 2.5.1.5) and labour reproduction thinking (cf 2.5.1.4). Rural areas were essential for attainment of these attitudes. These attitudes led Theophilus Shepstone<sup>13</sup>, the Secretary of Native Affairs, to consider segregating the Black people into a single large area, where it would be easier to civilise Black people through the medium of magistrates, police and trade schools than in the scattered locations. The policy presented by Shepstone and its intent was to keep the majority of indigenous people in 'reserved' rural

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<sup>13</sup> He was the son of the Reverend William Shepstone, one of the first Wesleyan Missionaries to labour in the Cape Colony. He grew up among the Xhosa speaking people and could speak the Nguni languages fluently and eloquently (Brookes 1927:26; Thompson 1990:97).

areas where they would be under the influence of chiefs while remaining subordinate to the British rule through strict laws (Cameron 1991:173; De Kiewit 1937).

Kallaway (1988:19) points out that Shepstone's Policy was intended, among others, to encourage the general extension of colonial norms and values through education. In these areas, the teaching of industrial education was encouraged and in some instances monies were allocated for that purpose<sup>14</sup> (Emanuelson 1927:59; Wilson & Thompson 1969). The allocation of this fund for the sole use of industrial education indicates the government's thinking on the link between education and labour production (cf 2.5.1.4).

In the mission schools the imparting of the 3R's and the teaching of skills such as carpentry, masonry and agriculture were of primary importance because they were associated with the 'upliftment' of the Black people's life and with the provision of appropriate labour for colonial farmers (Kallaway 1988:18). Industrial education in Natal was exercised in the context of a colony in the transition to capitalist production in agriculture and the emergence of a relatively economically independent indigenous population.

Even though the government was in favour of industrial education provided to Black people, there was no mechanisms in place for providing financial aid to mission schools before 1856. These schools were largely located in rural areas. A turning point came when Natal obtained a responsible government in 1894. Black education came under the Superintendent of Education, and the necessary funds were voted by the Natal Parliament under the Education Vote (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 80). There was a slight financial increase of about 1 percent of the money allocated in 1894, to Black education. After five years enrolment figures multiplied considerably but the allocation remained the same (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 85). This indicated the reluctance that government authorities had towards financial provision of education to Black people in remote rural areas. Just like in the Cape, rural education lagged behind because it was not adequately funded (cf 2.8).

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<sup>14</sup> An amount of £5 000 was made available for the purpose of native education which was mainly industrial in nature. During the 1860's there were a number of industrial schools which were under the auspices of the Wesleyan Mission Society.

Public schools which were present in the period 1857 to 1884 admitted Black learners (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 69), but only those who could “conform in all respects to European habits and customs” (Wolheim 1943). Dube (1985:92) argues that since the majority of African children were then still living in rural areas, and only knew their indigenous traditions, conditional acceptance of African children into these White schools was “nothing more but a smokescreen to shield racism” (cf 2.5.1). To the government, these indigenous people should remain in remote areas whereas their White counterparts received better education in the then urban areas. Christie (1991:42) confirms that the policy of the government in Natal to place Black people in rural areas (cf 2.5.1.3) and to make them, among many other oppressive measures, carry passes wherever they went had a negative impact on the provision of education to Black people.

To reinforce racial tendencies, in 1904, both the Cape and Natal enacted laws introducing compulsory education for all White children between the ages of seven and sixteen. The law was not extended to non-White learners living mainly in rural areas. Many historians believe that it was in schooling in Natal where segregation as a stated policy began (Dube 1985:91; Legassick 1995:43-59).

#### **3.4.4 The Orange Free State**

The Orange Free State was originally called the *Transgariep*, literally meaning ‘across the *Gariep* (River)’ and inhabitants in this territory included Bushmen, Korannas, and Bechuanas. There were basically three main movements, at different periods, through which the Orange Free State became populated by Cape colonists. First there were a migratory group of Cape colonists in search of better pastures for their flocks (*Trekboers*) who, without discarding British authority, moved across the Orange River in search of suitable grazing areas for their herds and flocks. This group did not only settle in the rural areas of the Orange Free State, but also moved westwards. The second movement took place in 1836 and subsequent years apart from the Great Trek. The third movement came from Natal, in the period 1843 to 1845, which supplied settlers to the Orange River territory (Eybers 1918:lx-lxi). In 1845, the Orange Free State, largely a rural region, was annexed by the British (Bruwer 1936:1; Le Roux 1998:251).

It was reported by the Interdepartmental Commission on Native Education of 1936 (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 126) that the history of Black education in the Orange Free State was practically synonymous with the history of missions. These schools were situated predominantly in rural areas. By 1854 the region had neither the time nor the money to attend to the education of the White learners, needless to say the education of the Black child. The situation was made worse off by the Anglo-Boer War in 1899 to 1902 which put on hold all education activities among the Black people.

Prior to 1910, the four colonies, namely, the Cape, the Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State operated independently. It was only in 1910 when the four amalgamated into a Union of South Africa that a more cohesive Union was realised.

### **3.5 THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA (1910-1948)**

In 1910 the Union of South Africa came into being after the passing of the South African Act of 1909. The Cape Colony, the Transvaal, Natal and the Orange Free State formed a single political entity (Eybers 1918: lxxiv; Republic of South Africa 1986: 43). Voting rights were only limited initially to White males, except in the Cape. This Act resulted in the legislatures of the four colonies ceasing to exist and their powers were vested in the Union Parliament (Malherbe 1925: 398). The Union of South Africa consisted of two houses, the Senate and the House of Assembly. In each of the former colonies, which were renamed as provinces, a Provincial Council was established. Britain retained ultimate power while leaving the governance of the state to the Afrikaners. Louis Botha became the first Prime Minister.

With the formation of the Union government, parliament was exclusively an all-White institution. The only Black people who had the franchise were those in the Cape (Shepherd 1941: 81-82). After the Union Government was established, several pieces of legislation were enacted which had a negative impact on the lives of Black South Africans. These Acts of parliament were interpreted as integral elements of a unified ideological package of segregation policy (Dubow 1995: 164) which not only neglected their basic human rights, but also kept Black people segregated in their own areas – predominantly rural. The following were included in a long series of segregatory Acts that were passed by the Union government:

- # The Mines and Works Act of 1911 and 1926 which stipulated that Black people could not be placed in positions of authority over Whites; Blacks could not be foremen or managers in the mines or factories; and White people should have higher salaries than Black people at all times.
- # The 1913 and 1936 Natives Land Act – which attempted to reduce all Black people in White owned rural areas to tenant or wage labour and limit Black people to use 13,7 percent of the total of South African land (cf 3.5.1-3.5.2).
- # The 1923 Native Urban Areas Act – which facilitated the subordination and exploitation of Black people by establishing segregation in the cities and forced Black people to carry special documents at all times to be allowed to stay in the cities.
- # The 1936 Natives Representation Act – which weakened the political rights of Black people in the Cape Province by removing qualified voters from the voters' rolls.

There were other legislative Acts that had to do with the land issues. Bundy (1991) argues that the history of Black people in South Africa, especially of Black people in rural areas, cannot adequately be understood without reference to the process of land dispossession and its effects. It is therefore imperative to look briefly at these Acts of Parliament that had to do with land issues and their influence on education. The 1913 and the 1936 Land Acts are two examples of legislation adopted by the Union government which segregated Black people and kept them largely in rural areas of South Africa:

### **3.5.1 The Natives Land Act, No 27 of 1913**

The 1913 Land Act was enacted three years after Louis Botha was inaugurated as a Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. This piece of legislation personified the recommendations of the 1903-1905 Native Affairs Commission, chaired by Sir Godfrey Lagden (Lewis 1999:153). The legislation adopted the principle that certain portions of land should be reserved exclusively for occupation by Black people. In total 13,7 percent of the total area of South Africa was demarcated as reserved land for occupational use by Black people only (Union of South Africa 1955[a]:44-46) which was situated within areas defined as rural and included the areas

of the former Kwa-Zulu, Transkei and Ciskei (Joyce 1989 s.v. "Natives Land Act, the 1913"). The White people, being a quarter of the population then, possessed 87 percent of the country's land in freehold. Black people, who formed three quarters of the population, were allocated 13 percent of the land – largely in poor rural areas.

To a number of researchers, there were a multiplicity of reasons why the 1913 Land Act was introduced:

- # According to Hartshorne (1992:124-125), this Act aimed at getting rid of a system of farming whereby Black farmers paid for the privilege of making use of White farmers' land.
- # Another reason noted by Hartshorne (1992:124-125) was that this Act would ensure the removal of squatters from the White farm-owned areas. However, according to Mbeki (1992:18), when this Act was passed the estimated number of squatters hardly justified the hysteria that surrounded the issue of squatting.
- # To Davenport (1977:259) this Act also aimed specifically at ridding African land ownership which White farmers found undesirable since it posed competition to White farmers.
- # To Malan and Hattingh (1976:7) the government did not want to accept any integration with the Black people, and the principle of White supremacy in White areas should be maintained. Black people were to become geographically and socially segregated by the ruling colonial group. Economic intermingling was, however, to take on varied forms, depending on the particular needs of the more politically influential sectors within the dominant White group.

Black people were denied access to land elsewhere and consequently these reserves became increasingly overcrowded. Economically, this Act aimed at reducing cash tenants or wage labourers, thus reducing a man "from being a farmer in his own account to being a servant at one stroke" (Bundy 1991:6).



The 1913 Land Act therefore provided the statutory basis for territorial segregation by dividing South Africa into urban and rural sectors (cf 2.5). The state was therefore seen as a tool in the hands of a more politically influential sector who used it to advance the interest of that specific group's interest, whereas on the other hand the other Black rural sector was disadvantaged by this legislation.

The 1913 Land Act did not go on unchallenged with much criticism being levelled against it by Black people, English liberals, missionaries and others (Christie 1992:46; Liebenberg 1975:383; Mbeki, 1992:18; Wilson & Perrot 1973:279-280). In 1916 the African National Congress (ANC) (1916:1) mentioned that the ulterior objective of the Union Government when introducing this Act was:

to deprive the Natives as a people of their freedom to acquire more land in their own right...to limit all opportunities for their economic improvement and independence; to lessen their chances as a people of competing freely and fairly in all commercial enterprises.

As rural areas in South Africa were defined as largely settlements without a large economic base; communities which were politically, socially and intellectually isolated; and communities traditionally administered (cf 2.4.2), communities that depended on normally infertile soil (cf 2.4.1) were deprived economic improvement. This Act ensured that the majority of the Black people continued to be trapped in impoverishment (cf 2.6). When referring to the 1913 Land Act, former ANC stalwart, Albert Luthuli (1962), reiterated that "this is the land that the government of South Africa speaks of as the 'homeland for Africans' and we are supposed to be satisfied with these so-called homelands forever". Liberation movements such as the ANC were against the separation of the South African people on the basis of race because living conditions of the people in these poor, rural areas were far from acceptable.

The total area designated as reserves by means of the 1913 Land Act was later found to be too small and more land for Black settlement was made available through the later promulgation of the Development Trust and Land Act of 1936.

### 3.5.2 The Native Trust and Land Act No 18 of 1936

The main purpose of the Act, as stated in the preamble was:

to provide for the establishment of a South African Native Trust and to define its purposes; to make further provision as to the acquisition and occupation of land by natives and other persons; to amend Act No 27 of 1913; and to provide for other incidental matters (Union of South Africa 1936[b]:90).

As part of the amendment, this Act envisaged the acquisition of an additional 6,2 million hectares of land for incorporation into what would later be called Bantustans or homeland areas (Union of South Africa 1936[b]:98). All the state-owned land in the proclaimed African areas was vested under the jurisdiction of the Development and Land Trust. The Native Trust Land Act further postulated that 'released areas' could exclusively be occupied and farmed by Black people under stringent supervision by White Trust officials (Lodge 1983:261).

According to Lodge (1983:261) the boundaries of reserves (later Bantustans and homelands and Black states) (cf 2.4.2) were fixed by these two pieces of legislation, the 1913 Land Act and the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act. These Acts restricted Black people to stay largely in rural areas.

After careful consideration and examination, the impact of the two Acts, on the provision of education to Black people during this period will thus follow.

### 3.6 EDUCATION DURING THE UNION GOVERNMENT PERIOD (1910-1948)

A good description of the state of educational affairs under this period of discussion is provided by the Welsh Commission Report. In 1935, *the 1935-1936 Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education, or Welsh Commission*<sup>15</sup>, was set up as the first national commission which looked into the provision of education to Black people after the Union government took power.

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<sup>15</sup> The Committee consisted of the Chairperson, WT Welsh, Cape Provincial Councillor and former chief magistrate of the Transkei, and the three Chief Inspectors of Native Education of Natal, Orange Free State and the Cape (Union of South Africa 1936[a]).

The Welsh Commission reported its findings in 1936, the same year when the Native and Trust Land Act (1936) and the Hertzog Native Bills were contentious issues in the Union government (Davenport 1977:281-284). The provision of Black education in this section will be viewed in light of government policies that were introduced after Hertzog became a Prime Minister.

When the Welsh commissioners were busy collecting evidence between 1935-1936, South Africans, especially the Black people, were feeling the impact of the legacy of the past especially due to government legislation. The Commission was faced with a grave situation whereby the country was recovering from what is called “the Great Depression of 1930-1932”. The price of wool, maize, and yellow mealies fell tremendously; and the rate of bankruptcy rose with alarming numbers. In addition, South Africa was hit by drought which affected the rural communities particularly badly (Liebenberg 1975:423).

The decline of the reserves, and poor working conditions on farm areas, pushed many South Africans into the towns (Davenport 1977:302-303,524,535). These conditions, marked by the passage of such discriminatory laws as the Natives Land Act (1913), the Colour Bar Act (1926) and the Hertzog Bills (1936)<sup>16</sup>, had a serious impact on the provision of education to Black people situated primarily in rural areas.

### **3.6.1 Administration of Black education**

In virtually all countries of Africa during this period, South Africa included, education was originally almost entirely the business of the mission societies. The mission societies continually played a very important role in the education of South Africans, especially Black people. With the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, education, except higher education, was designated a provincial matter for a period of five years<sup>17</sup>. After this period,

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<sup>16</sup> The two Bills which became Acts of Parliament in 1936 were the Representation of Natives Act (No 12 of 1936) – which embodied the principle that Black people should not share the franchise with White people; and the Native Trust Land Act (No 18 of 1936).

<sup>17</sup> Administration of Black education remained a provincial responsibility until 1953 when the Bantu Education Act was passed and it (the Act) transferred the control of African schooling to the Union Department of Native Affairs (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 52).

Parliament could decide on other arrangements for the control of schooling (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 253). In all the four provinces (the Cape Colony, Orange Free State, Natal and Transvaal), the administration of the schools, Black education included, fell under the Heads of Provincial Education Departments. At this stage, Black education largely still remained in practice a missionary undertaking (Lewis 1999:101-102).

The control and administration of Black education, identified as an area for investigation by the Welsh commissioners, was an issue which had implications for broader segregation policy. Black, Coloured, Indian and White children attended separate primary and secondary schools (Behr 1988:60). Basically, Coloured, Indian and White children went to free government schools, whereas the majority of Black children attended schools controlled by various missionary groups with limited funding. The principal exception to this practice was Natal, where in 1918 the provincial administration established state-run school for Black people (Davis 1984:130). However, even though state schools were introduced in Natal, most Black people attending school did so under missionary auspices.

White education and Black education were both under the legislative and administrative control of the four provinces, and three<sup>18</sup> out of four provinces had established a considerable measure of separate administration by the creation of distinct, and to some extent independent, Departments of Native Education, each with a separate *ad hoc* inspectorate (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 261). The nature of administration in Black education differed from province to province.

The control of Black education, and whether it should remain a provincial preserve or be taken over by the Union government through the Native Affairs Department (NAD), the Minister for Native Affairs becoming also the Minister of Education, was also designated as an area of investigation by the Welsh Commission. The Welsh Commission proposed that Native Education be under the Minister for Education, working through a special Director of Native Education.

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<sup>18</sup> In the Cape prior to 1921, all education was under one inspectorate, irrespective of the ethnic origins of the pupils. It was after 1921 that a Chief Inspector who was specifically to attend to Native education was appointed (Davis 1984).

There was discontent about transferring Native Education to the NAD. The NAD's limited involvement up until then in Black education was one of the factors cited as a weak point (Union of South Africa 1936[a]). Black education as provided by missionaries was isolated hence the Department that had to do with Black affairs (the NAD) had little to do with the education of the Black people predominantly residing in rural areas. Dubow (1989:13) supports this argument when he mentions that the NAD was a weak and fragmented department in the 1920s with a paternalistic ethos. However, by the 1930s it had become more robust and repressive in its administration of Native Affairs.

The other administrative body that the Welsh Commission reported about was the Native Affairs Commission (NAC). The Minister of Native Affairs had delegated powers, among others, concerning the administering of the Native Development Fund, on the advice of the NAC. The NAC was set up by the Native Affairs Act of 1920 as an advisory body to the Union government. One of its major objectives was to consult Black opinion, but, by 1930, it ceased to carry out its mandate. It was ironic that the body that could not interact with the Black people could recommend to the Minister of Native Affairs which amounts of money were to be appropriated to Black people who remained impoverished in remote rural areas. The NAC was known during the 1930's to be a propaganda vehicle for segregationist ideology (Dubow 1989:11,110). It can be pointed out here that the government structures had, in most cases, links with the ideology of segregation.

In its final report, the Welsh Commission rejected the involvement of the NAD and the NAC which indicated the fact that it (the Welsh Commission) did not agree with the notion that education should be an agent of segregation. The Welsh Commission proposed the transfer of Native Education to a Union Education Department which was inclusive of all race groups (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 331). On the contrary, the NAC recommended that the control of Native Education could rest in the hands of the NAD, with the Minister of Native Affairs becoming the Minister of Native Education as well (Union of South Africa 1936[b]: par 62-63).

The argument of the NAC was that it was illogical to split education from all other native affairs by dividing the care of Black people between departments. On the other hand, the main argument of the Welsh Commission on Native Education was that it was also illogical to

divorce one branch of educational activity, Black education, from the Department of Education, which in principle should deal with *all* education (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 331). The Welsh Commission Report rejected the idea of NAD control, stating that education should not be linked to a department that had a negative image among Black people (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 320).

The NAC, which represented the government thinking, advocated the idea that Black people were to develop in the allocated reserves by preserving, and building on the traditional Black peoples' virtues of brotherhood and family kinship. The fact that Black education should not be divorced from the Department of Native Affairs or 'Native Policy' suggested that, the majority of Black people stationed in rural areas, should continue developing 'along their own lines' in remote rural areas.

Education was seen as a vehicle to this separate development. It was in Black (largely rural) areas that Black interests were to be taken into consideration by the NAD. The view held by the NAC was basically in total agreement also with the Native Bills which were introduced in the 1930's. In 1936, when a Joint Sitting debate about the Native Representation Bill was held, Hertzog justified the neglect of Black education by linking it to the franchise issue. He further emphasised that since education was one of the criteria for the franchise, its provision had to be made in such a way that it limited the creation of large numbers of Black voters (Union of South Africa 1936[c]: cols 336, 529). It was the intention of the Union government when introducing several discriminatory Hertzogian Bills that through these Bills, Black people could remain in reserves (cf 3.5).

On the whole, the recommendation made by the *Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education* (Welsh Commission) that Black education should be a Union government responsibility, was not taken seriously into consideration until 1953 when the Bantu Education Act was introduced. For many years thereafter, the provision of education to Black people has not been free from political influences.

### 3.6.2 Aim of education

When the Union government came into being, it was faced with a multiplicity of challenges. Among others, it was faced with a challenge of introducing a policy according to which the national system of Black education was to be run. The debates in political circles during the Union government revolved around the link among education, the non-racial franchise and the broader place of Black people in society in which they were currently found.

When the Welsh Commission made its report in 1935-36 it was well aware of the situation and it noted that “whatever aim [of education] is formulated it will of necessity involve by implication the position which the Native has to occupy in the political and economic structure of South African society” (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: 455). The Welsh Commission (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 458) reflected the aim of Black education during this period when it reported that:

The education of the White child prepares him for life in a dominant society and the education of the Black child for a subordinate society. There are for the White child no limits, in or out of school... For the Black child there are limits which affect him chiefly out of school.

The quotation above does not necessarily reflect that the Welsh Commission advocated Hertzog’s segregationist policy, but the report surveyed the limitations created by segregation on Black employment and social opportunities (Krige 1993). As mentioned above, Black children and White children were prepared for different social settings because they belonged to different political and economic orders. Charles Loram, an advisor to the Union Government on Black education, before he was appointed to the NAC in 1920, verified the aforesaid when he remarked that Black people were a rural people. Therefore, their education should be differentiated from that of White people and geared towards development within rural areas (Loram 1917:80-83). According to Molteno (1984:65), schooling for Black people helped to prepare Black students for places of inferiority which they were to occupy in society (cf 2.5.1.3).

During the Union government period, compulsory education to Black learners was not enforced by law. Black people residing in rural areas of South Africa were not in one way or

the other compelled by law to attend elementary schooling. Many White people who were interviewed by the Welsh Commission, for example, gave a number of reasons why they felt that compulsory education for Black people need not necessarily be enforced by means of legislative Acts (Union of South Africa 1936:[a] par 453):

- # the introduction of elementary education to Black people might have caused 'social inconvenience' and might have been dangerous to the White economy;
- # elementary education would make a Black child unfit for manual work;
- # it could make him/her 'cheeky' and less docile as a servant; and
- # it would estrange the Black child from his/her own people and lead him/her to despise his/her own culture.

It was believed that 'literate' Black people, after completion of their studies were to work amongst their own people in the typical rural 'Native areas' like the reserves. This was in line with segregation Bills that were prevalent during the Union government that Black people, particularly the educated elite, could no longer aspire to a place in White society – their aspirations were to focus on the rural reserves. Reverend Haile, the former Principal of Tiger Kloof Institution in the former Transvaal, and one of the then leading Black missionary schools in South Africa, argued that the notion that Black people were to expand economically in the reserves was practically and philosophically impracticable since economic sustainability in rural areas was not possible and viable (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 460). These areas were deliberately neglected by the state and ran short of basic resources (cf 2.8).

### **3.6.3 Financing of Black education**

An important feature of Black rural education during this period and periods to come was that of inadequate funding. The funds which provinces administered for Black education drew very little from general revenue. Black education was financed under the Native Development Account or Fund which was created in 1925. This Fund drew from a proportion of income from taxes paid by Black people. Into this account, £340,000 a year was paid by the government. This sum was equal to the total amount that was spent by the four provinces on Black education during the period 1921-22 (Horrel 1963:31).



However, the grants from this fund proved to be inadequate for the carrying on of Black education since it could not keep pace with most essential needs of Black education. By 1933, the Native Development Fund was declared bankrupt, and by 1935 Black education was facing a severe financial crisis (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 250).

From 1930 to 1945 there was a huge disparity between financing of Black education as compared to that of White education. The government contribution per learner for the education of White people was ten times larger than that for education of Black people. The contribution per head of the White population was over forty times as much as per head of the Black population (Horrel 1968:23; Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 302). In 1935, for example, £23 per annum was spent on each White child as compared with £1.18.6 per annum for each Black child (*NBESR* 1935).

State expenditure on Black education was fixed and supplemented by a portion of direct taxes paid by the Black people – a policy which Dubow (1989:253) refers to as a policy of fiscal segregation. Black people were also expected to fund the education of their children from their tax revenues (Birley 1968:152). However, a key feature was that there were still patterns of racial inequalities, with funds more concentrated to White children who were largely in the urban areas (Christie & Collins 1984:165; Horrel 1963:31-32; Horrel 1968:23). Wolheim (1943:39) points out that the expenditure on education then alone would have to be multiplied by 36 to place Black education on the same level as White education.

Consequently, as a result of poor funding by Union Government, the following were some of the outcomes that were experienced with regard to Black (largely rural) education:

- # Over 70 percent of the total Native children of school-going age did not receive any schooling at all (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 300) in 1935. Only 30 percent of Black children of school-going age actually went to school, and very few progressed beyond the first two standards. Only 1.83 percent of pupils at school were in post-primary classes. The amount of money spent on them was still very small compared with White education (*NBESR* 1935).

- # Many Black schools, which were aided and inspected by the Provincial Education Department officials, were found to be “hopelessly overcrowded and understaffed. Conditions in unaided schools were generally worse off than the aided schools” (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 300).
  
- # In the period 1934 to 1935, out of a total of 424 teachers in post-primary schools, 282 (or 66 percent) were Europeans. With equal professional qualifications, the European teacher was paid a salary 63 percent higher than that received by the Black teacher. Consequently, two thirds of the money allocated to Black education was absorbed by the European teachers’ salaries (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 48).
  
- # By way of comparison, the government contribution per pupil for European education was 10 times as large as that for Black education, and over forty times as much as per head of the European population as per head of the Black population (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 302).
  
- # Resources and furniture were scarce, let alone educational equipment such as laboratory apparatus and maps.
  
- # For White children, primary education was both compulsory and free. The Black child was expected to pay school fees and buy their own books. Monies which were normally granted to mission schools were insufficient for the expanding needs of Black children (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 376).
  
- # There were shortages of teachers, those who were there were mostly poorly qualified and unqualified<sup>19</sup> and the majority of them were directly paid by parents themselves – not by the State at all (Birley 1968:153).

Both the Welsh Commission and the NAC agreed that Black education was starved of funds. As a result, both made several recommendations with regard to the financing of Black

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<sup>19</sup> In some cases, unqualified teachers, who normally did not have professional qualifications of at least three years of appropriate teacher training, knew little more than learners (Seroto 1999:4).

education. The Welsh Commission recommended that there was a need for more liberal financing of Black education. A separate National Education Fund was to be established and this proposal perhaps indicated a fear on the part of the Welsh Commissioners that if Black education is provided by the national government and coupled with other services every year, it might be neglected by a 'hostile' government (Krige 1993:168). This statement clearly reflects on the role that State legislation played in providing education to the entire South Africa. The mission societies had hopes about the recommendation that their major financial crisis would be resolved, but unfortunately it was not, because funding of Black education remained stagnant until 1953 (Horrel 1963).

The other challenge facing Black education during this period was the administration of finances. On one hand there was the NAC<sup>20</sup> which, irrespective of the little knowledge its members had on Black education, held the purse strings. On the other hand there were Provincial Councils which administered Black education without having the financial responsibility or control. This made the running of Black education by Provincial Authorities irksome and impacted negatively on the type of education that Black people were receiving.

### 3.6.4 Curriculum

The educational content of any society, is dictated by the aims of education as conceived by the curriculating authorities concerned. During the period under review the content of education (curriculum) was directed by the legislative policies of the Union government. In general, these policies were segregatory in nature. Charles Loram, a member of NAC, and also a member of the first Phelps-Stokes African Education Commission and an advisor to the Union government made several assumptions with regard to the content that should be included in Black education (Davis 1976:89-93):

- # Whites would continue to rule and Black people would continue to be ruled
- # Black people could only aspire to become junior partners in a firm

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<sup>20</sup> In 1945 there was a financial crisis because the General Tax with the fixed amount of £340 000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund was not coping with the actual expenses on Black learners. In the same year, financial control was removed from the NAC and was put under the Union Department of Education, Arts and Science (Hartshorne 1992:30).

- # Black people were a rural people and their future lay in the countryside;
- # agriculture was a natural way of life for Black people;
- # social adjustment or the avoidance of race friction between Blacks and Whites demanded that most Black people remain in rural area;
- # Black people were to perform manual and agricultural work; and
- # Black people education should be geared toward entrenching White control and a rural-oriented way of life.

Loram further argued that education which was provided for Black people during the Union government was too much a “bookish” affair and it was too “academic and too little related to the everyday needs of the African people” (Davis 1976:91) which implied a rural setting. Loram proposed that the government introduce special ‘manual training’ subjects in the primary school syllabus. Almost immediately after his appointment as Chief Inspector, in 1919, he summarily dropped algebra and geometry from the official syllabus. Physiology and hygiene, nature study, subjects with “practical and demonstrable value”, were subsequently added (Union of South Africa 1919:34).

The Europeans became aware that the progress of the country was inextricably bound up with the proper development of the Black races. Therefore the development of the Black race depended much on the content of education that was to be provided to the Black people.

#### *3.6.4.1 Manual and industrial subjects*

At the elementary schools, in all provinces, courses such as gardening and agriculture were offered. These two subjects were classified under manual and industrial training (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 182). Black people were to receive an education which would therefore suit them as a rural population (cf 2.5.1.4). Therefore, the curriculum in most Black schools did not emphasise academic content, but rather an education which emphasised a practical content.

The manual related subjects were introduced because they provided an efficient means of “inculcation of industry” into Black pupils. These subjects were also acceptable to White public opinion as it did not threaten White working-class jobs (Fleisch 1995:151). It can be said

without doubt that the introduction of manual-related subjects was a precursor to the enactment of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which emphasised that there was no place for Black people in the White community above the level of certain forms of labour. One is in agreement with Hartshorne (1989:20-21) that Black children did not require a narrow “skills and training” approach to education, determined by industrial, commercial or agricultural interests, or limited by either urban or rural environments, but an education that would permit all Black people to cope with the challenges that were facing South African society as a whole.

The inculcation of industrial habits into Black learners was resisted by rural parents in that those habits were generally designed for learners familiar with an urban environment. In most cases industrial education contained elements that conflicted with local customs and beliefs. This urban bias industrial-related content not only complicated the task of rural teachers, but rural learners could see little relevance of some subject matter to their own experience and to life in their community. There was a danger that schooling was to be perceived to be irrelevant to rural life. As a result parents might have seen no point in sending their sons and especially their daughters to school.

Furthermore, during the Union government, South Africans were faced with a challenge that society was moving from being a predominantly pastoral society, to an industrial one. The development of gold and diamonds mines in the nineteenth and twentieth century accelerated the process of urbanisation. With many Black people moving from reserves to towns, the White South African Union government feared that Black people would dominate the country as they formed the majority of the South African population (Dubow 1995:167). The Mines and Works Act of 1911 which stipulated that Black people could not be placed in positions of authority over Whites, was amended in 1926. This excluded Black people from occupying skilled jobs. Therefore the pastoral-oriented content at Black schools was no longer relevant because it could not satisfy the economic aspiration of the majority of Black people. The attempt by the government to ‘ruralise’ the curriculum by introducing subjects such as agriculture were confounded by parental objections to what they viewed as a sub-standard education offered to their children (Moulton 2001).

#### 3.6.4.2 Vernacular

In South Africa, the history of the use of a language of instruction in Black education has revolved mainly around English, Afrikaans and to a certain degree the Black languages, and, for many years, been determined by political and economic forces (Hartshorne 1992:187-188).

For example, prior to the establishment of the Union government, the original Dutch settlers of the Boer Republics, were strongly influenced by the doctrines of the Dutch Reformed Church (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 412-428). The use of the Dutch language and later Afrikaans became central in their educational struggle against the use of other languages. As Malherbe (1977:2) had to say:

The Afrikaans language became the symbol of the struggle for *national identity*, and in the course of time the State school was seized upon as the means to foster that consciousness of a nation with a God-given destiny [italics mine].

This struggle for national identity was to be later used to subjugate especially the Black people and keep them under especially White Afrikaner dominance.

In all four provinces (Cape, Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State) a vernacular language was a compulsory subject throughout the primary school through to teacher training institutions, but not a medium of instruction. When the Union Government came into power, the language issue was one of the controversial issues. In 1910, the following, with regard to the language issue, was included in Article 137 of the Constitution of the Union Government:

Both the *English* and *Dutch* languages shall be official languages of the Union, and shall be treated on a footing of equality and possess and enjoy equal freedom, rights and privileges - italics mine (Union of South Africa 1909).

The enactment of this Article in the Union's Constitution had far-reaching consequences for Black people in the sense that even after 1948, after the National Party came into power, Afrikaans (which developed from Dutch) was exclusively used as a medium of instruction. The use of the two official languages as defined in Article 137 of the Union Government Constitution had acquired political overtones because African languages were not rated so highly.

Even amidst all this negativity, the *Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education* (Welsh Committee of 1936), in principle was in favour of the extension of vernacular medium beyond standard 2 (Grade 4) level but there were shortcomings highlighted with regard to the use of the vernacular which included; a lack of fixed terminology in vernaculars, suitable textbooks and the availability of vernacular textbooks. The Welsh Commission (Union of South Africa 1936[a]: par 449) then recommended the following with regard to the language issue:

- # that in multi-vernacular areas, Native schools should, wherever possible, be organised on a language basis;
- # that where a provision of separate schools for pupils speaking each of the main Bantu languages is impracticable, experiments should be made in re-organising Native schools on a language group basis, the schools to be classified as either Zulu-Xhosa or Sotho-Tswana schools; and
- # that, neither of the above solutions is found practicable, schools in multi-vernacular areas might...be allowed to introduce an official language as medium of instruction at an earlier stage than is ordinarily permissible; and if no satisfactory arrangements can be made for the teaching of Native language or languages as subjects, the teaching of other official language as a subject in lieu of a Native language should be permitted.

It can be said that it is not unsound to emphasise the vernacular for the sake of development. However, in the case of South Africa, vernacular was emphasised for the sake of attainment of some political ideology. The grouping of schools on the basis of language groups, even though initially was purely educational, can be seen to be promoting ethnicity – stressing the need for cultural preservation. This culture preservation could be understood as preparing Black people to function within their local rural communities (Seroto 1999:91).

### **3.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

What has come to light in this chapter, where a brief historical development of Black rural education in South Africa has been highlighted in general, is that the colonial authorities during various periods were not that particularly concerned with the education of Black people. The Dutch authorities were only concerned with trade in the Cape Colony and the provision of education to Black people was not one of its first priorities. The same applies during the British rule in the eighteenth century.

It has also been established that there were a number of government legislations which contributed to Black education being confined to rural areas in South Africa. For example, the 1913 Land Act and 1936 Trust Land Act played a role in establishing geographical segregation in South Africa. This piece of legislation demarcated Black people to rural areas whereas Whites were accorded an opportunity to remain in advantaged urban areas as well as rural areas with the intention of farming. Most of the Black people were allowed in urban areas only because there was a need for manual labour by the dominant White society, a need endorsed by education.

The education of the Black people was also affected by the introduction of these segregatory laws. The 1936 Interdepartmental Commission on Native Education pointed out to the government of the day that Black rural education was seriously neglected by those who were in positions of authority. The government of the day was mostly concerned with White education and as a result little had been done to remedy the state of affairs of Black people.

In 1948 the National Party Government came to power and segregatory laws were introduced. In the following chapter, pieces of legislation that had a direct bearing on Black rural education starting from 1948 will be outlined and their impact on education will be critically analysed.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE APARTHEID GOVERNMENT'S STANCE ON RURAL EDUCATION (1948-1960)**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE APARTHEID GOVERNMENT'S STANCE ON RURAL EDUCATION (1948-1960)

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE CHAPTER

What transpired in Chapter two and three was a reflection of the complexity of rural education in South Africa and factors that influenced provision of education to Black learners during the pre-*apartheid* period. Since rural education is a human occurrence, several pieces of legislation that had a bearing on human beings were passed by various political forces. These Acts of government had an impact on the provision of education to all South Africans, Black people in particular. Education structures were used by those in government to direct and channel society in a certain specific direction - the direction which disadvantaged most of the Black people, especially those residing in rural areas. In the light of this problem this chapter therefore aims at critically analysing the intention of several legislative Acts that were introduced during the period 1948 to 1960 by the Nationalist Party (NP) government and the influence these Acts of parliament had on rural education. The objectives ensuing from this general aim will therefore be:

- # to touch on the political evolution of the NP and its underlying philosophical principles from a historical perspective;
- # to discuss the historical development of legislation surrounding rural education;
- # to highlight salient factors/influences of legislative intentions of Acts of Parliament during the NP government reign;
- # to critically discuss the general and specific implications contained in the Bantu Education Act of 1953;
- # to critically analyse perceptions of Black people about the introduction of Bantu Education Act of 1953; and
- # to assess the impact of the NP government legislation on Black learners, especially those in rural areas.

As mentioned, it is of primary importance that the historical background of the NP, the Party that ruled for more than forty years in South Africa and who introduced statutory discrimination, be highlighted. It is also imperative to mention that these Acts of Parliament that were introduced by the NP government were moulded and directed by the philosophical principles and beliefs of the NP.

## 4.2 THE BIRTH OF THE NATIONAL PARTY

As mentioned previously (cf 3.5), Louis Botha, a former Afrikaner General, was appointed the first Prime Minister of the Union government. The British oriented Cape Progressives (CP) opposition Party, led by Dr LS Jameson, and the South African Labour Party (LP), led by Colonel FHP Creswell, were formed in 1910. The LP was a predominantly English-speaking Party that believed in segregation, as a political doctrine, whereby political and economic supremacy of White people in South Africa was emphasised (Crijns 1959:54). Louis Botha's South African Party (SAP) absorbed members from the former Afrikaner Parties, as well as some independents from the former Natal.

The other Boer General, namely, JC Smuts took side with the Prime Minister. General Botha and the SAP tried to bridge the difference between the two major White groups, but Afrikaners, particularly those in the former Transvaal and Orange River Colony, rejected these efforts.

Despite the remarkable support Louis Botha got from his Cabinet, there was a sign of a gathering storm between him and one of his Cabinet Ministers, General JBM Hertzog. The difference that arose between Botha and Hertzog was that the SAP's goal was primarily focused on the merging of the two language groups in a single White South African nation, whereas Hertzog insisted that they retain their separate identities within the framework of a single national loyalty.

In 1912, the struggle between Botha and Hertzog intensified resulting in Hertzog being ousted from the Cabinet. Hertzog was asked by Botha to modify his views or resign from Parliament, but Hertzog refused. Hertzog then launched an attack campaign against Botha and labelled him as a protagonist imperialist who sought to exploit South Africa for his own selfish ends

(Van den Heever 1946:316; Wilson & Thompson 1975:370). Botha then resigned and when the new Cabinet came into being Hertzog was left out. On 1 July 1914, Hertzog and people who shared the same sentiments with him formed another political party called the National Party. Indeed, Hertzog championed Afrikaner separatism and, by 1920 his party although did not demand the majority.

The overall purpose for establishing the National Party was to prevent the destruction of Afrikaner identity (Joyce 1990:519). The members of the National Party were mainly concerned with the political implications of the use of Afrikaans as a language. The National Party used as one of its slogans “South Africa First” in contrast to the SAP, which on the contrary, were sympathetic to the interests of the British Empire.

In 1918 a secret organisation called the *Afrikaner Broederbond* (literally translated as “association of Afrikaner brothers”) was formed. This association was established with the sole purpose of advancing the Afrikaner cause and interests (Davenport 1966:251). Above all, it aimed at finding ways for Afrikaners to attain positions of power throughout the entire South African society. The gears of this organisation, as Verkuyl (1971) stipulates, were driven by two basic, ideologically-determined motifs or ideas, and they were referred to as the Christian national motif and the *eiesortige* (autogenous) motif.

The Christian national motif had the notion of ‘a separate Afrikaans nation’ identified with the Western Christian civilisation and appointed by God to play a dominant role in South Africa until the end of time. For many years to come, the Nationalist Afrikaner writings reflected the Calvinistic belief that the State is divinely ordained and created. This was supported by Du Toit, the *Afrikaner Broederbond* founder when he expressed his belief in a mystical or supernatural creation of the Afrikaner nation when he wrote of God having ‘brought together’ members of various nationalities in South Africa and ‘given’ them a common language (Van Jaarsveld 1961:223). Calvinism sought to renew society by penetrating life at every depth, so the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) strove hard in itself and its own brand of Calvinism was felt in the life every Afrikaner people. According to Wilson and Thompson (1990:372), although there was never any formal or official relationship between the church and the party, “the Dutch Reformed Church became in a very real sense the National Party at prayer”.

There are various interpretations of the origin of Christian-nationalism. According to Dubow (1995: 248) the origin of Afrikaner nationalism, as a mass movement, emerged after the South African War (1899-1902). The outcomes of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) was believed to have played a role in demoralising and shattering the Afrikaners' ambitions of becoming a dominant government.

The argument about this interpretation was based on the notion that the Afrikaners concluded that the character of the constitutional arrangements of the Union would essentially be British – the arrangement which they (Afrikaners) did not actually support. There were also views that Afrikaner nationalism thinking originated as a reaction against anti-British sentiments during the 1830's, giving rise to the Great Trek (Davies 1988:90). In his critical analysis of Christian-nationalism, Lewis (1999:168) argues that to date the origin of the Christian-national thinking is itself a debatable topic.

The second motif had the notion that non-White groups were guaranteed, within certain limits, an *eiesoortige* (their own separate kind of) development. According to this motif, a racial caste system was established which secured monopoly of power by the White (Afrikaner) people and formed the basis upon which all 'other groups' were assigned a particular subordinate group which was believed to be rural (cf 2.5.1.3).

On the political front, these motifs were gradually realised. In April 1923, the Labour Party and the National Party formed an election Pact leaving in abeyance contentious issues between themselves. The Pact won the general election of June 1924 and the new government with Nationalist Hertzog as Prime Minister came into existence.

After Hertzog had lost a number of members in the Party, he thought it necessary to join forces with the Smuts' SAP. This Party was later renamed the United South African Party or the United Party with Hertzog and Smuts as dual leaders of the Party. Inter-party conflict between Hertzog and Smuts was unavoidable since they still had differences over a number of issues. The question of South African participation in the Second World War was one such issue. Smuts agreed that South Africa would form an alliance with Britain and fight Germany whereas Hertzog, because of his belief in Afrikaner nationalism, was opposed to participation of South Africa in the Second World War (Marquard 1962:159). The Second World War, in

fact, accelerated more in uniting *Afrikanerdom* and infused it with purpose and determination than any other single factor before or after (Wilson & Thompson 1975:367; Le May 1965:213). In 1939 the Assembly voted in favour of a declaration of war against Germany. As a result of this declaration, Hertzog withdrew from the United Party and joined the opposition.

Due to Hertzog's republicanism beliefs, he re-united with the Malan Party. The two formed a Party called the *Herigde Nasionale of Volksparty*. Later on, Hertzog and one of his lieutenants, Havenga, withdrew and formed the Afrikaner Party. In 1943, the UP won the election and its campaign on elections was based on the Second World War issue. After Hertzog retired from politics, the Nationalist-Afrikaner Party coalition was formed, under the leadership of Malan and Havenga. This coalition Party won the 1948 general elections. Malan became a Prime Minister with Havenga as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. In 1951, the two Parties merged and formed *Die Nasionale Party* (the National Party) with Malan as the first leader of the Party.

Dr DF Malan was Prime Minister of the Nationalist Party (NP) from 1948 to 1954, and he was followed by JG Strijdom (1954-1958), HF Verwoerd (1958-1966), BJ Vorster (1966-1978), and PW Botha (1978-1989) - all members of the NP, which won the general elections between 1953 and 1979.

#### **4.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK DURING THE NATIONALIST PARTY RULE (1948-1960)**

Segregation and inequalities had existed in the South African history as a matter of custom and practice, but after 1948 they were now enshrined in law. Under the new NP rule, almost all practices concerning the separation and segregation of Black people were strictly enforced by law at all levels. On 29 March 1948, the NP made the following statement:

There are two sections of thought in South Africa in regard to the policy affecting the non-European community. On one hand there is the policy of equality...[o]n the other hand there is the policy of separation (*apartheid*) which has grown from the experience of established European population of the country, and which is based on the Christian principles of Justice and reasonableness.

We can act in only, one of two directions. Either we must follow a course of equality -, which must eventually mean national suicide for the White race, or we must take the course of separation (*apartheid*) through which the character and the future of every race will be protected and safeguarded with full opportunities for development and self-maintenance in their *own* ideas, without the interests of one clashing with the interests of the other, and without regarding the development of the other as undermining or a threat to himself.

The Party believes that a definite policy of *separation (apartheid)* between the White races and the non-White racial groups... is the only basis on which the character and future of each race can be protected and on which each race can be guided so as to develop his *own* national character, aptitude and calling (*United Nations* 1952:139-140 - emphasis mine).

Statements quoted above, heralded an extreme policy, known as *apartheid* (Afrikaans for “separateness”) introduced by the NP government after it took over power in 1948. To be able to put into perspective various legislation introduced by the NP Government, it would be necessary to discuss the concept *apartheid*, and its underlying principles from both a historical and philosophical perspective.

#### **4.3.1 Defining the concept *apartheid***

Rural education during this period has been shaped by the government *apartheid* ideology embedded in legislative Acts. Therefore to be able to put rural education into perspective, it is imperative to define briefly what the concept *apartheid* entails and its underlying philosophy.

Defining the concept *apartheid* is not without problems since there are disagreements, about its definition between various scholars (Bunting 1964). Keet (1957:1) defines *apartheid* as a government policy which sought by means of legislation to segregate politically, economically and socially, the different racial groups in South Africa. Murphy (1973:87) agrees with Keet when he mentions that *apartheid* was a complete and permanent separation of racial groups in South Africa in every sphere: cultural, economic, social, political, biological and territorial (*Readers Digest* 1992:514; Tabata 1959:1-2; Thompson 1990:190).

Prior to the coming into power of the NP and its propagation of *apartheid*, there was a number of segregationist legislative acts which were enacted by government to that effect (cf 3.5). The ideology of segregation was cemented by DF Malan when he took power in 1948. He promised his followers, the *Volk*, that non-Whites should be “put in their place” (Ngcokovane 1989:56). Malan further assured the *Volk* that the Native reserves would become the true fatherland of the Black people (Carter 1966:4).

As an official government policy since 1948, *apartheid* encompassed racial separation at all levels (*Readers Digest* 1992:514). The concept *apartheid* embraced the following ideas:

- # *Apartheid* aimed at segregating the population of South Africa which comprised of four racial groups - White people, Coloured people, Indians and Black people (Thompson 1990:190; cf 2.5.4).
- # According to Tabata (1959:1-2) *apartheid* was a policy of *baasskap* literally meaning ‘boss-ship’. The NP advocated the ideology that the Whites were bosses (supremacy) whereas the Black people were servants (inferiority). From a Calvinistic point of view, the White people thought that they were superior to all other non-White people in South Africa (cf 2.5.4.5).

A turning point in the NP government reign came when HF Verwoerd (1958-1966) took over the reigns to become a leader of the NP in 1958. He introduced a political ideology of total separation called separate development. The ideology of separate development was pivoted on the determination by White South Africans to retain all political power in any means available with the aim of preventing economic competition from Black Africans. To attain this goal, the White people, through the NP government, thought that residential segregation or separate development was a solution (cf 2.5.1.3).

In the first ten years of the NP’s reign as government, most of the *apartheid* legislation passed in Parliament, involved careful and full legal definition of the White racial domination which had been long an integral part of the South African way of life. These laws set specific limits on aspects such as housing, education, employment, entertainment, sports, sexual relations



within or outside marriage. For the sake of this research, specific legislation and their subsequent impact on education have been selected for discussion.

#### **4.3.2 The Group Areas Act 41 of 1950**

A significant reflection of the *apartheid* ideology was evidenced in the physical separation of the four races - namely the White people, Coloureds, Indians and the Black people. The Coloureds and Indians were initially not vividly demarcated from the White residential locations (Naicker 1996:34). The Act did not only define residential areas for different racial groups, but it also included segregation between the urban and rural people (Behr 1988:14; Murphy 1973:96). The Group Areas Act of 1950, created the main pillars of racial restrictions on places of residence and prohibited the use of most of the facilities by the non-White people (cf 2.5.4.3). The Group Areas Act of 1950, according to Joyce (1990:45), was a source of unequal treatment of the races since over 50 000 of non-White people were forced to resettle in other areas as compared to only 40 000 of the White people. In most instances Black people were forced to move to barren rural areas which were, in most cases, economically not viable.

#### **4.3.3 The Bantu Authorities Act No 68 of 1951**

After coming into power, the NP government introduced several laws which impoverished the masses of the Black people situated mainly in the rural areas of South Africa. One such Act was the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951.

It was the government's intention to institutionalise its policy of separate development or *apartheid* by introducing this Act. The primary aim of the Bantu Authorities Act was the establishment of a hierarchy of authority in Black areas, as a precursor to self-government in the areas as demarcated in the 1913 Land Act, and 1936 Development Trust and Land Act. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 was therefore established to create a machinery for enabling Black people in certain specified areas to gain expertise in self-rule during a series of stages (cf 2.5.1.2). The Bantu Authorities Act provided that each of the established Black territories was to develop a territorial (legislative and executive) authority at the top of an infrastructure of tribal and regional administrations (Republic of South Africa 1986:202). The Government aimed at eventual establishment of a three-tier, (tribal, regional and territorial) structure of

administration in the Black reserves (*Foreign and Commonwealth Office* 1978:5). The NP government was supporting a persistent myth that there is a separate Bantu society and a separate Bantu economy as advocated by the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr HF Verwoerd, when he said that “there is no place for him [the native] above certain forms of labour...” (Union of South Africa 1954: col 2619).

An important aspect of the system of Bantu Authorities, as Liebenberg (1975:487) advocates, that by conferring certain powers on the headmen, whose authority was crumbling, Verwoerd wanted to ensure that he could count on the support of the headmen in implementing the system of the government which he planned to introduce.

In 1951, Dr HF Verwoerd, appointed a Commission under Professor Frederik Tomlinson to conduct an exhaustive enquiry into, and to report on a comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of the native areas with the view to develop within them a social structure in keeping with the culture of the Black person, based on effective socio-economic planning (Davenport, 1977:375). According to Welsh (1998:451), it was assumed that in these (rural) areas a new generation of Black entrepreneurs could develop industrial estates which over ten years would provide new jobs. The Tomlinson Report (Union of South Africa 1955[a]:194) stated that White people would never voluntarily abdicate their power and accept government by a Black majority. It further recommended that there should be direct investment by White-owned firms in the bantustans (Union of South Africa 1955[a]:131).

This system of government by local Chiefs was sharply criticised by the liberation movements. The ANC pointed out that the Bantu Authorities were the exact antithesis of democracy, it was a rule by some kind of Council appointed even without consultation with the people at grassroots level, by the sole decision of the Chief and the NAD - a Council in which the people had no say at all.

#### **4.3.4 The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act No 46 of 1959**

The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act No 46 of 1959 was introduced on the basis of recommendations made by the Tomlinson Commission (Union of South Africa 1955[a]). The purpose of the Tomlinson Report was to justify separate development, and to suggest how this process may be achieved. The NP Government welcomed the unequivocal rejection of

integration and of any theories on a possible middle course, as well as justification by the Commission of the policy of *apartheid*.

According to the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 (Union of South Africa 1959:514), it was declared that "the Bantu people of the Union of South Africa do not constitute a homogeneous people but form separate national units on the basis of language and culture." This Act classified the Black people in South Africa into eight "Bantu ethnic units", namely, North Sotho, South Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Swazi, Xhosa, Tsonga and Venda. Each of the ethnic groups was to have its own homeland (Liebenberg 1975:489-490). The Bantu Self-Government reaffirmed geographic segregation which was outlined in the 1913 Land Act by establishing the so called "homelands" or Bantustans. These geographic areas, based on ethnicity, were the most rural and barren thirteen percent of the South African land. The United Nations and most of the international countries refused to recognise the Bantustans as 'independent nations' because in essence they were not independent according to international standards.

According to Christie and Collins (1984:173), the introduction of the Promotion of Self-Government Act of 1959 would reduce the numbers of permanently settled Blacks in urban areas, and in a way provide an alternative basis for the supply and control of Black labour. Beinart (1994:156) raises concerns that White people from very diverse backgrounds were to be one group with one territory, while Black people with similar histories were to become a series of separate minority nations. The national units identified in this Act were later to become the basis of the establishment of future Bantustans (cf 2.5.4.3).

The NP government wanted to make sure that Black people "develop along their own lines" in separate geographical areas named Bantustans and homelands. The President General of ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli, when addressing a public meeting organised by the South African Congress of Democrats in Johannesburg in 1958, argued that:

There is really no possibility of anyone developing "along your own lines", [it] turns out not to be development along your own lines at all, but development along the lines designed by the government through the Native Affairs Department. Even in determining the laws that govern us and our development, there is no attempt to consult those who are affected...Developing along

our own lines, has come to mean “developing along their lines - the Government’s lines (Luthuli 1958:1).

These past policies that propagated the ideology that different races should develop along different lines, in accordance with their inherent cultural propensities, implied that different races, with separated territories, required different types of education. It can also be pointed out that the separate development or *apartheid* policy depended on the existence of a Black elite and bureaucracy in the Bantustans who would ideologically, politically and economically support these segregatory structures as outlined in the legislation. It is thus necessary to outline Black education during this period and how the political ideologies were reflected in it.

#### **4.4 EDUCATION DURING THE NATIONAL PARTY RULE: 1948-1960**

Within a few months after the NP took power in October 1948, the new government established an inquiry into “Native” or “Bantu” Education policy which culminated in the 1953 Bantu Education Act. The dominating principles governing Black education under the Nationalist government, as elaborated in the terms of reference of the Eiselen Commission were basically that Black Education must be different from that of the White people in *toto* (Union of South Africa 1951: par 1). The aforementioned references, as will be reflected in the subsequent section (4.4.2) have their roots in Christian National Education (CNE). Therefore a brief overview of the CNE is imperative to understand the Eiselen Commission and the subsequent establishment of the Bantu Education Act.

##### **4.4.1 The Christian National Education Policy**

The CNE had its origin in the years after the Boer War, when leaders of the DRC advocated the right to develop a system of schools in which Afrikaner children could be educated in the Afrikaans language under the precepts of the church. During the 1940’s there was a strong view amongst the Afrikaners demanding that Afrikaans be used as a medium of instruction in Afrikaans schools, a view which continued up to the late 1950s (Christie 1991:173).

At a Conference of the Institute of Christian-National Education (*ICNE*) in 1939, the concept CNE policy received serious attention. It was the belief of the Conference to insure “the continual propagation and furtherance of the historically-developed ideal of CNE and ensuring

that the general policy laid down...should find acceptance in a systematic way" (*ICNE* 1949:2). The policy was devoted to the preservation of the Afrikaners as a nation.

In 1948 a group of University of Potchefstroom academics and prominent leaders of the NP converged and produced a policy document which called for a conservative, Calvinist approach to education for Afrikaners. The call to Calvinism was indicated by the statement in Article 4 of the Institute which stated:

We believe that all education is essentially the controlling guidance and formation of a child's development into an adult in submission to the Word of God in all things, and that the highest aim of all education is the formation of the man of God, 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works' (*ICNE* 1949:2-3).

The CNE policy aroused considerable controversy in South Africa. Criticism from the public, from the English-speaking churches, and many liberal Afrikaners was so intense that in 1948 when the NP went for polls, it did not emphasise the policy in its election manifesto. But that did not prevent other provinces adopting the policy. In other provinces, for example, the Free State and the Transvaal, the policy was adopted as an official working document.

The CNE advocated the following (in a nutshell):

- # The use of mother-tongue as a medium of instruction throughout primary and secondary schools. The mixing of different languages and cultures was regarded as ungodly.
- # It should prepare the Black people for their station in life (which was not equal to that of the White people).
- # It should preserve the 'cultural identity' of the Black people who were in a state of 'cultural infancy' and must be guided by 'senior White trustees'.
- # It must of necessity be organised and administered by White people as guardians.

- # It called for teaching of religion at schools, preferably Calvinism. Subjects such as civics, geography and history were to be taught in accordance with Calvinistic tenets.

The Afrikaner's CNE further propagated the view that the White population groups should not attend the same school. Children belonging to English-speaking group was to attend a different school as that of the Afrikaans-speaking group. The CNE held the same view of different schools for different races. When referring to education of the Black people, the ICNE reiterated:

We believe finally that native education should lead to the development of an *independent self-supporting* native community on a Christian-National basis (ICNE 1949:15 - emphasis mine).

The statement quoted above was not only in line with the CNE principles of “no mixing of languages, no mixing of cultures, and no mixing of races” (Christie 1991:174), but it is vividly indicative of the territorial *apartheid* program – a program that played a major role in demarcating most of the Black people to rural areas. The Bantu Education Act of 1953, as will be reflected in the subsequent sections, was based on the underlying philosophies of the CNE years before the Act could be enacted in Parliament.

#### 4.4.2 The Eiselen Commission

According to Malherbe (1977:549), the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which became the cornerstone of the *apartheid* education legislation, gave “expression to the main ideas embodied in *the Eiselen Commission Report*”. It is in this Report, under the chairmanship of Dr WWM Eiselen, a prominent Nationalist, former Secretary for Native Affairs and formerly Chief Inspector of Native Education in the former Transvaal (1936-1946), that a comprehensive picture of Bantu Education was reflected. Dr Eiselen, himself a *Broederbond* (the secret society credited with helping to bring the NP to power in 1948), was described as “a leading fascist intellectual”, was a strong supporter of the *apartheid* policy, and the separation of the “heterogeneous groups...into separate socio-economic units, inhabiting different parts of the country, each enjoying in its own area full citizenship rights” (Robertson 1973).

The Commission composed of seven members appointed by the Governor-General, GB van Syl and composed of members from various fields. The Commission was weighted with academic experts but they were not all specialists in the field of Black education<sup>21</sup>. Even though the Commission made a special effort to obtain evidence from as many strata of Black society as possible, in general, Black people did not form part of the Commission which clearly reflects the fact that the majority of Black academics, who had considerable knowledge of Black education, were left out. The neglect of these Black elites by the government, was indicative enough that (rural) missionary education did not form an integral part of the South African education system.

The terms of reference for the Commission were:

- # The formulation of the principles and aims of education for Natives as an *independent race*, in which their past and present, their *inherent racial qualities*, their *distinctive characteristics and aptitude*, and their needs under the ever-changing social conditions are taken into consideration.
- # The extent to which the existing primary, secondary, and vocational educational system for Natives and the training for Native teachers should be modified in respect of the contents and form of *syllabuses*, in order to *conform* to the *proposed principles and aims*, and to prepare Natives more effectively for their future occupations.
- # The organisation and administration of the various branches of Native education.
- # The basis on which such education should be financed.

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<sup>21</sup> The Chairperson, Dr WWM Eiselen, was a German trained anthropologist, of missionary parents, who had worked for ten years as the Chief Inspector of Native Education in Transvaal; Jan de Wet Keyter, also of German origin, was professor of Social Work at Stellenbosch University; Andrew Murray was a historian at the University of Cape Town; Gustav Bernard Gerdner was professor of New Testament subjects, mission science and practical theology at Stellenbosch Seminary; Peter Allen Wilson Cook was a Director of National Bureau for Educational and Social Research; Michael Daniel Christiaan de Wet Nel was a prominent National Party Member of Parliament who later served as Minister of Health, and then Education, Arts and Science and finally Bantu Administration and Development and John MacLeod, was Chief Inspector of Education in Natal (Republic of South Africa 1981:176).

- # Such other aspects of Native education as may be related to the preceding (Union of South Africa 1951:181 - emphasis mine).

These term of references were in line with the CNE ideals that Black education should lead to an “independent self-supporting native community”. The CNE propagated that there should not be any mixing of races (cf 4.4.1). These communities were to be demarcated in the rural areas of South Africa as mentioned in the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts (cf 3.5.1; 3.5.2).

After a thorough investigation, the Commission came up with a report which was divided into three parts: (1) The Bantu and the Present System of Education; (2) Critical Appraisal of the System of Education; (3) Proposals and Recommendations.

In Part 1 the Commission highlighted inadequacies that existed, for example, in administration, finance and the purpose of Black education. The Commission believed that all aspects of Bantu education should be controlled and coordinated by the State. It was further suggested that a new division called the *Division of Bantu Affairs* be established. The Commission further believed that Black people should be involved in the educational affairs of their children, an educationally sound principle. However, this had to happen in their own territories which were mainly rural. To achieve the active participation of Black people in administration and control of Black schools, the Commission suggested that Bantu Local Authorities be created (Union of South Africa 1951: par 133). This latter point resulted in the promulgation of the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act (cf 4.3.3).

Part 2 of the Eiselen Report is an evaluation report of Bantu education before 1949. The following criticisms were levelled against the education provided to Black learners prior 1949:

- # Bantu Education is not an integral part of a plan of socio-economic development.
- # Bantu education in itself has no organic unity; it is split into a bewildering number of different agencies and is not planned.
- # Bantu education is conducted without the active participation of the Bantu as a people, either locally or on a wider basis.



- # Bantu education is financed in such a way that it achieves a minimum of educational effect on the Bantu community and planning is made virtually impossible (Union of South Africa 1951: par 752).

These criticisms were laid against Black education, because its provision as mentioned in previous chapters, was ignored by governments. Where it was provided, prior to the Union government, it was based on the CNE policy that schools should remain differentiated. Again, very little criticism can be laid against these points from an educational perspective. However, what was a concern was the philosophy of *apartheid* behind these educational points. These schools were mostly established in rural areas and with little or no funding at all, Mission Societies made an attempt to educate (evangelise) Black learners. In most cases as mentioned in (d), resources left much to be desired.

It is imperative to note that the Commission made use of extensive “efficiency terminology” which was based on aspects such as “holding power”, rates of retardation and elimination” and “examination scores”. The commissioners also mentioned that the Black learners began schooling later, spent additional years in the sub-standards, and then left on average with less than four years of schooling. The Commission further found that a large number of schools used English as a medium of instruction, mission schools seldom had sufficient textbooks and furniture, and finally poor attendance of schools by Black learners made progress difficult (Union of South Africa 1951: par 266-267; 579-588; 625-753).

Fleisch (2002:43) mentions that the notion of defining Black education in terms of bureaucratic efficiency, was a new means of legitimating educational policy. It thereby found a very powerful means to discredit missionary education. Instead of applauding what different missionary societies had done for learners who primarily resided in rural areas, the Commission criticised the internal productivity of the mission schools. It was not easy for mission schools to practise bureaucratic efficiency with the limited resources that were at their disposal, as compared to urban White schools which were well looked after by the State.

In their criticism of the Black (rural) education, the commissioners used terminology such as “the general socio-economic development plan” and “the plan for general development” (Union of South Africa 1951), which according to (Fleisch 2002:43), was a way of criticising the

existing system and of conceptualising an alternative (cf Union of South Africa 1951:1052). The use of such a terminology was indicative enough that Black education was to conform to a grand social plan as introduced by the State. Education was to be broadly viewed as a vital social service concerned not only with the intellectual, moral and emotional development of a individual but also with the socio-economic development of the Black people. The Commission's criticism in this case was justifiable since Black education was not integrated with other social services. To be able to define rural and rural education, it is imperative to note that the relationship between space and society play a major role (cf 2.3.2). Therefore rural areas would be able to develop when social services were integrated with all other State efforts designed to raise the level of the life of the Black people.

In Part 3 of the Report, several conclusions and recommendations were made. The following were specific recommendations which were later passed by the NP government as legislation:

- # central control of Bantu education with the Black people playing a major role; and
- # the transfer of local administration of schools from missions to the local authorities.

The Commission further recommended that the first step towards making an effective education system for the Black people, was to make an extensive study of the socio-economic conditions in Bantu areas, along with a detailed program for social development in these areas. This was investigated in detail by the Tomlinson Commission which reported in 1955 (Union of South Africa 1955[a]).

The NP used the Eiselen Commission's recommendations selectively so that they fitted in with broader segregatory policies of the government and statements below support this notion. In 1953 Dr HF Verwoerd, as Minister of Native Affairs, cited the following:

Racial relations cannot improve if the *wrong type* of education is given to Natives. They cannot improve if the results of Native education, is the creation of frustrated people who, as the result of the education they have received, have expectations in life which circumstances in South Africa do not allow to be fulfilled immediately, when it creates people who are trained for professions not open to them,...Therefore, good racial relations are spoilt when the *correct* education is not given. Above all, good racial relations cannot exist when the education is given under the control of people who create wrong expectations on the part of the Native himself, if

such people believe in a policy of *equality*...It is therefore necessary that education should be *controlled* in such a way that it should be in accord with the policy of the *State* (Union of South Africa 1953: col 3576 - emphasis mine).

In 1954 Dr Verwoerd further stated that:

My department's policy is that education should stand with both feet in the *reserves* and have its roots in the spirit and being of *Bantu society*...The Bantu must be guided to serve his *own community* in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of *labour*. Within his community, however, all doors are open...(Union of South Africa 1954: cols 2618-2619- emphasis mine).

Dr Verwoerd did not lose sight that the 'correct' type of education that needed to be provided to Black learners was that which would discourage Black learners from aspiring to positions which they would not be allowed to hold in the White, largely urban society. Verwoerd further reminded his government that the question of equality with Black people should not be entertained as Black people belong to rural areas. Their services would be needed in the form of a certain level of labour (cf 2.5.4.4). He did not forget that the education of the Black people should therefore be in line with the government policy of separate development.

## **4.5 THE BANTU EDUCATION ACT**

The NP government used recommendations made by the Eiselen Commission to formulate future government legislation especially regarding education. In 1953 the Bantu Education Act was developed. The section below indicates how the Bantu Education Act, as legislation, and as proposed in the Eiselen Commission, impacted on rural education.

### **4.5.1 The aim of Bantu education**

The aim of Bantu education in South Africa has been perceived as a contested terrain between the State and, especially the Black people. While the aim of education as perceived by the missionaries before 1948 was evangelisation of the Black people (Pells 1938:7; Stonier 1998:216), the NP government had a different aim to that of the missionaries, namely to

educate Black people to remain subordinate and inferior (cf 2.5.4.3; 2.5.4.4; 2.5.4.5) in places which were predominantly situated in rural areas.

The Eiselen Commission Report, as a precursor to Bantu Education Act of 1953, made an assumption that education is that set of activities that transmits culture from one generation to the next. Culture is defined in the Report as “the total of all those patterns of thought, behaviour and feeling that characterise the social life of a group or a society”. Culture was to be transmitted to various social groups through institutions such as the school. From this background the Eiselen Commissioners defined the aims of Bantu education as follows:

- # From the viewpoint of the whole society the aim of Bantu Education is the development of a modern progressive culture, with social institutions which will be in harmony with each one another and with the evolving conditions of life to be met in South Africa and with the schools which must serve as effective agents in this process of development.
- # From the viewpoint of the individual, the aims of Bantu Education are the development of character and intellect, and equipping of the child for his future work and surroundings (Union of South Africa 1951: par 764).

The development of a Black culture was commendable, but it should have taken into consideration a number of factors. Every human being has a culture and it should therefore not have been restricted to specific racial groupings (cf 2.5.1), but be inclusive of the universal phenomenon which is applicable to the whole human being. The concept ‘culture’ involves many factors such as language, social-economic, historic and geographical development, philosophy and art (Abbutt & Pearce [S.a]:11) – factors which were not considered by the Commission. In the South African context, the concept ‘culture’ had been used to classify people into different racial groups which further divided them into urban and rural communities. According to Mawasha (1969:144-145), the aim of Black education lost sight of the multi-racial and multi-cultural citizenry of the South African society.

Eiselen, a German trained anthropologist, and having had his religious background as the son of the Berlin Mission Society parents, never described Black cultures as static or explicitly inferior to White culture, but he represented them as being in a state of decline, having been corrupted through their contact with White society (Kros 2002:57). Eiselen increasingly argued

that Black societies should be developed in line with their own particular cultural imperatives. Having been indoctrinated by the Berlin Mission Society, Eiselen propagated the ideology that tribes and nations had to be kept apart from each other, so that each national unit had its own cultural identity (Seroto 1999:87). This reflected a political direction to Black people developing within their own communities which were in the remote rural areas (cf 2.5.4.3). Horrel (1968:136) reiterates that the NP government, when introducing the Bantu Education Act of 1953, aimed at educating the Black child so that he/she would not want to be on *par* with the White child, but would be content to be confined to remote rural areas. Black people were to be trained in accordance to their demands in life.

The aims of Bantu education can be summarised as follows (Cameron 1989:35-39; Hyslop 1990:203; Kutoane & Kruger 1990:8; Murphy 1973:136; Shingler 1973:278-290; Wolpe & Unterhalter 1991:4):

- # maintenance of White domination - politically and economically;
- # subordination of Black people by the Whites;
- # separate development by preserving separate identities of different racial groups;
- # inequalities among different racial groups by perpetuating differentiated education systems;
- # preservation of separate identities with Black people located to rural areas; and
- # education being directed towards the needs of rural population as prescribed by differentiated and discriminatory legislation.

To be able to actualise the aim of Bantu Education Act of 1953, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act No 46 of 1959, which emphasised the point that Black people constituted “separate national units”, was passed by the NP government. These units were predominantly situated in the rural areas of South Africa.

#### **4.5.2 Administration of Black schools**

It seemed that the Eiselen commissioners advocated contradictory statements about how Black education should have been governed. At a certain point they seemed to be committed to centralisation of educational governance, but at the same time advocating strong local

control (Fleisch 2002:45). This criticism is based on two premises that the executive authority for Black education be transferred from the Provincial Education Departments to the Union Department of Native Affairs, and the local level be removed from missionary control to local Bantu Authorities.

The idea that the Department of Native Affairs should control Bantu education was not only introduced after 1953, but it was mooted as far back as 1936 (cf 3.6.1). The following were various types of schools to be administered by the central government through the Department of Native Affairs:

- # government Bantu Schools, established by the Minister of Native Affairs and financed by the State; and
- # state-aided Native Schools, which were apparently mission schools or other schools established by groups other than the Bantu themselves (Union of South Africa 1951).

The Act did not make provision for private schools that existed, but the Minister of Native Affairs stated that private schools could be registered and approval for the new ones could be sought. Missions and churches were left with three options to choose from, namely whether they would remain private, keep control of schools or rent or sell buildings to Black community organisations (Horrel 1964:21). Missions and churches, which were entirely opposed to the transfer of Black education to the Native Affairs Department, even though it was convenient for them to opt to become private schools, were unable to do so because of the financial constraints they were faced with (Seroto 1999:75-77; 101-103). By 1957, most of the Mission schools had withdrawn from the Black schooling system and their schools had either closed or been handed over to Government. Only the Roman Catholics and the Seventh Day Adventists opted to continue, at their own expense. Private schools ran their administration, appointed their own staff and had their own admission policies, and it was obvious that the government would not have a say about the day-to-day activities of private schools. In most cases these schools were in urban areas and admitted learners from the White communities.

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 made provision that Black primary and post primary education be transferred from the provinces to the Native Affairs Department with effect from January 1954. Instead of centralising administration in Pretoria, six regional units, each with

its own Regional Director and Educational Advisory Council were established (Horrel 1968:9-10). Instead of having an autonomous role in formulating policy and planning, the major function of the regional structures would be to implement decisions taken by the central Department of Native Affairs. These Regional Units were separated from one another on ethnic-cultural grounds (Ruperti 1976:65). These ethnic groups were mostly found in the rural areas of South Africa and the regional units were located in urban centres. The trend of establishing resources in urban areas was a common practice in the history of South Africa. It was in most instances out of touch with the rural areas' needs, as will be seen also in the subsequent chapters. Table 4.1 illustrates regional areas according to ethnic groupings:

**Table 4.1 Regional Units according to ethnic groups**

Region	Ethnic group	Regional unit
1. Northern Transvaal	Northern Sotho, Venda and Tsonga	Pietersburg (currently Polokwane)
2. Orange Free State and Northern Cape	Southern Sotho and Tswana	Bloemfontein
3. Southern Transvaal	Tswana	Pretoria (currently Tshwane)
4. Natal	Zulu	Pietersmaritzburg
5. Ciskei and Western Cape	Xhosa	King Williamstown
6. Transkei	Xhosa	Umtata

**Source:** Horrel (1968:23)

At the head of each Regional Section, a Regional Director was appointed, who was responsible to the Secretary of the Native Affairs Department. Regional Directors in these regional units were White officials. A question that can be raised was whether real power or authority had in fact been decentralised. What comes to light was that at every Regional Office there were White technical officers who had vested powers to run the affairs of Black education - a policy which was propagated by the CNE (cf 4.4.1). These regional units, as indicated above, predominantly catered for the majority of Black people residing in rural areas although they were predominantly located in urban areas. Although it was the intention of the NP government to accelerate the separate development policy, these units were still controlled by the White NP government. The Whites still dominated the control of Black schools in these

rural settings. The establishment of regional offices in urban areas ironically reflected the neglect of the Black persons' educative needs although the whole philosophy of the *apartheid* education argued that Black people should see to their own educative needs.

Christie and Collins (1984:171) point out that the transfer of Black education from the provinces to the national government was to be "the springboard for educational policies to contribute towards the reproduction of black labour in a stable form" which was in line with the reproduction theorists' line of thought (cf 2.5.4.4). It was the intention of the NP government that this labour be drawn, basically from the reserves which later became homelands for the majority of the Black people. White officials would therefore see to it that this was indeed attained. As was pointed out in previous sections, these areas were more rural than urban.

#### **4.5.3 Governance structures in Black schools**

Governance of education in this study refers to the control of education by statutory bodies such as school committees, school boards or school governing councils at a local level. It should be pointed out that professional management<sup>22</sup> of the school is not necessarily the competency of Governing Bodies. In the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, which will be dealt with later, a clear line is drawn between professional management and the governance of the school.

It was of great concern to the Eiselen commissioners that prior to the establishment of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, Black parents were not actively involved in the education of their children (Union of South Africa 1951: par 113-114). The recommendation that the establishment of school boards and school committees in Black communities was regarded by the Eiselen Commission as a way of stimulating parent involvement in the education of Black learners.

School committees as stipulated in the Bantu Education Act, which were predominantly established in rural areas, comprised of seven members. The chief or headman had powers

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<sup>22</sup> Professional management of the school refers to the day-to-day administration and organisation of teaching and learning at the school and the performance of the departmental responsibilities that are prescribed by law (Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata & Squelch 1997:11).



to nominate five members. From the five parents nominated by the chief or headman, parents were to elect four representatives at an officially constituted meeting (Union of South Africa 1955[b]:31). It was the responsibility of the Secretary of Bantu Education to nominate the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson among the seven members. It is imperative to note that none could continue to serve on the committee without prior approval of the (White) Secretary of Bantu Education.

The intention of establishing school committees and boards was that parents should be involved in educational matters. Ironically, the presence of White officials in the affairs of the Black people meant that the latter had little real decision-making power. The White administrators became the actual policy-makers. Fleisch (2002:48) emphasises the point that the State became increasingly “inaccessible and insulated from the broader society“. In most cases Black people residing in rural areas were the most neglected and ignored by these new political arrangements.

The duties and functions of the school committees and the school boards were similar, but more restricted (Union of South Africa 1955[b]:34). School committees and school boards were not consulted and represented when educational policies, which affected their children, were formulated. Murphy (1973:161) contends that the role of school committees and boards promoted attitudes and practices consistent with Black self-development, within the separate development framework. Ironically they could not even develop themselves. The White people had the last say in all matters affecting the governance structures of Black schools.

According to Weiler (1983) the school committees and school boards operated as a means by which the NP government could shift the financial burden directly on to Black communities. Most of the Black people in rural areas were stricken by poverty. The unemployment rate was also high with the majority of the Black people in rural areas deriving income from old-age pension and other social grants (cf 2.4.2). Hyslop (1989) argues that local school governing bodies were essentially about the “organisationally and ideologically reincorporating of Black communities into the education system“. The Black people were allowed, in the opinion of the Commission, to take ownership of the schools, even though practically it was not so.

Moreover, the government was preparing the way for the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act and the subsequent Promotion of Bantu Self-government Acts in the late 1950s

(cf 4.3.3; 4.3.4) which contributed to ensuring that the Black people were confined to rural areas.

#### **4.6 THE FINANCING OF BANTU EDUCATION**

For South Africa to attain sustained economic growth, high employment rates and rising productivity, the contribution of education plays a major role. The State, as early as 1910, failed to supply good-quality basic schooling and financing, a trend that continued up to the twenty-first century. There is a high correlation between expenditure and the provision of education. If public expenditure is curtailed, the children of the poor will not have an opportunity to acquire any meaningful social services including education (Heynemann 1982:130).

Until the passage of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, education of Black people was generally financed by the State and administered by the provinces. The NP government in the 1950s was faced with serious financial constraints with regard to financing of Black education. Several factors, cited by Hyslop (1990:214) which led to these constraints were: the NP racist base and ideology which generated strong political pressures against expenditure on Black education; employers who were unwilling to pay through taxes, for social services for their employees and the South African economy which was less robust than in the preceding or subsequent decades. Verwoerd further made the NP's stance clear on financing of Black education when he stated that:

It is sound educational policy to create among the Bantu a sense of responsibility by allowing them to bear sufficient financial responsibility to make them accept that their development is their own concern...(Verwoerd 1954: 6-7).

The statement cited above indicated the dilemma Black people found themselves in, of being financially independent and viable whereas the areas that they found themselves in were poverty-stricken and lacked resources and employment opportunities compared to urban centres where mines and industries were found. Rural dwellers were mostly dependent on wages that their spouses earned on the mines in Kimberley and the Witwatersrand. It was not possible for a large percentage of Black people in rural settings to finance the education of their children.

Two years after the Bantu Education Act was introduced, the Exchequer and Audit Amendment Act, Act No 7 of 1955, which created a separate Bantu Education Account, was introduced. Into this account was to be paid a fixed annual amount of R13 million from the General Revenue Account, an amount which was pegged for the next seventeen years. Into this Account, the following were also to be paid:

- # four fifths of the general taxes paid by Black people;
- # loans that Parliament might make available to meet temporary deficits in the account;
- # receipts arising from the maintenance, management and control of Black schools with the exception of moneys received from the sale of land and buildings taken over by the government; and
- # any other money authorised by Parliament for Bantu Education (Horrel 1964:13).

It was the intention of the NP government, by all means, to cut costs on the provision of Black education (Dugard 1985:89). Hyslop (1990:215) points out that the per capita expenditure on Black education fell from the equivalent of R17,08 in 1953 to R12,46 in 1960 because learner-enrolment continued to be high whereas funding of Black education by the government remained fixed. For example, in 1953 there were 0,8 million Black learners and in 1960, there were over 1,5 million Black learners (Blignaut 1981; Horrel 1968) which meant that funding should have automatically been increased. The platoon<sup>23</sup> system which was introduced by the NP government was not only used as a financial saving device, but it impacted negatively on the provision of education to Black learners. With a radically disproportionate share of resources being devoted to White education, among others, the following, in Black education, were experienced:

- # school buildings remained in appalling conditions;
- # teacher-pupil ratios increased tremendously;<sup>24</sup>
- # teacher morale deteriorated;

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<sup>23</sup> Platoon system involves two schools using the same premises at different times. One school will use the facilities say from 07:00 - 12:00 and the next school from 12:30-17:30.

<sup>24</sup> In some cases, teacher-pupil ratios increased from 1:42,3 in 1946 to 1:54,7 in 1960 (Christie & Collins 1984:179). This device of the state to cut costs on provision of education to Black learners made education deteriorate even further.

- # high drop-out rates; and
- # high failure rates.

As is noted, poor funding by the central government had many negative consequences for the provision of education to Black learners. It should be stressed that most of the Black parents were residing either on farms or Bantustans. These areas, as stipulated and demarcated by the 1913 Land Act, were predominantly rural and had been struck by abject poverty. This poverty was as a result of special policies pursued by the NP government (cf 2.5.1). Making parents pay for the education of their children, also for other educational expenses at school, was a double burden to the Black communities.

Not only did the State legislate policies which had put enormous financial strain on the resources of Black education system, but it was also the intention of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 to design the curriculum in the form that the government thought appropriate. The design of the curriculum for Black learners will therefore be discussed in the following section.

#### **4.7 SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

The concept curriculum means a number of things to different people at various places. In America, for example, it includes “all experiences which are offered to learners under the auspices or direction of the school” (Doll 1970:21). In South Africa, as Murphy (1973:183) points out, the concept curriculum is prescribed by relatively detailed syllabi which outline what ought to be taught in each subject at each grade level. It is worth noting that curriculum as detailed in the syllabi is essentially a political activity, and that the education system is the device by which an advanced society prepares its young for adult life in the society. Kelly (1989:145) further notes that no one’s view of education can be fully understood in isolation from his or her political persuasions and South Africa is no exception.

Though it was one of the intentions of Bantu Education Act of 1953, to involve parents in the education of their learners, the curriculum was drawn up by the White officers of the Department of Education. Black teachers, parents and other interested parties or organisations had almost no say in the curriculum formulation. Obviously the NP government did not lose sight that the curriculum for Black learners should be embedded in the political and

economic policies of the country - in this case that Black people belonged to specified rural areas and their education was to be tailored in that direction. The school curriculum in South Africa before and even after 1948 was based on two premises. The White educational planners view was the content needed by Black people, if they were to participate effectively in the White economic system under the social and political conditions set by the South African government, was to be addressed seriously in the curriculum. Secondly, the curriculum set for Black people should address the question of what the learners gain if they were to remain in homelands. The curriculum was therefore organised in such a way that these two premises were given attention.

The Eiselen Commission recommended that primary schools be reorganised so that they would be of two kinds – the lower primary and the higher primary schools. The lower primary schools comprised of Sub A to Standard II (present Grades 1-4). The Commission recommended that in this phase there would be a rounded-off course (ethnic studies, civics and Bantustan geography), complete and worthwhile in itself, in which a mother-tongue would only be used as a medium of instruction, although one official language would be introduced as a subject. Ethnic studies dealt with the general distribution of various races and development of separate groups of the population. Civics, as a subject, included a study of governing institutions such as the Bantu Authorities (Union of South Africa 1951).

It is evident from aspects of the curriculum mentioned above that the NP government wanted to instil its political thinking into the Black child. By emphasising subjects such as ethnic studies and civics, the government wanted the child to see himself/herself as not being part of a broader society, but as a member of a rural society.

In 1964, the Minister of Bantu Education, Mr WA Maree, mentioned that because Black learners spend four years in the primary phase, at the end of Standard II they would have acquired the ability to read and write their own language (Dugard 1985:91). It is doubtful whether the State was aiming at producing semi-skilled labourers because four years of training meant that learners would have achieved minimal literacy, numeracy and life skills. Since education for Black people during this period was not compulsory, most learners were most likely to drop-out after Standard II. White education was compulsory for the first eight years and it can be argued that after eight years at school, one would expect the learner to have acquired adequate skills in numeracy and literacy.

The Commission further proposed that higher primary schools be composed of Standards III to VI (Grades 5-8). Admission to these grades was to be based on merit. At the end of Standard IV, two classes were to be introduced, one with a more academic and the other with a more vocational bias. For the sake of this research, the researcher will only highlight the provision of religious education and environmental studies as examples.

#### **4.7.1 Religious education**

Religious education from the colonial era onwards, as in the missionary period, played an important role in the curriculum provided to Black learners. The importance of religious education in schools was emphasised, especially in the former Transvaal Syllabi for Native schools in 1948, which stated that “a school with happy children, trustworthy, diligent and friendly towards one another is the best testimony to the religious instruction given at that school” (Union of South Africa 1951: par 462).

According to the syllabi of the primary schools of the four former provincial education departments, the schools were to be officially opened daily with the Lord’s Prayer and a hymn (Union of South Africa 1951: par 462). The Commission on Native Education further emphasised that the aim of religious education was to assist children to grow up in the knowledge of God and to benefit from the Bible. The use of mother-tongue in the instruction of religious education was also of primary importance (Union of South Africa 1951: par 462). The government wanted Black people to be able to understand religious principles such as obedience. Although obedience itself represents a positive value, the government understood it in terms of racism: Black learners were to remain submissive and subordinate.

Religious education contained only the teaching of the Christian religion based on the principles of Calvinistic Christian National Education. Religions such as Islam or Buddhism did not form components of religious education. The fact that South Africa was a multi-religious and multi-cultural society was not taken into cognisance. Nevertheless, the Black people had their own traditional indigenous religion, the most prevalent being ancestral worship, a religion that had been criticised by missionaries and continued to be criticised by the government due to its CNE affiliation.

The Bible was also used selectively as the sole source of reference of religious content, a point that reflected bias. The emphasis was based on concepts such as moral building, humility and gratitude which were backed by several portions of the Scriptures. These values are morally correct, but the government used them for their political ends. They intended that the Black people should remain humble and accept that they were a nation that belonged to the remote rural areas. The government wanted to make sure that the Black people did not challenge the *status quo*.

#### **4.7.2 Environmental studies**

The environmental studies curriculum was comprised of elementary geography, history and nature study. It also included aspects on home life, relations with parents, food, kindness to animals, road safety and climate. Environmental studies emphasised learning about the local community and attitudes which must be developed for the sake of society. The following was one of the aims of environmental studies:

The pupil should realise that he is a member of a *particular* community and that he is *bound* by that community...his home, his school, his church, his residential area and his tribe. These groups serve him directly or indirectly and he in turn owes them loyalty and cooperation (Republic of South Africa 1967: par 44-45 - emphasis mine).

Murphy (1973:199) concludes that the main aim of environmental studies was to prepare young Black learners to live in a mostly White, structured society in which the individual works hard and accepts the social order without questioning. Components which formed environmental studies, did not take into consideration that a learner needed to be equipped for his/her entire life, not only for the local community. It can be concluded that this subject was somewhat biased toward the rural environment. The emphasis only on the individual or community needs of the learner was emphasised by Lewis (2002:151) when he mentions that:

The education system should, at all times, strike a balance by serving the individual as well as the community in which the individual functions. Although such an ideal is seen by many as practically impossible, its underlying philosophy should feature in the thinking and behaviour of all involved in the educative act.

Christie and Collins (1984:172-175) rightly point out that the Bantu Education Act of 1953 had a hegemonic character. This was partly achieved by the curriculum. They argue that the Bantu Education Act aimed at creating mechanisms for the incorporation of Black people within the political order which the State was propounding. The Eiselen commissioners also held the view that the reserves (later referred to as the homelands) were real areas where the Black culture could function most completely. The commissioners acknowledged that the reserves were becoming “economic and cultural slums, places to be avoided by the educated and enterprising”. They continued advocating the idea that education of Black people should be oriented toward the rural because they were the only areas left which still had functional “Bantu social institutions” (Fleisch 1998:64)

#### **4.8 PERCEPTIONS OF AND REACTION TO BANTU EDUCATION**

Most of the churches, except the Dutch Reformed Church<sup>25</sup>, objected to the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. Objections raised by the Church were either political or religious. The Methodist Church, the Church of Scotland and many other Protestant churches argued that Bantu education was education for subordination. The churches objected to the policy whereby the Black people were trained for a life in the reserves (Christie 1992:87; Davenport 1977:537).

Churches also believed that Bantu education was wrong because it was in direct conflict with Christian principles. The Catholic Church believed that Bantu education did not uphold and retain their Catholic character (*SA Outlook* 1954).

The liberal English group in the Union, according to Fleisch (1998:51), viewed the Eiselen Commission's Report as a dogmatic treatise, an outgrowth of some misunderstood anthropological concepts, German theory and a peculiar insular Afrikaner 'ethnic identity'. This Report of the seven Commissioners was further criticised as a half-hearted effort to justify what had become a systematic campaign of racial discrimination, indoctrination, control and distortion. Other liberals believed that Bantu education was also an outgrowth of the Afrikaner “frontier mentality” (Horrel 1963; Shingler 1973; Tabata 1959).

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<sup>25</sup> The Dutch Reformed Church had clearly identified itself with the policy of separate development at a People's Conference in Bloemfontein in 1950 (Davenport 1977:537).



According to liberal thinking, Bantu education, as an aspect of the *apartheid* state, was a specific type of schooling that was unique to the *apartheid* state, a schooling that was characterised by indoctrination, control and the systematic distortion of knowledge (Davis 1972; Horrel 1968; Malherbe 1977; Tabata 1959). The fundamental criticism of Bantu education was that it failed to make provision for equality of opportunities in education as it clearly resulted in a Black-White, rural-urban divide.

In the late 1970s the interpretation and criticisms levelled against Bantu Education as viewed by the liberals were heavily challenged. These revisionists, having been influenced by Marxism, argued that the Bantu Education Act, was not an expression of *Afrikaner* racism *per se*, but a response to the needs of a capital accumulation process in South Africa (Christie & Collins 1984). Schooling was seen as a tool to shape workers for the workplace – the provision of skills in keeping with the needs of the workplace. The Bantu Education Act wanted to ensure that education provided to Black people predominantly residing in rural areas, met the needs of the ruling party.

The common factor found in both the liberal and Marxist interpretations was that there was serious dissatisfaction about the establishment of the Bantu education system in 1953. Whether viewed from the liberal or Marxist background, Bantu education, reflected a link with the separate development mentality which aimed at demarcating the Black people to bantustans which were later known as self-government territories. These areas were found predominantly in rural South Africa.

#### **4.9 MASS RESISTANCE DURING THE 1950s**

There were a number of groups that opposed not only the Bantu Education Act of 1953, but *apartheid* legislation in general. Liberation movements such as the ANC were involved in mineworkers strikes, opposition against the Separate Representation of Voters Act, the ANC defiance campaign of 26 June 1952 as well as the 1955-1956 Defiance Campaign in opposition to the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (Mandela 1994: 117, 124-125, 141-146, 197).

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was also heavily resisted by, among others, individuals,

teacher formations, religious groups and political movements. For the sake of this study, only the teacher formations and the ANC as a political organisation will be investigated.

#### **4.9.1 Teachers' resistance**

The earliest concerted resistance to Bantu education proposals came from the people who were mostly affected – Black teachers, because they would work for double or triple sessions each day; class sizes would be larger; salaries would not be improved; and they would ultimately be in the employ of the government (Christie 1991:228; Lodge 1983:118). It should be pointed out that during the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, there were no organised national teacher organisations within the schools. Although regional and local teacher organisations existed, they were not politically significant.

Teachers opposition to Bantu Education came mainly from the Cape and Transvaal Teachers' Association (CATA and TATA). There were serious tensions between the government and CATA and in 1952 an annual conference was held to condemn proposals made by the Eiselen Commission (Lodge 1983:118). A Memorandum was submitted to the Commission demanding State financing of education at the same rate per child irrespective of race or colour and urging the government to use English as a medium of instruction.

When the Bantu Education Act was effected as law in 1955, CATA was the only teachers' organisation based in the rural areas of the Transkei which played a primary role in opposing the proposed system. Its view was based on the belief that the NP government wanted to use Black education as a way of generating Black labour for White industry (Hyslop 1990:178). CATA's critique of the Eiselen Report underlined the ethnically decisive role which Black people would play in rural areas.

One of the major activities of CATA in opposing the Bantu education was that of a boycott of the school boards and committees. In its view, it believed that the State was attempting to make Black people operate "the machinery of their own operation" (Lodge 1983:118-119). CATA was of the opinion that the government was making an attempt to use them to support and implement the government's racial policies.

As a result of the political activities of CATA, its members were dismissed from schools and its official recognition by the Government was withdrawn. This was the strategy of the government to discourage teachers to partake in CATAs activities. Most teachers kept themselves out of politics since the government was inculcating the norm that education should be separated from politics and/or community life. Teachers were often reminded about what happened to those who engaged in politics.

The CATA as a rural-based teacher organisation, understood the impact of the Bantu Education Act in the context of a wider struggle against land rehabilitation and the reorganisation of local government under Bantu Authorities (Lodge 1983:119). It was these group of teachers who could interpret the link of Bantu Education with Bantu Authorities and rural development programmes. This teacher organisation, active in the rural areas of the former Transkei and the Eastern Cape realised that the Bantu education fitted in with the proclaimed Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 (cf 4.3.3).

The TATA, which was urban-based, began to be active in the early 1950s. Hyslop (1988:9) points out that the leadership of TATA first realised the introduction of the Bantu education policies as indicated in the recommendations of the Eiselen Report. After a series of meetings which were held both in Transvaal, the Transvaal Education Department published regulations severely restricting the political activities of TATA (Lodge 1983:120) resulting in what Hyslop (1990:181) called “political quietism”. Although by the late 1960s teachers’ conservatism was prevalent, by the 1970s revolutionary teachers’ associations were revived which opposed Bantu education in all respects.

#### **4.9.2 The African National Congress (ANC) school boycott (1955-1956)**

At its annual conference in 1949, the ANC seemed to take the initiatives in the political struggles where a Programme of Action was launched (Liebenberg 1975:491; Lodge 1983:121). This campaign targeted, among the others, the introduction of the proposed Bantu Education Act. The other five issues that were included in the campaign were: the pass laws; the Group Areas Act; the Native Resettlement Act; the Suppression of Communism Act and anti-trade union measures.

In 1955 the ANC organised a school boycott against the Bantu Education Act. At an annual conference which was held at Durban in December 1954, the ANC planned to withdraw children from Bantu education schools, and draw up alternative educational and cultural activities (Lodge 1983:121). This approach to the boycott was characterised by disagreements between the National Executive Committee (NEC) and the ordinary members. The NEC recommended that children be withdrawn from school for a period of one week. The general mass of the conference overruled the NEC and proposed that an indefinite strike be launched. The strike was scheduled for 1 April, which was during the Easter recess. It was agreed that the organisation of the boycott be in the hands of Women's and Youth's Leagues (Lodge 1983: 121). The Youth League started campaigning against the issue of the Bantu Education Act several months before April 1954. Hyslop (1990:237-274) gives a detailed analysis of why the campaign against the establishment of the Bantu education collapsed. The creation of cultural clubs, as alternative schools, through a body called the African Education Movement (AEM) took place. The aims of the AEM were threefold: to establish private schools; to assist cultural clubs for boycotters; and to develop home education programmes (Lodge 1983:284). The AEM failed to carry out its mandate because, parents did not believe in these types of schools, but rather in mass schooling. The Youth League also failed in evoking the mass political movement of the youth. Despite the organisational challenges the ANC had regarding the 1955-56 boycotts, it continued to be a strong liberation movement in South African politics.

#### **4.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Fundamentally, *apartheid* ideology propagated by the NP government sought to secure a stable cheap labour force while protecting White supremacy and preserving the purity of the White population. It was the intention of the government to limit the numbers of the population in urban areas by introducing segregatory laws which would compel the majority move to rural areas or homelands.

In order to achieve its aims of White supremacy and Black domination, the Christian national motif and the separate development ideology were propagated. In order to attain these aims it was necessary to introduce pieces of legislation that would effect what the NP government propagated. Demarcating the Black people to reserves (later homelands) was one of the primary objectives of the government. As a result, the Group Areas Act, the Bantu Authorities

Act (No 68 of 1951) and the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act (No 46 of 1959) were introduced. These Acts of Parliament aimed at restricting Black people to rural areas where they could ultimately exercise self-government.

As was the norm in politics worldwide, the national education system, as a social structure, was used as a vehicle to enable the Nationalists to achieve their aims and objectives. The analysis and proposals given by the Eiselen Commission, were in most cases in line with the policies and ideologies that the ruling NP government propagated. The Eiselen Commission made recommendations in line with the government policy of *apartheid* and separate development. Black education had to take cognisance that the Black people were a rural people and therefore provision of education had to be in accordance with their rurality.

It was also the intention of the White NP government that for Black education to be fully differentiated, it had to be controlled by a separate Department of Native Affairs. This was a deliberate plan by the government to move control of Black education from the mission schools to specific White bureaucrats who did not always have the compassion for and experience of Black learners. Even though the government encouraged participation of parents by introducing school committees and school boards, powers over Black education remained in Pretoria. It should be noted that this arrangement made it easier and effective for the NP government to control rural education.

As was mentioned in this chapter, the financing of rural education during this period remained far from adequate. The Black learners, whose enrolment figures doubled during this period, were worse off when it came to financing. This ultimately made the problem of inequalities - racial and rural-urban, a greater one.

The legislation resulting from the intensification of the *apartheid* laws brought a massive response from anti-*apartheid* movements. The ANC as the dominant liberation movement took the lead to challenge the ills that existed in the education of Black people mostly residing in rural areas. Irrespective of the repressive measures the NP government introduced during this period, the struggle against the *apartheid* ideology continued.

Having outlined rural education during the period 1948-1960, the practical outcomes of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 seen together with the homeland policy as from 1960 to 1994, will be critically dealt with in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RURAL EDUCATION IN THE FORMER HOMELANDS: 1960-1994**

## CHAPTER 5

### RURAL EDUCATION IN THE FORMER HOMELANDS: 1960-1994

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

As pointed out in the previous chapters, the NP government, by means of several pieces of legislations, decided unilaterally that the Black people consisted of group of nations, each of which was entitled to a homeland (cf 4.3.2; 4.3.3). These homelands were basically designated largely rural areas (Butler *et al* 1977:1). The Black people, including those domiciled in South Africa 'proper' (outside the homelands), would automatically be obliged to belong to one or other of the homelands, depending on the individual's own ethnic or tribal origins (Eidelberg 1997:88).

Homelands would become dumping grounds not only for the unemployed, but for the politically disaffected, and, as Giliomee (1985:50) states, would thereby perform the function of 'ruralising' the revolution. The majority of Black people, were found in these homelands. The aim of this chapter is therefore to critically investigate Black education in the predominantly rural areas of the former homelands between the years 1960 and 1994.

The objectives of this chapter are therefore:

- # to critically analyse different pieces of legislations that played a pivotal role in establishing homelands in the South African context during this period;
- # to discuss education legislation that impacted on education in the rural areas;
- # to highlight a number of educational indicators that were the result of the NP government policies during the period under review; and
- # to critically comment on resistance against Black education before the dawn of the democratic era.



## 5.2 THE FORMATION OF HOMELANDS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The idea of establishing homelands did not only start after the NP government assumed power in 1948, but Rogers (1973:2) indicates that it was as old as the European occupation in South Africa (cf 3.4.3). The homeland idea was only reinforced after 1948. In his address in Parliament in 1948, Dr DF Malan, the first Prime Minister of South Africa stated:

... nor does our policy of apartheid mean...that we are going to eliminate all the natives who are present in the European areas and who come here to work, and that we are going to send them all to their own *reserves*...That is a caricature of our policy of apartheid (Union of South Africa: 1948).

Dr Malan did not lose sight of the fact that total separation between the Black people and the White people was not an ideal, but that to a certain extent and for economic reasons, Black people were still needed as labourers.

The assumption of office of Dr Verwoerd as Prime Minister in 1958 hastened the translation of the separate development ideology into enactment. There were several reasons that made Verwoerd believe in separate development, among others, unrest and anxiety within South Africa (cf 4.11); intensifying hostilities from the international world; and the isolation felt by the South African government with the enforced withdrawal from the Commonwealth in 1961 compelled him to try and satisfy a number of political needs by introducing comprehensive legislation which affected most of the Black people (Butler *et al* 1977:29; Rogers 1973:4). The homeland separate development Acts were such endeavours.

On the 31 May 1961, the Union of South Africa became the Republic of South Africa after the enactment of the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act (No 32 of 1961) (Republic of South Africa 1961: Section 1). The *apartheid* theoreticians in government sought for a way to harness the cry for independence to the preservation of White power in South Africa by introducing a plan which aimed at transforming the country's existing Black areas into states in which Black people would exercise 'full political' rights within their own areas which were largely in the rural settings.

The first major step in the direction towards constitutional development of homelands came in 1963, when the Transkei was granted a limited measure of self-government. The Republican Parliament approved the Transkei Constitution Act (No 48 of 1963) with Chief Kaizer Matanzima as the first Chief Minister. The Transkei Constitution Act granted Transkei partial self-government within the Republic of South Africa by giving the territory its own Legislative Assembly, cabinet, citizenship, flag, national anthem and language - Xhosa together with English and Afrikaans. The Transkei was ethnically separated (cf Table 4.1) and was predominantly rural.

The Transkei self-government had no say over matters such as defence, internal security, postal services, railways, immigration, money and banking, and customs and excise. These functions remained under the control of the South African government. The government did not make the mistake of granting Transkei a single essential right enjoyed by a sovereign independent State. Actually the South African government was still in control of the Transkei government because at every single Department, a White official was appointed to give the government leadership and guardianship. The Transkei, as a partial government, paved the way for similar constitutional developments in other homelands.

In 1970, the Black States Citizenship Act, (No 26 of 1970) was passed, and amended the use of the term "territorial authority" to a "State". This signified a major change in the status of the former Black reserves. The Black States Citizenship Act of 1970, had as its aim, the provision for citizenship of certain National States. Section 3 of the Act provided that every Black person within the boundaries of South Africa shall be a citizen of a particular National State.

In 1971 a general framework of self-government was created within a single framework where homelands could achieve self-governing status. As a result, the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act (No 21 of 1971) was adopted by the South African Parliament (Republic of South Africa 1971). The years between 1972 and 1981 resulted in the formation of six self-governing and four 'independent' homelands (cf 2.4.2). The Transkei became the first to become an independent republic in October 1976 under the policy of separate development. The following homelands were declared 'independent' homelands: Transkei (1976), Bophuthatswana (1977), Venda (1979) and Ciskei (1981), whereas Lebowa, Qwaqwa, KwaZulu, Gazankulu, KaNgwane and KwaNdebele remained self-governing states (Graaff 1995:184).

To enhance their *apartheid* policies, the NP government continued and introduced a series of legislation that impacted negatively on Black people in these rural areas. When PW Botha took office (1978-1989), as Prime Minister, he made it abundantly clear that he was committed to the *apartheid* system of separate development. Consistent with this conviction, he announced a new constitution, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No 110 of 1983), according to which he believed that the new Constitution "...would bring radical changes but would in essence leave the basic principles of *apartheid* unassailed" (Ngcokovane 1989:126).

The 1983 Constitution allowed Coloured and Indian people into central government, but it also entrenched grand *apartheid* by requiring that they be elected from separate voters' rolls and segregated into separate chambers (Republic of South Africa 1983[a]). The new tricameral government<sup>26</sup> system was not only aimed at incorporating Coloureds and Indians into parliament, but at regional level they aimed to replace the White provincial authorities with new administrative and planning bodies which, although multiracial, were appointed rather than elected. At the local level they aimed to introduce appointed multiracial bodies like Regional Services Councils and elected local authorities, including Black community councils, to take the reins of local government (Cobett, Glaser, Hindson & Swilling 1986:137-168).

James and Du Pisanie (1987:37) advocated that the introduction of the tricameral government and its legislation reproduced rather than adulterated racial and ethnic boundaries. The 1983 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was in line with the government's *apartheid* plan that the political rights of the Black people could be expressed legally only through the homeland concept to which they could be ethnically linked ( *Readers Digest* 1992:466). Naicker (1996:36) argues that even if the Coloured and Indian representatives sat in chambers of Parliament, their social life was still hemmed in by segregation.

Although segregation policies were evident in the history of South African education, with the accession to power of the NP government in 1948, separatist practices in education were

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<sup>26</sup> The tricameral system of government entailed three legislative houses: the House of Assembly (Whites), the House of Representatives (Coloureds) and the House of Delegates for Indians (*Readers Digest* 1992:469).

solidified into the *apartheid* ideology. Hofmeyr and Buckland (1992:20) confirm that the NP pursued two objectives in education: segregated differentiated education for the different racial groups and state control over all education in the interest of *Afrikanerdom* which pursued Christian National principles. This differentiation was not only political, social, economic or racial, but it was also territorial by separating White people from Black people by the creation of homelands.

In the following sections, the NP government educational endeavours to differentiate South African society on the basis of ideology of *apartheid* will be discussed.

### **5.3 FROM BANTU EDUCATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 came to be heavily challenged by Black people, especially in 1976. The 1976-77 unrest gave rise to new legislation. The Department of Bantu Education, had since 1978, been renamed the Department of Education and Training [DET] (Behr 1978:328; *SAIRR* 1980:490). The DET predominantly concentrated on the urban areas as each self-governing and 'independent' state had its own education department, referred to as the Department of Education and Culture. Hartshorne (1992:127) mentions that between the years 1963 and 1978, there were ten separate education departments hiving from the Department of Bantu Education. The NP government made sure that its policies would be continually followed by placing seconded White officials as Secretaries responsible to the Minister for Education and Culture of the Legislative Assembly of the homeland concerned.

The homeland education Acts tended to be similar with the regulations of the DET which indicated that the NP government did everything in its power to influence homelands to stay within the legal framework of the South African education policies. The range and organisation of subjects and the contents of syllabuses were received from the central government in a fairly passive way and the relevant homeland education departments had neither the capacity nor the motivation to alter or elaborate them substantially. In the Transkei, for example, employees of the Department of Education believed that it was necessary to keep the curriculum the same as that of the DET so that employers and institutions of higher learning would be able to recognise and assess their (Transkei) qualifications (Jacklin 1993:10).

The Education and Training Act was adopted by the homelands. It laid down seven cardinal policy principles within the framework of which education in Black schools had to be pursued.

The principles were as follows:

- # Education shall have a *Christian* character, but the religious convictions of the parents and the pupils shall be respected in regard to religious instruction and religious ceremonies.
- # The medium of instruction shall be in the *mother-tongue* up to and including standard 2. Thereafter one of the official languages may be used as the medium of instruction.
- # Education shall be compulsory and free (including the supply of books) subject to the co-operation of the parents.
- # Education shall be provided in accordance with the ability, aptitude and interest of the pupil, as well as the training needs of the country, and to this end appropriate guidance will be given to pupils.
- # There shall be co-ordination with *other* departments of education with respect of *syllabuses, courses* and *examination* standards.
- # Recognition shall be given to the active involvement of the parents through parent-teachers' associations, or other local committees or councils.
- # Health services shall be provided in schools in conjunction with the Department of Health (Republic of South Africa 1979 - emphasis mine).

Firstly, it should be pointed out that the series of Acts introduced by the NP government after 1948, although aimed at improving education, only succeeded in further institutionalising and entrenching *apartheid* ideology. The Education and Training Act was no exception. This Act of Parliament appeared to place less emphasis on separate development. However, one must remember that the whole society was enmeshed in a racial paradigm.

In the first principle it is mentioned that education shall have a “Christian character” and that the religious convictions of the Black parents would be respected. This is one of the democratic values which the Act mentioned. However, the legislation as reflected in the Education Acts mentioned aspects that related to Christianity as associated with the principles of CNE. The CNE propagated the ideology that the education for Black people should lead to the development of an independent “native community” (cf 4.4.1), which advocated the notion of Black subordination. Ironically, it was mentioned in the Education and Training Act of 1979 that other religions were to be respected.

As mentioned previously, the education of Black learners was not compulsory. It was now mentioned in the principles underlying the Education and Training Act that education “shall be compulsory and free”, but on condition that there is co-operation between parents and the State. It has been continuously reiterated throughout this study that Black parents were poor and in most cases unemployed. The government was obligated to ensure that Black children’s schooling was attended to without making certain conditions. In simple terms, the conditions under which rural education found itself in, were to continue whereas the principles in the document propagated something different.

The government wanted also to ensure that the curriculum provided to Black people remained in line with its *apartheid* ideology. In the planning of the schools, the syllabi and methods of education, special attention was never paid to the socio-economic needs of rural areas. The child was trained for the labour market and hence subjects that were manual and industrial related were emphasised.

The curriculum prescribed that teachers give the highest priority to teaching the two official languages of South Africa at that time; the government laws; history from the White perspective and employment opportunities in the Republic of South Africa. Values such as

self-reliance, initiatives, critical thinking, democracy and enthusiasm for building Black societies did not receive the attention they deserved (Murphy 1973:235). Most of the subjects that were taught at Black trade schools were concrete work, bricklaying and plaster work, drain-laying, welding, metal work, motor mechanics, motor body repairs, painting and glazing because, according to the *apartheid* ideology, it was a wrong principle to train Black children for more technical jobs since they would ultimately aspire to become engineers and technologists. This urban-bias curriculum, in most cases, complicated the task of rural teachers and made learning that much more difficult for rural children, who saw little relevance of some subject matter to the life in their rural communities. Vocational training and agriculture as imperatives of rural development, were not main priorities.

The NP government also failed to realise that rural schools, unlike urban schools, were confronted with challenging conditions such as impoverishment (cf 2.4). In most cases these schools did not have laboratories and electricity and subjects such as physical science and biology could not be easily taught in such conditions. Practical demonstration lessons were difficult to perform. The syllabuses which were taught, because they were derived from an urban-based background, did not relate to circumstances and daily experiences around rural life. In other words, the syllabus as prescribed by the DET did not afford learners an opportunity to make maximum use of the environment around them within a broader community life.

Most of the learners in the former homelands did not enrol in subjects such as economics, accounting, typing and woodwork or arts-related subjects such as music and art, but rather enrolled in subjects such as geography, biblical studies, history and biology. Enrolment of learners in various subjects in 1988 were as follows: 0,4 percent in the self-governing states enrolled in typing and technical subjects<sup>27</sup> (Du Plessis, Du Pisani & Plekker 1989:16). In 1990, the enrolment in both typing and technical subjects in the self-governing homelands dropped to 0,3 percent. Not only did schools in rural schools lack the necessary facilities and equipment for specialised subjects, but they also had difficulties in recruiting and attracting teachers with 'rare' skills to accept posts in these rural schools. The average enrolment in economics in both the self-governing and 'independent' homelands was 9 percent as

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<sup>27</sup> These subjects included woodwork, needlework, technical drawing, motor mechanics, and building and construction-related subjects (Du Plessis *et al* 1989:16).

compared to an enrolment of 36 percent in biblical studies (Du Pisani, Plekker, Dennis & Strauss 1991:16).

#### **5.4 GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Before 1994, the South African education system was fragmented according to registered ethnic groups. This fragmentation hindered provision of basic education to learners in most parts of South Africa. The establishment of an egalitarian education system with equal provision for all learners would be a myth until a unitary system of administration and management, as recommended by various Commission of Enquiries, was in place.

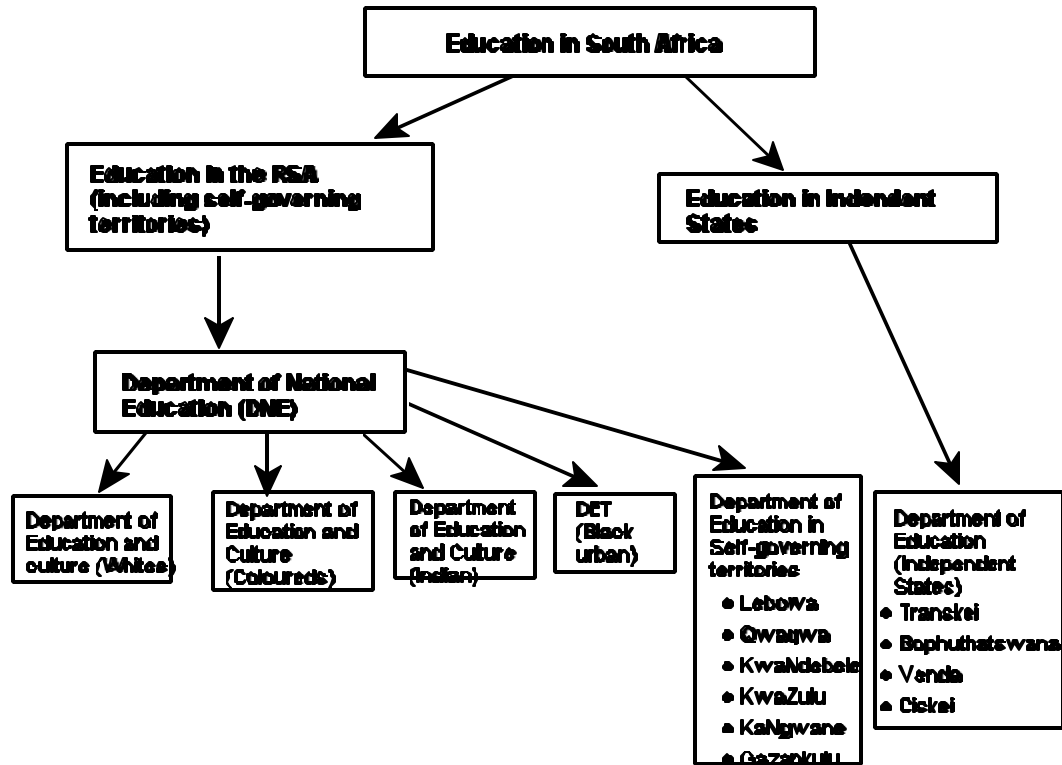
There were nineteen separate, educational administrative structures in South Africa before the dawn of the democratic era. Lindsay and Zath (1994:463) mention that a major feature of the constitutional changes in South Africa under the *apartheid* was the fragmentation of functions and the consequence of a multiplicity of authorities. These educational structures were set up in this manner because the South African racial laws mandated by the *apartheid* government were in effect.

The *apartheid's* fragmenting of populations and their related education departments resulted in a collection of different quantity and quality data from different parts of the country. It must be noted that statistics that are used in this chapter indicate the measure of inequalities that existed among the various racial groups in South Africa.

As a point of departure in trying to indicate inequalities among different racial groups, it is imperative to highlight structures of educational governance and administration in South Africa. The separate educational departments structures are portrayed by Table 5.1:



Table 5.1 Education in the Republic of South Africa until 1993



**Source:** DNE (1991:8)

There was also continued pressure from four main sectors of society: the private sector, teachers, parents and the Black community in general, that provision of education to Black learners required serious review. To that effect a commission of enquiry was to be established. This pressure resulted in the Prime Minister announcing on 13 June 1980 that he had decided that the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), under the chairpersonship of Professor JP de Lange, the former Rector of the Rand Afrikaans University and the chairperson of the *Broederbond*, investigate and report to Cabinet within twelve months. The following section will thus deal with the investigation of this Commission.

## 5.5 THE DE LANGE COMMISSION

The De Lange Commission came into being after the worst outbreak of student and pupil unrest in South Africa. Various stakeholders in education discussed this crisis with the then NP government with the aim of establishing principles for an education policy which would allow for the realisation of the potential of all inhabitants of South Africa, promote economic growth, and improve the quality of life of all inhabitants (*SAIRR* 1982:338). One of the results of such discussions was the government's intention to appoint the HSRC to carry out an investigation into education.

The De Lange Commission (Main Committee) comprised twenty-five members. The Committee members were taken from various sectors, like education departments, universities, teacher associations and the private sector (*HSRC* 1981:2-5). Of the six Executive Committee members, one was Black (LM Taunyane, a school principal and President, South African Teachers' Association) (*HSRC* 1981:9). It should also be mentioned that the Committee, even though it had been drawn from various sectors and racial groups, was not representative because the majority of Black people predominantly residing in rural areas were left out. Most of the members were drawn from urban areas, because unrest between 1976 and 1980 were more dominant in urban areas.

While the De Lange Commission was welcomed by nearly all people, it should also be mentioned that in the eighteen sub-committees which were established (cf *HSRC* 1981:2-5), the commissioners concentrated on Black schools in the former White rural areas, that is, farm schools<sup>28</sup> only. It remained unfortunate that the De Lange Commission did not touch on rural education in the former self-governing and 'independent' states. This shows a failure by the Commission to investigate education from a holistic point of view.

By the end of February 1981, the main committee had reached consensus on broad principles (which were later accepted by government). These principles included the following:

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<sup>28</sup> Following recommendations made by the De Lange sub-committee on rural education, the former Department of Education and Training, in 1987 published a document on farm schools named *Onderwysvoorsiening vir plattelandse swart leerlinge*.

- # Equal opportunities for education, including equal standards for every inhabitant, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex, shall be the purposeful endeavour of the state.
- # Education shall afford positive recognition of what is common as well as what is diverse in the religious and cultural way of life and the languages of the inhabitants.
- # Education shall give positive recognition to the freedom of choice of individuals, parents and organisations in society.
- # The provision of education shall be directed in an educationally responsible manner to meet the needs of the individual as well as those of the society, and economic development, and shall, *inter alia*, take into consideration the manpower needs of the country.
- # The provision of formal education shall be a responsibility of the State, provided that the individual, parents and organized society shall have a shared responsibility, choice and voice in this matter.

These principles did not touch on rural education *per se*. They were mainly concentrated on urban areas. The interest and impetus of the Report itself were based on creating stability which was located in urban areas.

The De Lange Report called for the elimination of inequalities and propagated the notion of equal standards for all irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex. The Report did not enquire about the origins of the inequalities that prevailed in South Africa, but it relied only on data from the White group and hence suggested that more resources were needed at Black schools. Thorough investigation into rural education should have been done before recommendations or proposals were made about Black education.

The Report further stressed that “the distribution of education will have to be organised in such a way that everyone will receive a rightful share, regardless of race, colour, socio-economic context, ethnic context, religion, sex or geographic location” (Republic of South Africa 1981: 204). According to Hlatshwayo (1991:154), this statement tends to contradict the reform policy

which favours urban *vis-à-vis* rural schools. Before the government could address the equity problem in South African schools, there was a need to look first into inequalities and then move in the direction of trying to balance the pendulum.

Nevertheless, the De Lange Report made proposals that under-utilised facilities were to be made available to other groups. The proposal put forward was rejected by the National Party government as constituting “interference with the policy of having separate residential areas for the various population groups” (Republic of South Africa 1983[b]: 46). The government was mindful that different groups, as mentioned in the Group Areas Act and the Homeland Acts, continued to live in their respective predominantly rural areas.

The De Lange Report proposed that primary schooling should be compulsory and free, but that secondary schools should be dualistically structured. One stream would be subsidised by industry and focus on vocational training, while the other would be subsidised by parental fees and be more academic. The more differentiated system of career-oriented education would positively adhere to the policy of differentiated labour needs of the employer with regard to Black labour force. The provision of technical education to Black people was believed to be one way of providing a higher level of skill designed to meet the manpower requirements of South Africa (Chisholm 1984: 391). This was a call by the De Lange Report for a redesign of an education system which would channel the majority of Black people predominantly residing in rural homelands into vocational and technical education. Chisholm (1984: 387-409) further mentions that the previous assumptions that vocational education and training for Black people was either to be discouraged as posing a threat to the monopoly of skills for White people, or that Black people were only to be trained for skilled work in the homeland areas, were both abandoned as the whole issue of skills shortage entered into the centre of the debate about economic growth.

In October 1981, the government published an Interim Memorandum containing its provisional comments on the De Lange Report. The government made it very clear that it remained committed to the existence of different education departments for different population groups; to the policy that each population group should have its own schools; and to the principle of mother-tongue education (SAIRR 1982: 344). The De Lange report also proposed a single ministry of education to replace the ethnically divided ministry. Hyslop (1988: 191) mentions that while much of the De Lange recommendations were adopted as policy, much of what had

been proposed were also refused by the NP government. According to Christie (1991: 189), the De Lange Report was simply a modernisation of *apartheid*. Under the De Lange system of education, class, race and gender differences would remain. The *apartheid* ideology was vividly reflected in the White Paper on Education of 1983 where the government reiterated its stance to the conservative *Afrikaner* philosophy of education, CNE, in contrast to De Lange's recommendation for a single ministry of education (Christie 1991: 189; Mncwabe 1990: 46). When coming to differentiated education, the NP government did not want to compromise with the understanding that appalling conditions in most of the Black schools which were largely situated in rural areas should remain unchanged.

It appeared that the government was not prepared to move away from its policy of separate development. In line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (110 of 1983), the White Paper on Education of 1983 aligned itself with the concept of 'own affairs' and 'general affairs'. Education was divided into 'own' and 'general' affairs and the recommendation made by the De Lange Committee that it should become a single ministry, was rejected by the government. The ideology that informs the 1983 White Paper on Education is summarised by the concept of an 'equal but separate' education system. There were four separate ministries for the four population groups.

Even though the NP government propagated the notion of an 'equal but separate' education system, inequalities continued to exist. These inequalities are reflected in statistics. These statistics will further be analysed to understand where these inequalities were and how they impacted on Black people, particularly those in the rural areas of South Africa.

## **5.6 SOME INDICATORS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST RURAL EDUCATION (1970-1993)**

In this section a few indicators which measure directly or indirectly imbalances and inequities that were prevalent in the provision of education between urban and rural learners are looked at. In order to bring to light the impact of government legislation on rural education, indicators which include financing of education; per capita expenditure; teacher qualifications; teacher-pupil ratios; matriculation results; average size of class; and drop-out rates will be discussed.



### 5.6.1 Financing of rural education

In the latter 1960s and early 1970s, the Bantu Education Account ran into serious difficulties and as a result interest free loans were sought out to relieve the situation. In 1972, the Bantu Education Account Abolition Act (20 of 1972) was passed with the intention of financing Black education out of the Consolidated Revenue account. This simply meant that Black education was to be financed from the whole body of tax-payers and not just Black people.

The Republic of South Africa Constitution Act (110 of 1983) made provision for the DET budget to be decided upon by the Minister of Education and Development Aid, the Minister of Finance and after serious deliberations by the cabinet. The former homelands were responsible for their education budgets, for which they received grants from the Central government. The non-independent homelands received grants through the budget vote of the Department of Development Aid and the independent homelands through the vote of the Department of Foreign Affairs (Behr 1988: 82).

As mentioned by the De Lange Commission, this indicator had been a bone of contention among South African people who discerned a serious need for a more equitable share of finance for education (*HSRC* 1981: 185). The Minister of National Education in 1986 also agreed when he announced a ten-year plan that aimed at achieving parity in state spending on education for four racial groups in South Africa (Republic of South Africa 1983[a]). To get a better view of funding in 1988, the enrolment figures coupled with their respective expenditures will be dealt with in the ensuing discussion:

**Table 5.2 Enrolment of learners in 1988**

	<b>Total</b>
White designated (Black)	2 033 831
Independent homelands	2 037 452
Non-independent homeland	2 956 290
Coloureds	832 329
Indians	233 910
Whites	935 903
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 029 715</b>

**Source:** *SAIRR* (1990:814)

It should be pointed out that 71 percent of learners out of the total Black learners in 1988, were found in the former non-independent and independent homelands, the majority of which were situated in the rural areas. The remaining 39 percent of the total Black learners attended school in the White designated urban areas. There are several reasons why there were more learners in the homelands. One reason was that the Bantu education system introduced mass schooling for Black people which led to an increase in school attendance. Hyslop (1988:190) agrees when he points out that enrolments in Black secondary schools increased from under 600 000 in 1953 to over a million after the 1960s. This increase in enrolment figures must be understood in the light that it was in line with the NP government that Black schools be expanded in the homelands. This increase was also because of the government's homeland policy, which aimed at making Black people citizens of the homelands rather than of South Africa (Christie 1991:107).

From Table 5.2 it is evident that the Indians, Coloureds and White population comprised a small percentage of the total population. The White people comprised 10 percent of the total population in 1988, but in terms of resources, they were more advanced than the Black learners because their funding was high.

A feature of education financing in the pre-democratic era of imbalances in budgetary allocation is indicated in Table 5.3. This feature indicates how finances were allocated between and among different registration groups of people in South Africa.



**Table 5.3 Total education expenditure during 1988**

<b>Education Section</b>	<b>Rands</b>
Black education in the White designated urban areas	1 640 728 000
Black education in the non-independent homelands	1 472 420 970
Black education in the independent homelands	983 442 000
<b>Sub Total (Black education)</b>	<b>4 096 590 970</b>
Coloured education	1 103 369 000
Indian education	463 240 000
White education	3 727 539 000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9 390 738 970</b>

**Source:** SAIRR (1989:244)

When critically analysing Tables 5.2 and 5.3 above, the following come to light:

- # Two million Black learners in the former White designated urban areas were allocated an amount of R1, 6 billion – 17% of the total education budget.
- # 4,9 million learners in the former mostly rural homelands received an allocation of R2, 4 billion – 26% of the total budget allocated to education.
- # With less than a million learners, the allocation made to White education was R3,7 billion – 40% of the total education budget. This component of the South African population's budget was far more than that of the Black people with five times more learners in both urban and rural areas than those of the White learners.

The per capita expenditure between different racial groups indicates the imbalances that existed in financing of education in South Africa. This clearly reflected the government's deliberate intentions to allow Black education to lag behind more so than other education departments in South Africa.

The per capita expenditure (including capital expenditure) in 1989 among various racial groups per learner was as follows: R3 082 (Whites); R2 227 (Indian); R1 359 (Coloured); R764 (Blacks in DET schools) and R647 in former, mostly rural self-governing territories (*SAIRR* 1990:795; DNE 1991). The per capita expenditure of the Black learners was five times less than that of the White learner and a one third less than that of a Black learner in the urban areas. In the 1991/92 financial year, the per capita expenditure (including capital expenditure), on learners by race was as follows: Black learners, R1 248; Coloured learners, R2 701; and White learners, R4 448.

Factors such as the salaries of teachers which consume large proportion of funds and differing expenses on the primary or secondary school level cannot be overlooked. According to the Department of National Education (DNE 1993:47), 70 percent of the education department budgets were used for salaries. This salary structure of teachers was based on the level of qualification of teachers. Most of the teachers in the homelands were under-qualified which meant that the education departments in the homelands consumed a smaller portion of the budget on the salary component as compared to the White salary component. It has been a long-standing practice of the government's policy of separate development that the education of Black teachers should remain inferior so that it needed to spend less on Black teacher remunerations than White teacher remunerations (Molteno 1984; Pillay 1984:17; Seroto 1999: 39,52-62;89-93).

The view that primary education is considerably cheaper than secondary education, as advanced by the Department of National Education also cannot be disputed (DNE 1993:47). In 1988, 54 percent of learners were in the homeland primary schools and 46 percent were in the secondary schools as compared to 58 percent in White primary schools and 43 percent in White secondary schools (*SAIRR* 1988:824). Most learners in 1988, were found in the homeland secondary schools and one would expect the per capita expenditure for learners in the homelands during 1988 to be higher than that for White learners in the secondary schools if the argument that secondary education is expensive was used. Unfortunately the per capita expenditure for White learners was nearly four times greater than that of the Black learners in secondary schools<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> The per capita expenditure used is an average of that of a Black learner in 1988, calculated from the per capita of DET and homeland learners. This expenditure differed from

There were also disparities among the homelands themselves. The per capita expenditure on pupils in 1986/87 for Gazankulu was R327, R279 for KaNgwane and R413 for Transkei (*SAIRR* 1988:151). These differences can be explained in terms of the political and economic relations between each homeland and the South African government, the availability of internal economic resources and the priority of education as an item on the annual budget (Jacklin 1993:7).

In January 1991, Professor James Moulder, former professor of philosophy at the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) openly mentioned that Black urban education was sufficiently more funded compared to the education of rural Africans. He further mentioned that “the funding gap between education in the homelands and education under the DET was far greater than that between the DET and White education” (*SAIRR* 1992:194). Professor Moulder stressed the point that the government concentrated more on White education and Black urban education than Black rural education.

Given the backlogs that existed for years in rural areas, it is imperative to point out that there were still other factors that the government was faced with. Economic growth had been much lower than the education inflation factors such as the growth in student numbers and the improvement in the qualifications of teachers, factors which necessitated increased education expenditure. In some instances this led to ever-growing backlogs in school buildings, making the funding of education even more difficult (DNE 1993:29). Nevertheless, despite these factors, unequal spending has long been a particular vexing aspect of *apartheid* ideology and disadvantaged the majority of South Africans, especially Black people living in the rural areas.

### **5.6.2 Teacher qualifications**

The De Lange Commission correctly mentioned that “without a corps of well-trained and talented teachers, any endeavour aimed at a system of education by means of which the potential of the country’s inhabitants is to be realised, economic growth promoted, the quality of life of the inhabitants improved and education of equal quality provided for everyone, cannot be successful” (*HSRC* 1981). Beeby (1986:37) further mentions that “teachers are the

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homeland to homeland resulting in some having a higher per capita expenditure than the other (*SAIRR* 1990:795).

frontline troops of change, and progress depends on their own education, motivation and freedom to innovate”.

In South Africa, especially in the former homelands, there is a quantity and quality deficiency of teachers. Pillay (1984:13) mentions that this pattern of deficiency is a vicious circle of poorly qualified teachers producing poorly qualified learners who go on to become poorly qualified teachers. Most Black teachers in South Africa were trained at segregated institutions designed solely for Black people. These institutions were distinct from other training colleges and they were under separate education departments which were established in accordance with the separate development policy of the NP government. In further pursuance of the *apartheid* policies, training colleges for teachers were predominantly located in the homelands. It was not until the late 1980s that the NP government started establishing training colleges for teachers in the urban areas. This is indicative that the teaching profession was more associated with Black rural people as other professions were largely designed for occupation by the White people.

By means of example to demonstrate the lack of Black teacher qualifications, the Department of Bantu Education appointed a committee of investigation<sup>30</sup> into teacher training in 1967, and the Lower Primary Teachers' Certificate and Higher Primary Teachers' Certificate courses offered at colleges of education, were revised. The committee recommended that the Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) course be introduced. This teachers' course gave greater attention to all levels of primary school work without giving adequate attention to the Junior primary work (Grade 1 to 3). The foundation of learners at the entrance level was not adequately laid and that impacted negatively on many Black primary school learners. In 1968 a two-year Junior Secondary Teachers' Certificate (JSTC) was introduced after senior certificate or matriculation. In 1978, a three-year Senior Secondary Teachers' Certificate (SSTC) was also introduced. In 1983 both the JSTC and SSTC were replaced by a three-year Secondary Teachers' Diploma (STD). The PTC was replaced by a three-year Primary Teachers' Diploma (PTD). For a very long time Black teachers were not adequately trained and it was not until 1983 that three-year diploma was introduced in Black Teachers' Colleges.

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<sup>30</sup> This was an internal committee which comprised of Dr Ken Hartshorne (then Chief Education Planner in the Department of Education), and Mr G Engelbrecht, then inspector of education (Hartshorne 1992:256).

The qualification of teachers in the homelands remained a matter of serious concern. The official definition of a qualified teacher at that time was one who had a minimum of post-matriculation education plus a professional three-year diploma or degree.

In 1988 there were 77,2 percent unqualified teachers in the homelands (TBVC excluded). In Bophuthatswana, 73,9 percent of teachers with qualifications below standard 10 had a three- or two-year certificate in 1988 (SAIRR 1990:839-840). The condition was worse in other homelands with Gazankulu where 95 percent of primary teachers were unqualified and in 1982, 60 percent of teachers in Venda had only standard 8 or lower qualifications (Pillay 1984:17). In 1988, even though official statistics were not available, the Research Institute for Education and Planning (RIEP) mentions that nearly 100 percent of the teachers in White schools were believed to be professionally qualified, having at least Standard 10 and a higher academic qualification (Du Pisani *et al* 1991:18).

It is clear that South Africa, especially the rural homelands, were confronted with a teacher crisis both in terms of quality and quantity. Colleges of education during the NP government era, as compelled by their *apartheid* ideology, did not produce adequately qualified teachers.

### **5.6.3 Teacher-pupil ratios**

There was a considerable variation in the teacher-pupil ratios across colour bars. Black people residing in urban areas were more advantaged as compared to those in the former rural homelands. The teacher-pupil ratios in the former independent and non-independent homelands were far from acceptable. Disruptions that prevailed in the 1980s made the enrolment figures in the former homelands rise because most parents wanted to secure their children by taking them to 'stable' schools which were mostly situated in the former rural homelands. Ironically these stable schools seriously lacked resources to ensure effective teaching. The teacher-pupil ratios in the homelands were as follows:

**Table 5.4 Teacher-pupil ratios in the homelands (primary schools)**

Homeland	1987	1988	1992	1993
Bophuthatswana	1:37	1:35	1:33	1:29
Ciskei	1:43	1:44	1:39	1:34
Gazankulu	1:43	1:42	1:43	1:39
KaNcwane	1:41	1:37	1:40	1:37
KwaNdebele	1:40	1:35	1:40	1:39
KwaZulu	1:54	1:54	1:53	1:43
Lebowa	1:44	1:40	1:40	1:40
Qwaqwa	1:32	1:30	1:34	1:31
Transkei	1:62	1:69	1:73	1:51
Venda	1:34	1:34	1:35	1:32

**Source:** SAIRR (1988; 1989; 1993; 1994; 1995)

It is clear from Table 5.4 that the need for teachers was most urgent in the Black rural schools. The shortage was more serious in the primary schools, especially in the self-governing and independent homelands. In Transkei, for example, the teacher-pupil ratio in 1992 was as high as 1:73 which showed a high proportion of teachers needed in primary schools. Bophuthatswana, Lebowa and KwaZulu also had an exceptionally high proportion of teacher-pupil ratios at the secondary level (Pillay 1984:15).

The occurrence of high teacher-pupil ratios was worse than that in the developing areas of Africa. The average teacher-pupil ratio in South Africa's primary schools in 1979 was 1:52 comparable with 1:27 in the primary schools in Ghana in 1978 (Pillay 1984:16). Teacher-pupil ratios in Black schools, especially in rural areas, remained high for several years as compared to other countries in Africa.

There were also considerable variations in the distribution of teachers across circuits in the former homelands. In Gazankulu, the ratio of pupils to qualified teachers varied across circuits from 1:41 to 1:107 in primary schools, and from 1:33 to 1:99 in secondary schools (Jacklin 1993: 10).

There were a number of reasons that this situation of unevenness in the distribution of Black teachers in South Africa continued. Even though the teacher-pupil ratios in rural areas were high, there was a tendency of teachers to move to urban areas. Because rural areas were and still are not well resourced due to past government legislation of separate development, teachers wanted to be situated close to urban areas where there were better resources for themselves and for their children. Institutional practices which included housing schemes only practicable in urban areas, were not only attractive to teachers, but working conditions in urban areas were better than those in rural areas.

#### 5.6.4 Matriculation results

The fundamental purpose of secondary schooling, as Hartshorne (1992: 59) mentions, is to prepare young people for entry into universities, technikons, colleges of education. Moreover, it has a broader responsibility which has to do with the general development and upliftment of the community in which it is and which it serves. Kant mentions the following with regard to youth development:

One principle of education which those men especially who form educational schemes should keep before their eyes is this - children ought to be educated, not for the present, but for a possible improved condition of man in future, that is, in a manner which is adopted to the idea of humanity and the whole destiny of man (Kant quoted in Mncwabe 1990: 49).

In South Africa, a daunting task facing the youth is to secure equal educational opportunities. Throughout the history of Black education, learners had opportunities to learn, however, they could not reach their full development when denied equal opportunities. There are a number of factors that contribute towards making a learner reach his/her full potential, among others, a shortage of qualified teachers in secondary schools result in poor academic standard of work. A matriculation certificate has been perceived as the main vehicle used by the youth to achieve access to status and success in working life.

The Black Senior Certificate examination results remained a cause of serious concern to many people for some time. Although the number of Black candidates sitting for Senior Certificate examinations increased over a number of years, the pass rate remained low. The

number of candidates obtaining the matriculation exemption pass, according to Behr (1984:209), left much to be desired. In Table 5.5 comparative statistics of the Matriculation results of all population groups for 1989 are presented:

**Table 5.5 Overall results of all candidates (1989)**

	<b>Entries</b>	<b>Matriculation exemption</b>	<b>School leaving</b>	<b>Total passes</b>	<b>Failures</b>
Black	209 319	21 357 (10,2%)	66 153 (31,6%)	87 510 (41,8%)	121 809 (58,2%)
Coloured	22 666	4 044 (17,8 %)	12 431 (54,8%)	16 475 (72,6%)	6 191 (37,4%)
Indian	14 191	5 889 (41,5%)	7 393 (52,1%)	13 282 (93,6%)	909 (6,4%)
White	70 666	29 333 (42,4%)	37 892 (53,6%)	67 825 (96,0%)	2 841 (4,0%)

**Source:** SAIRR (1990)

The Black Matriculation pass rates had been a matter of concern as compared to that of their counterparts. In 1989, for example, 96 percent for White candidates passed the Matriculation examination as compared to 42 percent for Black people. It is imperative also to point out that the Matriculation exemptions for Black people did not keep pace with the large enrolments of candidates in a particular year. In 1989, for example, 96 percent of White candidates passed Standard 10, and 42,4 percent of them obtained Matriculation exemption. In the same year 41,8 percent of Black people passed Standard 10, and only 10,2 percent obtained Matriculation exemption. This situation was worse in the homelands as is illustrated in the following section.



**Table 5.6 Black Matriculation results in the urban DET schools and the rural homelands in 1989**

	Entries	Matriculation exemption	School leaving certificates	Total passes	Failures
DET	40 092	10,1%	30,6%	40,7%	59,3%
<b>Non-dependent homelands</b>					
Gazankulu	10 707	11,2%	34,2%	45,4%	54,6%
KwaNdebele	5 283	6,7%	26,7%	33,4%	66,6%
KwaZulu	28 245	10,3%	32,7%	43%	57,0%
Lebowa	46 659	8,2%	27,8%	36%	64,0%
Qwaqwa	5 069	6,5%	26,7%	33,2%	66,8%
<b>Independent homelands</b>					
Bophuthatswana	17 613	12,5%	37,5%	50%	50%
Ciskei	7 045	11,4%	39,5%	50,9%	49,2%
Venda	9 940	9,1%	33,4%	42,5%	57,5%

**Source:** SAIRR (1990)

It is clear from Table 5.6 that the situation of low pass rate was prevalent in the homelands. These low pass rates meant that the majority of Black students hailing from the rural homelands had less opportunity to be admitted at institutions of higher learning than their White counterparts. The poor matriculation results did not only indicate the different quality of education in White and Black schools, but it also reflected the poor quality of schooling between the urban DET schools and the rural homeland schools.

### 5.6.5 Physical resources

It cannot be overemphasised that the quantity and the quality of physical resources constitute limiting factors which affect all other forms of provision related to schooling. Shortages of

classrooms limit the number of learners who can be admitted and the number of teachers who can be employed. Equally so, books and other apparatus cannot be kept in insecure and dilapidated classrooms.

It was normal practice under the Department of Bantu Education (1958-1978) that the responsibility of erecting and maintenance of schools was vested in the Black community. It was the policy of the NP government that communities had to finance the cost of establishing schools on a Rand-for-Rand basis. Homeland governments were responsible for planning, distribution and cost of facilities in their area of jurisdiction. Outside these areas there were communities that were under the control of tribal authorities and they were expected to initiate school building programmes and contribute a portion of the costs of facilities. These proportions varied from homeland to homeland.

With the passing of the Education and Training Act (90 of 1979), provision was made for the state to erect, establish and maintain public schools (Republic of South Africa 1979: Section 5). This embodied a positive move by the government to erect schools for Black people, but these were to be erected only in urban areas. The then public relations officer of the DET, Mr T Janson mentioned that as from April 1979 the Department envisaged building twenty five senior secondary schools, two teacher training colleges and sixteen technical centres and 127 schools which were to be largely located in urban townships. The Department also envisaged repairing some of the urban schools (*SAIRR* 1980:494). Nothing was mentioned and done about those schools in rural homelands which were in appalling conditions, not to mention those learners who were taught under the trees.

It should be pointed out that even though rural communities tried to build classrooms on a Rand-for-Rand basis, the number and quality of these classrooms remained limited. This was made clear by the high pupil-classroom ratios in the homelands. The pupil-classroom ratio in Ciskei for example, estimated by the Ciskei Department of Education in 1992 was 1:43 (primary) and 1:46 (secondary). Jacklin (1993:9) mentions that a consultancy firm estimated that the overall 1991 ratio was approximately 1:55 if only 'acceptable' structures such as church hall, rondawels and other facilities were counted. If only permanent classrooms were counted in Transkei in 1992, ratios were as high as 1:191 (primary) and 1:64 (secondary) while the Gazankulu 1992 ratios were 1:69 (primary) and 1:62 (secondary).

Poor provision of facilities has negative implications for schooling. In many instances, because of a lack of classrooms in many homelands, as indicated above, enrolment at primary schools had to be limited to a specific number. The quality and the quantity of facilities had curriculum implications also. In most of the secondary schools of the former homelands, communities had difficulties in erecting proper laboratories. In such cases, science apparatus could not be accessed, and if available could not be securely housed. This had a serious implication for the provision of science as a subject in many rural homelands. In other rural schools learners only learned about, for example, sodium or lithium at universities or colleges.

It should also be mentioned that during this period, the NP government supplied or fully subsidised initial school equipment for handicraft, science, vocational and technical subjects in the DET schools predominantly situated in urban townships (Horrel 1968:31-32). These schools were further supplied with readers and certain textbooks at the primary level. It was not until 1986 that the then Minister of Education and Training announced that his Department will be able to supply free basic stationery not only to learners in the urban townships, but also to the self-governing territories. In March 1986, the then Minister further reiterated the Department's commitment to supply textbooks to learners in township secondary schools and those secondary schools in the self-governing territories would be provided with funds to purchase their own books (*SAIRR* 1988:426). In many instances, if these funds were sent, they were insufficient and not easily accessed by the relevant rural homeland governments.

#### **5.6.6 Drop-out rates and illiteracy rates**

In 1988, there were 11 333 schools in the homelands. Although these schools were under the control of their respective homeland authorities, they obtained substantial subventions from the NP government. These insufficient subsidies combined with the general neglect of education by the central government resulted in high illiteracy rates and high drop-out rates<sup>31</sup>.

Out of the total enrolment of 1 168 204 learners in Sub Standard A (SSA), 837 049 (71,6 percent) of these learners were in the homelands in 1989 (*SAIRR* 1990:824). The high drop-

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<sup>31</sup> Drop-outs or school leavers are defined here as learners who left school during or at the end of an academic year and did not return to school the following year. It includes learners who leave after passing, or without passing a standard or grade (Du Plessis, Du Pisani & Plekker 1989:17; *SAIRR* 1990:828).

out rate in SSA, as mentioned by the Research Institute for Education and Planning (RIEP) was a cause for alarm (Du Plessis *et al*/1989:17). In 1988 the dropout rate in SSA was at 25,8 percent. Statistics provided by RIEP in 1988 to 1991 showed that the dropout rate among Black people was high at primary level, with the proportion of approximately 25 percent in SSA. These dropout rates were mainly found in the former rural homelands where conditions of learning remained a matter of serious concern.

When responding to the question of high dropout rates in Black schools in 1991, the former Director of Education and Training, Dr Bernard Louw, said that the causes of high dropout rates at Black schools were poverty, unrest and poorly qualified teachers (*SAIRR* 1992:206). Poverty, however, was considered as the principal contributory factor, more especially because the majority of parents in the homelands received either breadline wages or were unemployed and found it an insurmountable burden to maintain the cost of books, stationery, uniforms and school fees (cf 2.4.2). In rural areas, especially, economic demands required that Black children terminate their schooling in order to provide childcare for younger siblings and augment family income (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:146).

The illiteracy rate remained high also among Black people. The NEPI Report (1993) indicated that illiteracy rates were significantly higher in rural areas and that the overall levels of schooling attained by men were “probably only slightly greater than for women”. For example, in 1970, about 80 percent of the population in Msinga district of KwaZulu and 53 percent of the Venda population were illiterate, and 66 percent in the Transkei in 1982 were illiterate (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:139-140).

In March 1987, the number of school-going age (taken as seven to 16 years) children not attending school in South Africa and non-independent homelands was 1 051 189 (*SAIRR* 1989:259). When asked in Parliament, why such a large number, the then Minister of Education and Development, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, said that compulsory education in South Africa had been introduced in public primary schools where school committees had requested it. This arrangement as stipulated in the Education and Training Act did not apply. Furthermore, the NP government did not see to it that it was maintained because it served the purpose to produce unskilled workers. Unfortunately, most of the school committee members were uneducated or received little education and as a result it was impractical for them to request the government to introduce compulsory education. However, school attendance was

compulsory for all Coloured and White learners until the age of sixteen (*SAIRR* 1989:260). This also played a role in contributing to the high illiteracy rate of Black people, especially in the homelands. The main cause was the general socio-economic conditions under the *apartheid* government which vitiated against normal schooling for Black learners.

## **5.7 RESISTANCE OF BANTU EDUCATION IN THE 1970s AND 1980s**

It should be borne in mind that this system of government was continually resisted by the majority of Black people. It has been reiterated in this thesis that throughout the history of the Black people, the struggle against Bantu education and subsequent Acts of Parliament, was prevalent even though it did not take the form as it did in the 1980s. Many politicians expressed the need for an alternative education for Black people. These voices were strongly heard after the 1976 Soweto uprisings. Several reasons caused the 1976 Soweto uprisings.

### **5.7.1 The 1976 Soweto uprisings**

When introducing some of the restructuring measures with regard to Black education, the then Minister of Bantu education in 1975, Mr MC Botha, gave the instruction that half of the subjects in Standard Five (Grade 7) and Form I (Grade 8) be taught in Afrikaans<sup>32</sup>. There was a serious opposition and resistance to this regulation. The introduction of Afrikaans as a partial medium of instruction was not opposed not because it was a language of the oppressor, but because it would play a major role in disadvantaging most of the Black learners in the English dominated labour-market (Hyslop 1986:38). Ironically, in 1943 Mr MC Botha, in his capacity as secretary of the *Afrikaanse Kultuurraad*, tried unsuccessfully to organise a strike among all Afrikaans students opposing integration with English students. His argument was that English language would dominate Afrikaans speaking people of South Africa. Yet in 1975 he found it necessary and compulsory to impose Afrikaans on Black people.

On 16 June 1976, 20 000 students marched through Soweto in protest against the introduction of Afrikaans as a partial medium of instruction. The police retaliated and opened fire and the first victim, Hector Peterson, was killed. This uprising spread throughout the whole country

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<sup>32</sup> The 'fifty-fifty' rule pertaining to language policy of Bantu education, emphasised that half examination subjects be taught in Afrikaans and half in English. As this policy was not practicable in some cases, exemptions were granted to schools which applied for it (McKay 1990:46).

as students expressed solidarity with Soweto. Rural areas were also part of this event. Molteno (1979: 54) confirms this by pointing out that:

Tens of thousands of men, women and children, students, parents and workers, in some 200 black communities throughout the country, including the Bantustans, actively participated in the uprising.

Even though the urban areas have been the major sites of protest and resistance, the centres to challenge the policies and authority of the State (Hartshorne 1992: 112), the uprising was extended to rural areas. The majority of Black learners who were predominantly found in different rural settings also took part in this historic event. It is unfortunate that when the government addressed students demands, they concentrated largely on urban areas.

There were a number of reasons, besides the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, that led to the 1976 uprisings. The Cillie Commission, which the government appointed to investigate the uprisings, confirmed that even though there was a serious dissatisfaction about the Bantu Education, other sources of friction included influx control laws, the Group Areas Act and the homeland policy which compelled Black people to take homeland citizenship (SAIRR 1982: 501).

Christie (1991: 243) and McKay (1990: 25) point out that due to the increase<sup>33</sup> of student numbers from about 25 000 in the 1950s to approximately 318 000 in 1975, schools with poor facilities and poorly qualified teachers in overcrowded classrooms made the situation unbearable. Hyslop (1989: 64) argues that by squeezing large numbers of learners into under-resourced schools, the system itself generated the culture in which rebellion grew.

Ten years after the Soweto upheavals, education-based resistance in both the urban and rural areas had become a steady stream rather than an intermittent flow. Thirty-three schools were closed countrywide and 40 more became “non-functional due to the absence of pupils” (Zille

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<sup>33</sup> These increase in enrolment was further exacerbated by moving the 1975 standard five learners into secondary schools which doubled the first year intake and put increased pressure on the already overcrowded schools (Christie 1991:241; Hyslop 1986:37).

1987: 24). The learning environment continued to crumble and generally Black high schools continued to collapse.

### 5.7.2 People's Education

Despite the massive state intervention in Black schooling in the form of substantial financial injections, Black schools remained key sites of resistance to *apartheid*. By the end of 1985, there was a serious call from students, activists, parents and teachers, journalists and writers, academics and priests and even people in the government for an alternative form of education. This came about in the form of People's Education<sup>34</sup>.

Sisulu (1986) pointed out that resistance in the country during the 1980s expanded from the townships to the rural areas where the people took up the cudgels of freedom. One feature of these boycotts was that it was not only student-based, but different stakeholders were key players in resisting the *apartheid*-driven government. Sisulu (1986: 107) further mentions that:

The struggle for people's education is no longer a struggle of the students alone. It has become a struggle of the *whole* community with the involvement of *all* sections of the community. This is not something which has happened in the school sphere alone; it reflects a new level of development in the struggle as a whole (emphasis mine).

By the end of 1985, Black schooling both in the urban and rural areas was in a serious crisis. In October 1985, the Soweto Civic Association (SCA) converged at a meeting and the Soweto Parents' Crisis Committee (SPCC) was formed. The concept People's Education came with the formation of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) in March 1986 in the wake of the first National Consultative Conference called upon by the SPCC in December 1985 (Muller 1987:21-22). The Conference highlighted the following:

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<sup>34</sup> People's Education is a broad subject with many philosophical and educational ramifications. It is impossible to give a detailed history of People's Education, its underlying philosophy or even its philosophy of education within the limits of this chapter (Christie 1991:267-296; Engelbrecht 1988; Levin 1989; McKay 1990; Mkatshwa 1985; Mkatshwa 1987; Sisulu 1986; Van der Walt 1989:136-151; Zille 1987).

- # The crisis in the provision of resources as a direct result of the disproportionate allocation of funds on the basis of race and differential funding among the 19 education departments.
- # The misappropriation of power by the state in general and the DET in particular was also of concern. The question of manipulation of matriculation results in favour of the less politicised rural students was also raised.
- # In discussing the struggle for control of education between the state and the community, the state was accused of causing conflict between the actors in education as envisaged by People's Education, i.e., the parents, teachers and students.

The increase in gangsterism among students, the disruptive effects of the Natal violence, poverty, especially as it affected farm school children, the drive of the DET to encourage teachers into the homelands and the potential elitism of some private schools (McKay 1990:39-40).

Molobi (1986:5) summarises the key features of People's Education when he mentioned that it involved:

- # the democratisation of education by involving a cross-section of the community in decisions on the content and quality of education;
- # the negation of *apartheid* in education by making education relevant to the democratic struggles of the people;
- # the achievement of a high level of education for everyone;
- # the development of a critical mind that becomes aware of the world;
- # the bridging of the gap that exists between theoretical knowledge and practical life; and
- # the closing of the chasm between natural science and humanities and between mental and manual labour, with emphasis on worker education and the importance of production.

Despite the fact that People's Education was not precisely defined, the SPCC resolved that People's Education was *inter alia* education which enables the oppressed to understand the evils of *apartheid* and prepares them for participation in a non-racial, democratic system; and



eliminates capitalist norms of competition and individualism as well as stimulating critical thinking (SAIRR 1986:5). People's Education had been argued as a process, a struggle for non-racialism, democracy, collective input, critical thinking and active participation by all people.

Van der Walt (1989:136-147) summarised People's Education by mentioning the following: it is a form of education which is conceived for the purposes and from the perspective of Black people and is closely associated with the Black freedom struggle; it is education for justness and fairness, education which can satisfy the needs of individuals; it also aims at fulfilling the needs of the whole community; it is education for the people who therefore need to take charge of their education. People's Education means education at the service of the people as a whole, education that liberates, education that puts people in command of their lives.

The foregoing points reflect primarily on the question of content, control and method in the educational arena, which were fundamentally the responsibility of the state. There is little dispute over the fact that the curricular content within Black education, both urban and rural, was in dire need of a drastic review in order to present a more realistic picture of South African society. It is fundamental that education should meet the needs of a community and as Engelbrecht (1988:11) mentions, "should preferably be controlled by the community concerned". This is affirmed by the NECC stance on radical tradition which proclaimed that:

[e]ducation cannot be discussed in isolation from the rest of society. Education cannot be discussed outside the socio-political setting. To understand education one must of necessity understand the nature of society (Mkatshwa 1987:5).

Historically, Black communities were left behind in education-related issues. In many instances, especially in rural areas, they existed to 'rubber-stamp' decisions made by their respective homeland government who in turn endorsed most of the policies prescribed by the Pretoria government. In the opinion of the proponents of NECC, as mentioned above, it was fundamental to take on board the Black people not only for the sake of forming parent bodies, but also for taking part in sophisticated phenomenon such as curriculum development processes.

It seemed that a consensus was reached between the government and the NECC over the provision of Black education. Both the NECC and the government reached a consensus that there was a need to review Black education. Instead, the government declared a state of

emergency and detained as many NECC leaders it could find. Most of them were immobilised and forced into hiding. In the rural Eastern Cape and in Soweto, there was a “breakdown of learning habits” and the “collapse of an educational environment” (Zille 1987:25). This situation spread throughout the country with the state exercising its strategy of detaining, issuing out restriction orders to the people who were involved in challenging the legislative *status quo*.

## 5.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

It has emerged from this chapter that between 1948 and 1994, the ideological policy of the NP government of *apartheid* and racial discrimination were entrenched in the different legislative Acts. It can be mentioned with little uncertainty that education in South Africa, especially in rural homelands, was unavoidably and inextricably bound up with the government policy of *apartheid* or separate development.

The structure of Black education during this period had been formulated in such a way that it would produce a Black population which was not only poorly educated and subordinated, but which would easily and automatically accept its subordination and low level of education as natural. This is evidenced by the majority of the Black population in the former predominantly rural homelands where subordination and political ignorance had been the order of the day. Hence, an extremely low level of funding in Black education, especially in the former homelands, resulted in, amongst others, poorly trained teachers. Government legislation succeeded in ensuring all of these aspects.

The character of the education that was provided to Black learners was also reflected in the syllabuses which virtually excluded commercial subjects such as accounting and economics and, which also undermined the role that Black people would play in the construction of a modern and democratic South Africa. The government also prohibited Black people exercising their political and democratic rights by means of legislative Acts.

Nevertheless, despite the government’s ideological discriminatory policies and legislations, resistance to Black education and other laws gained momentum during the 1970’s and 1980’s. It has been shown in this chapter that protests and demonstrations against Black education had been countless. In 1976, the revolt against *apartheid* education was not only concentrated in urban Soweto, but it spread to many rural parts of the country as students came out in solidarity with Soweto.

In the early 1980s protests continued and spread over the country with a different focus altogether. The struggle tended to shift from demands for radical reform of the existing education system, to a contestation with the state over control of the school. Hence the emergence of the NECC which propagated People's Education for people's power. This clearly indicated that Black education was inappropriate and was underpinned by White discriminatory legislation. It was a call for an alternative education for Black learners.

It has been continually reflected in previous chapters that rural education lagged behind during various historical periods. Past governments, especially the NP government played a pivotal role, particularly by legislating a number of Acts of Parliament which worsened the quality and provision of education in rural areas. The researcher further wanted to investigate whether the democratic government has introduced legislation that has worked contrary to rural education. In that light the following chapter will deal with rural education in the post-*apartheid* era.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **RURAL EDUCATION DURING THE DEMOCRATIC ERA (1994-2004)**

## CHAPTER 6

### RURAL EDUCATION DURING THE DEMOCRATIC ERA (1994-2004)

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Prior to the democratic era (1994), education in South Africa had been seen as an instrument to promote inequality especially in the late 1970s and 1980s resulting in many Black people, by means of the introduction of deliberate repressive legislative Acts (cf 4.3; Chapter 5), being disadvantaged and marginalized. The transition from an *apartheid* education system in 1994 to one of transformation and democratic discourse initiated South Africa's drastic policy shift towards equal and quality education (Waghid & Schreuder 2000:85). These policy shifts were reflected in, among others, the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), Curriculum 2005 and the subsequent Revised National Curriculum Statement and the White Paper No 6 on Education for Learners with Special Needs.

An apparent challenge facing the South African government in the field of education is the insistence on equality of *all* in the field of education - that is an equalisation and redress of opportunities to ensure a more equal distribution of educational resources. The aim of this chapter is therefore to look at the provision of education to learners in rural areas after the ANC government took power given the *apartheid* past and rationale. The objectives emanating from this aim are therefore an investigation of:

- # changing socio-economic conditions in rural areas as well as the changing political place and role in the society;
- # the official rationale for education in rural areas defined as those areas previously defined as reserves and then as homelands;
- # the broader socio-economic policy in terms of which education is defined;
- # infrastructural and resource provision in general and education as a part of it;
- # budgetary provisions and implications of budgetary processes and mechanisms relating to education in general and implications for these areas;
- # governance, management and administration of schools in rural areas; and

# curriculum related issues in rural areas.

In the following sections, an investigation of aspects captured by the objectives mentioned above will be made.

## **6.2 TRANSITION FROM *APARTHEID* ERA TO DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION: AN OVERVIEW**

On the 27 April 1994, the new democracy in South Africa was born and in May the first post-*apartheid* and multi-party government was established. The Government of National Unity (GNU) with President Nelson Mandela and two executive Deputy Presidents, Thabo Mbeki (ANC) and FW de Klerk (NP) headed the government. The GNU resulted from negotiations held at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park from 20 December 1991 to the end of 1993. These negotiations were known as the Convention for Democratic South Africa (CODESA). The Interim Constitution, Act 200 of 1993, was adopted as an interim measure towards adopting a final Constitution (Karisson, Pampallis & Sithole 1996: 40).

The GNU was based on proportional representation in accordance with the Interim Constitution. The GNU, which was the first democratically elected government, ended its term in 1999 when the ANC government took power after winning elections in June. The GNU in this chapter is also referred to as the ANC government since the ANC was the majority party. This chapter will further look at the provision of education by the ANC government up to the 2004 national elections. On the 14 April 2004 national elections were held all over the country and the ANC won an overwhelming majority of the votes by 70 percent ( *City Press* 2004[a]:2; *Sunday Times* 2004[b]:4) which signalled another period of the ANC as the ruling party in South Africa.

## **6.3 CHANGING POLITICAL GEOGRAPHICAL IDENTIFICATION OF RURAL AREAS**

Although there is a common understanding of what the concept rural entails (cf 2.3), it has been reiterated that a universal definition does not exist. It has been also mentioned that in the South African context, the concept rural was defined by making use of a multi-criteria approach. A number of criteria and characteristics of rural areas were identified and they distinguished rural

areas from urban areas. Those characteristics are still applicable even in the democratically established provinces.

After 1994, the political role of the rural and marginalised people took another shape. When the Constitution of South Africa was introduced in 1996, it stipulated that local government should consist of municipalities, which must be established in the whole territory of the Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa 1996[d]:Chapter 7). Former homelands which were independent or self-governing were dismantled and the chiefs or traditional leaders were incorporated into local governments. The role of traditional leaders was a bone of contention but with the establishment of Council of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA) tensions between local government representatives and traditional leaders were minimised (Republic of South Africa 1996[d]: Chapter 12). It was the intention of the ANC as a ruling party to address the issue of the neglect that the rural sector continued to experience, especially in the area of politics.

Following the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), nine provinces were established. Those provinces were the Eastern Cape (including former Transkei); the Free State (including former Qwaqwa); Gauteng; KwaZulu Natal; Mpumalanga (including former KwaNdebele); Northern Cape; Limpopo (including former Gazankulu; Lebowa and Venda); North West (including former Bophuthatswana) and the Western Cape. The Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo are classified as predominantly rural as they have incorporated the former rural homelands. The four provinces qualify to be classified as rural according to the multi-criteria approach (cf 2.4).

#### **6.4 CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN RURAL AREAS**

As a part of nation-building initiative, the democratic government launched a sustained campaign against rural and urban poverty and underdevelopment. Among its priorities, the government committed itself to co-ordinated programmes to provide a wide range of services that include educational services to people in rural areas (Republic of South Africa 1995[a]).

The most important task of the new democratic government in 1994 was to eliminate the deep levels of poverty in the country (cf 2.6) which were more prevalent in rural areas. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was introduced in 1994 by an alliance of organisations (the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party [SACP]), with a wide ranging programme of social reform to meet the basic needs. It was the aim of the RDP to deal also with, among others, a weak economy characterised by high income inequality. The South African economy was built on systematically enforced racial division, segregation in education, health, welfare, transport and scars of inequality and economic inefficiencies were prevalent in the society, in particular, the Black rural communities. The RDP therefore aimed at, among others:

- # meeting the basic needs of different communities;
- # development of human resource;
- # building of the economy; and
- # democratisation of the State and society (ANC 1994[b]:7).

The main emphasis of the RDP was poverty eradication which was prevalent in South Africa, particularly in rural provinces. The RDP did not clearly articulate economic strategies that needed to be followed to eradicate ills that had been deliberately created by former governments (Blumenfeld 1998:17). As a result it was incumbent upon the ANC-led government to design a macroeconomic policy that would lend support to its broad economic and development objectives. In 1998, the RDP was effectively displaced by the current macroeconomic policy named the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy.

In 1999 the ANC government continued to show its commitment to co-ordinated programmes to provide a wide range of services that include educational services to people in rural areas. *The Rural Development Strategy* was one such programme, which aimed at ensuring that the gap between the social services provided to advantaged and disadvantaged communities is increasingly narrowed and eventually closed. This strategy was aimed at ensuring “coherence in the roll-out of infrastructure and services such as water, electricity, health-care and education” (Republic of South Africa 2000: foreword).



It is imperative to note that aspects such as growing unemployment, poverty and other pressing social issues have become emotive subjects and have become key indicators among people on how to judge the performance of the democratically elected government. These aspects play a major role in trying to define what rural areas were and still are. Therefore, it is essential that they be discussed below.

#### **6.4.1 Poverty**

As mentioned previously (cf 2.6.2) the incidence of poverty continues to be high in rural provinces with the poverty rate of 78 percent in Limpopo, 74 percent in the Eastern Cape, 63 percent in KwaZulu Natal as compared with, for example, 32 percent and 29 percent in Gauteng and the Western Cape respectively (UNDP 2000). Nevertheless, it seems the present government has made poverty alleviation one of its priorities (*Sunday Times* 2004[d]:15). The ANC's intention to change the lives of the rural poor can be seen in that 46 percent of rural households, since its inception, were electrified in 1999. However, in the same year there were still over 3,2 million unelectrified households, of which 2,1 million were in rural provinces (Republic of South Africa 2000:122). The situation has improved in that in the State of the Nation Address of 2004, the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki mentioned that 70 percent of households without electricity were electrified. He further mentioned that 63 percent of people had access to sanitation and 1,6 million houses had been built (Mbeki 2004). This clearly highlights the intention the ANC government has to reduce poor conditions that continue to prevail in rural areas.

Although there is no doubt that the government has committed itself to helping reduce poverty and inequalities through providing basic services to poor households, there is consensus among all role players that its efforts have had limited success (*City Press* 2002[a]:19). It has been regularly pointed out to government that thousands of especially rural communities, have not been alleviated of the suffering and ills of the past. A discussion document, which was approved by Cabinet and released for public debate by Minister of Social Development, Zola Skweyiya in 2002, highlighted the following:

- # The lack of policy to address income poverty has been a constraining feature of South Africa's socio-economic programme.

- # The poor have particular difficulties in accessing health-care and primary education because they do not have even the most basic income for transport, food and clothing.
- # Despite dozens of government alleviation programmes at high cost, the available evidence suggests that the poverty rate is getting worse. Although the report lauded government's various programmes to alleviate poverty, they were unable to make any significant impact on massed-based unemployment and levels of income poverty in the immediate term.
- # Many programmes for alleviating poverty and meeting basic needs were not targeted effectively in rural areas or to the beneficiaries.
- # Most rural women and disabled people still experience difficulty in accessing basic needs.
- # A survey conducted on housing subsidies indicated that most people in rural areas were less likely to know about subsidy schemes (*City Press* 2002[a]:19).

At this stage there is no effective form of monitoring and evaluation of delivery programmes in South Africa. There are transformation and progressive policies which the government has introduced to reduce poverty, among others, Poverty Alleviation Programmes, but the strategic management of those policies is not in place. Also, there is no uniform measure or standard to determine whether development is taking place at a local and a provincial level. There is a serious need of looking into a national co-ordination process that will be able to address the question of delivery by the government. If these measures are not in place, rural provinces will be the most affected.

Poverty has an impact also on the provision of education, especially rural education (cf 2.7). There is a strong correlation between the level of education and standard of living. Lack of access to basic services such as electricity, sanitation and health-care is also closely correlated to poverty. The persistence of poverty in rural areas will consequently affect provision

of education to rural learners in the sense that effective learning has to take place in a conducive learning environment.

#### 6.4.2 Household income

The household income is one of the most important aspects that the government needs to address. There are basically four types of livelihood generating activities prevalent in rural areas and they are:

- # wage labour;
- # agricultural and non-farm petty commodity production;
- # pensions and other state transfers; and
- # remittances from a family member living elsewhere.

The largest proportion of rural households in 1997 (38%) relied for their income primarily on wages and salaries from their non-migrant member. Some 31 percent relied on pensions and different types of grants. Remittance from family members living elsewhere was the most important source of income for 21 percent of rural households (SAIRR 2000:275). May (1997:23) reports that most rural households “require multiple income generating activities to generate an adequate livelihood. For most of these households, non-cash income generating and expenditure saving activities are essential components of their livelihood strategy”. May (1997) further points out the following:

- # 5 percent of rural household had no access to wages or remittance from formal sector jobs and no access to welfare transfers;
- # 12 percent of rural households which were welfare dependent, received no other income; and
- # 17 percent of rural households were dependent on remittance sent on an irregular basis by a migrant.

In other words, in 1997, 34 percent of households in rural areas were referred to as vulnerable in that their livelihood was based on an unstable source of income. This was as a result of poor economic conditions that continue to plague rural areas. These conditions have a direct bearing

on education because for the vulnerable, the direct cost of education may compete with money needed for basic household needs and time spent at school might interfere with other household activities, such as supporting other working members of the household by providing child care or looking after livestock (Gordon 1997:5). In some instances, the family has no choice but to withdraw children from school because of poor or no income. In many cases, girls were more likely to be withdrawn than boys (Griessel, Manquele & Wilson 1987).

## **6.5 ECONOMIC POLICIES**

The government's macroeconomic programme (the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy, GEAR) based on the RDP, was articulated in 1997. Acknowledging the reality of South Africa as an emerging market in the context of globalisation, the GEAR basically argues for fiscal discipline and debt reduction and emphasises policies of economic stabilisation to attract international capital and investment. Overall, the GEAR is aimed at improving the efficiency of public expenditure and to prioritise development and redistribution within fiscal constraints.

### **6.5.1 The GEAR strategy**

According to the government, GEAR was not a policy, but merely a strategy that operationalises the RDP. This strategy was designed to achieve sound economic fundamentals and create the basis for sustainable growth and development. The basic principles of GEAR were (Republic of South Africa 1996[c]:3):

- # A renewed focus on budget reform to strengthen the redistribution thrust of expenditure.
- # A faster fiscal deficit reduction programme to contain debt service obligation, counter inflation and free resources for investment.
- # An exchange rate policy to keep the real effective rate stable at a competitive level.
- # Consistent monetary policy to prevent resurgence of inflation.
- # A further step in the gradual relaxation of exchange controls,

- # A reduction in tariffs to contain input prices and facilitate industrial restructuring, compensating partially for the exchange rate depreciation.
- # Tax incentives to stimulate new investment in competitive and labour absorbing projects.
- # Speeding up the restructuring of state assets (privatisation) to optimise investment resources.
- # An expansionary infrastructure programme to address service deficiencies and backlogs.
- # An appropriately structured flexibility within the collective bargaining system.
- # A strengthened levy system to fund training on a scale commensurate with needs.
- # An expansion of trade and investment flows in Southern Africa.
- # A commitment to the implementation of stable and coordinated policies.

The GEAR strategy was necessary because during the period 1995/96 the Rand depreciated in value by 17 percent. The overall deficit to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached 9 percent in the financial year 1992/93 (Republic of South Africa 1996[c]:26). This deficit<sup>35</sup> was high by international standards, and it was believed that it would increase if the government did not stop high expenditure.

According to Dornbusch, Fischr, Mohr and Rogers (1991:39) growth in GDP was seen as an indicator of a healthy economy. As the economy grows, so do the incomes of individuals, that is *per capita* income. Running a deficit on GDP, means among others, there will be not enough revenue for the government and debts will not be repaid at a faster rate. The government will be faced also with a task of making sure that debts are paid. Alternatively, whatever monies

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<sup>35</sup> The deficit is defined as the difference between total government expenditure and current revenue. It was used by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a criteria when judging fiscal policies of member countries (Dornbusch *et al* 1991).

used by the government to pay back its debts, is the money that could have been used to provide social services, especially to poor rural communities (Biggs 1997:38-45).

Principles laid by the RDP contradicted the GEAR policy in that the RDP propagated the idea that the government should redirect its spending toward historically deprived (rural) communities (ANC 1994[b]), whereas the GEAR industrial strategy was focused primarily on improving competitiveness and especially exports - a labour policy which was designed to shift from the oppressive colonial relationship of *apartheid* to a modern labour market (Republic of South Africa 1996[c]). The tight restriction on government spending contradicted the need to improve the delivery of services for the majority of South Africans who were largely residing in rural provinces.

GEAR also reinforced the vicious cycle of poverty by supporting an economic strategy which did little to support greater equality as enshrined in the Constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996[d]), and its growth path emphasised mineral production and refining for exports - which generates few jobs, strengthens big business, and consequently reinforces the underdevelopment of rural areas.

### **6.5.2 The possible impact of GEAR on the economy and consequently on rural education**

The aim of this section is not to reflect on the link between education and economic development but rather to emphasise that there is a high correlation between the degree to which the country is economically developed and the capability of the respective country to supply education. Countries which are economically viable, in most cases, are able to provide better education for their citizens.

In South Africa, the GEAR strategy succeeded in reducing fiscal deficit, inflation and in alleviating the tax burden, especially at the bottom end of the scale. Even though there were positive indicators with the GEAR strategy, it has been criticised by labour formations such as Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and by academics. The following criticisms levelled against the GEAR were not only made by the labour movements, but even lay people confirmed their concerns about the government economic strategy.



### 6.5.2.1 *Job opportunities*

The South African government is faced with the difficulty of the market to create new employment opportunities, in the context of an investor-friendly policy environment. A major aim of GEAR, is therefore, to generate positive employment growth, but unfortunately since 1994, South Africa, has, in fact experienced massive retrenchments in industry and a growth in unemployment amongst both school leavers and adults (DNE 2000[a]:13).

The GEAR strategy has set up a target of 126 000 new job opportunities when it was introduced in June 1996. It aimed at the creation of 400 000 jobs by the year 2000. However, between 1996 and 1998, 300 000 jobs were lost (Baatjies 2003:190). In most cases, job losses had hit the unskilled Black labourers in the most vulnerable sector of construction, mining and labour-intensive sectors of manufacturing. This affected the migrant men who, when employed, remit a large portion of their wages to a wife and family in the rural areas who are heavily dependent on this flow of funds. The official unemployment rate in 2002 was 30 percent (more than 4,5 million people) while 60 percent of the population lived below a poverty line of R533 a month (*Mail & Guardian* 2003:26). Fifty percent of poor household lived in rural provinces in 2002 (*City Press* 2002[b]:17).

High unemployment rates had a negative impact not only on the economy, but also on the provision of education to learners in rural areas. Rural communities would therefore find it difficult to send their children to school and in most instances learners would be withdrawn from school because parents were unemployed or retrenched from work.

### 6.5.2.2 *Redistribution of resources*

The government is attempting to redistribute the wealth in South Africa through the GEAR strategy, largely to the advantage of the previously disadvantaged Black people. Unfortunately this wealth has mainly benefited a small Black elite that was part of the wealthy top 10 percent of the South African population. However, for the bottom 40 percent of predominantly Black households, the economic situation has deteriorated (Baatjies 2003:190).

Between the period 1991-1996, the poorest 40 percent of Black people, mostly in rural communities, received only 0,1 percent of the estimated R55 million of the redistributed wealth



gained by Black people, compared to R24 billion gained by the richest 10 percent of the Black population. These Black elites were labelled by the then Deputy Chairperson of Standard Bank, Saki Macozoma, as taking “the lion’s share of the redistribution of wealth” (*Black Business Quarterly* 2001:28). The 10 percent of the Black elite group was largely found in urban areas of better resourced provinces. Fact is, the government economic policy continued to benefit urban communities whereas rural communities remained sites of despair. The gap between the poor and the rich, the rural and the urban has continued to widen.

#### *6.5.2.3 Decline in economic growth*

According to the GEAR strategy, emphasis was placed on economic growth that would precipitate employment opportunities for a more equitable distribution of the country’s wealth. The GEAR strategy targeted an economic growth of 6 percent per annum (Baatjies 2003:190). From 1993 to 1999 the annual growth rate averaged little over 2 percent per annum. The annual growth rate for 2000 was 3,1 percent which remained below the targeted average.

The GEAR strategy contributed a little in improving the annual economic growth. The social challenges like poverty inherited from *apartheid* governments were still enormous and would negatively affect investments and job creation. Lack of economic growth would result in development taking place very slowly. Consequently, backlogs that existed for many years because of the *apartheid* government’s discriminatory policies and laws would not be adequately prioritised and attended to since the economy would not have grown enough. The rate of poverty, especially in rural areas, would also continue to increase. Poverty will force learners out of school before they complete basic grades and consequently perpetuate marginalisation and underdevelopment.

#### *6.5.2.4 Improvement of the labour market*

The GEAR policy also aimed at the growth of non-gold exports (Republic of South Africa 1996[c]:2). The government’s intention to venture into the field of skills development for the modern sector of labour market in the context of the need for global economic competitiveness and efficiency (Kallaway 2001:22) is commendable. However, Nancy Birdsall (former Director of the World Bank’s Policy Research Department) argues that the debate on globalisation is fundamentally the question of who’s running the global economy and in whose interest (*City*

*Press 2004[c]:2*). The challenge facing the government is to translate the potential benefits of globalisation into real, tangible gains for the poorest people predominantly residing in rural areas.

Another challenge posed by globalisation, in South African context, is of the need to adjust microeconomic policies to achieve more rapid economic growth which would suit an environment of open markets. Adjustments of economic policies to be in line with the global market usually placed the burden on politically under-represented social groups, leading to an increase and perpetuation of poverty - the approach that seems to been taken by the government. This approach by the government has tended to neglect the specific interests of the rural poor in favour of market-related policy development. In most cases the issue of equity and redress for the rural society was often ignored because the government was committed with the global market-related issues.

The impact globalisation has on the provision of education is that the government wants to produce students with specific skills who can fit in the global environment. In other words, the majority with the so called 'rare' skills would be found in resourced provinces. The government would ultimately fall into a trap of channelling their resources to urban provinces to allow students to be in line with what the open market required. As a result, rural learners, who do not have the educational facilities and resources will find themselves not equipped for a global economy.

#### *6.5.2.5 Restructuring of the public sector*

Still in line with the government's objective of contributing to positive economic growth, the GEAR policy aimed at restructuring the public service that could ultimately become cost-effective. As a result, the government entered into discussion with the labour movement with the aim of restructuring the public service. To effect restructuring of the public sector, the government embarked on processes such as the offering of the voluntary severance packages (VSP) and in some cases initiated the Redeployment and Rationalisation (RR) process. Teachers, as members of the public sector were also affected by these processes.

The redeployment process was worked out by dividing the provincial education department's personnel expenditure budgets by the average teacher salary to arrive at the number of posts the department could afford. Most of these posts were further divided into the total school population of the province, resulting in affordable learner-educator ratios. Staff establishments for each school, depending on subject weighting of learners were worked out (Motala 2003:511).

There were many problems that arose as a result of the process of RR. In many instances, there was poor management of the redeployment of teachers and this had had an adverse effect on the teaching profession (*Edusource* 1998[b]:5). Principals of schools did not use criteria such as 'last in, first out' (LIFO) or an examination of the curricula needs of the school when educators were declared in excess.

In the Eastern Cape, following an urgent application in the Port Elizabeth Labour Court, 101 teachers succeeded in having their redeployment orders to schools in remote rural areas of the Transkei where there was no accommodation, electricity or running water, terminated. Those teachers were reinstated in their previous better resourced predominantly urban schools (*Edusource* 2003[b]:17). In 2003, four pre-primary schools in Limpopo brought an urgent application against the Limpopo Department of Education stopping the Department from transferring eleven teachers to other posts in the rural areas of the province. The Department of Education indicated that they would oppose the court action. The government policy of redeploying educators to rural areas was a move in the right direction. The move by teachers avoiding going to rural areas was a clear message to the government that the GEAR strategy on restructuring the public sector was flawed since issues such as rural development which were enshrined in the RDP policy were not adequately addressed. Restructuring of the public sector resulted also in lowering the teachers' morale (*Edusource* 2003[a]:1); teachers' workloads increased; classrooms became overcrowded; more periods for educators and lack of teaching materials became the order of the day.

Most of the urban schools which had excess teachers were those falling under the former Department of Education and Training (DET). These schools were fairly resourced and their budgets were better than those in the former self-governing and 'independent' homeland schools (cf 5.6.1). As a result, due to better infrastructure and other benefits, most of the teachers found it undesirable to take posts in rural areas.

#### 6.5.2.6 *Low wages*

Public sector wage cuts were the government's part of the GEAR strategy. As the strategy calls for an extreme reduction in budget deficit, privatisation and public spending cuts, it also called for 'wage flexibility' which in essence meant lower wages and restraint. The proposal by the government to lower wages was not welcomed by the labour movements such as COSATU.

It was the firm belief by the government that wage moderation would contribute to economic growth, job creation, social benefits for workers and an environment in which investments can be made with confidence for the business sector (Mazibuko 2000:81). With the concept of wage flexibility, the government hoped that income inequalities would be addressed in the South African economy (Republic of South Africa 1996[c]:22-23).

Public sector wages were crucial in poorer provinces like the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. In the Eastern Cape, for example, 90 percent of all those employed work for government (Phadu 1999). Lowering wages for the public sector simply meant that most of the workers predominantly residing in rural provinces would be negatively affected and hence learners in the affected households would be forced to leave school and supplement income in their respective households.

#### 6.5.2.7 *The government stance on HIV/AIDS*

In 1999 alone, 4 million people in sub-Saharan Africa became infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the virus that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) [UN 2000]. The impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa's population is apparently profound and is affecting the delivery of learning, teaching and development to an unprecedented degree.

The Minister of Health, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang pointed out in August 1999 that 6 million South Africans would be infected with HIV by 2005 and there would be 1 million orphans (SA/RR 2000:221). The study conducted by the United Nations (2000) points out that before the appearance of HIV/AIDS, about 2 percent of all children in the developing countries were orphans. By 1997, the proportion of children with one or both parents dead had skyrocketed to 7 percent in many African countries and in some cases reached an astounding 11 percent. In

most cases children whose parents have both died are less likely to be in school than children who are living with one or both parents.

The alarming statistics of people infected with HIV/AIDS led to an investigation by the President of South Africa. On 5 April 2001 the Interim Report by the Presidential AIDS Advisory Panel which was compiled by, among others, conventional scientists, failed to agree on theoretical grounds, as to whether HIV causes AIDS or not. Interestingly, consensus was reached on the impact of socio-economic issues such as poverty on HIV/AIDS (*Black Business Quarterly* 2001:29). The drop-out rates due to poverty, illness, lack of motivation and trauma are likely to increase. Absenteeism among children who are care-givers or heads of households, those who help to supplement family income, and those who are ill, is bound to rise (DNE 2000[a]).

The question of poverty cannot be divorced from macroeconomics of the country. The government economic policy which continues to fail to create envisaged formal job opportunities may have an impact on the exacerbation of this pandemic. As the poverty rate is high in rural provinces, this pandemic is most likely to affect people who are residing in rural areas. Orphanhood<sup>36</sup> rates are projected to increase by a factor of five by 2005, which would mean that there would be nearly one million children without one or both parents (UN 2000). In the rural province of KwaZulu Natal, it was estimated that in 2000, there would be between 197 000 and 278 000 HIV/AIDS orphans - between 5,8 percent and 8,8 percent of all children in the province. In a study which was conducted by Case, Paxson and Abledinger (2002), it was found that poor educational outcomes are largely due to the tendency of orphans to live with distant relatives, a finding which has serious implications for South Africa where orphans frequently rely on extended family for care after their parents die.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is not only affecting learners from rural provinces, but teachers as well. In a report that was sent to the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal mentioned the following problems which were experienced in one of the rural provinces of KwaZulu Natal (Asmal 2000:10-11):

- # Where a learner or an educator is succumbing to an AIDS-related illness, and the school appoints an itinerant person to visit the sick teacher or pupil, but because homes

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<sup>36</sup> Orphans are defined as children who have lost one or both parents.

are far from the school, especially in rural areas, the itinerant person would not reach the home of the infected easily.

- # Psychological Guidance and Special Education services for counselling and providing support to both the infected and affected persons were normally not available.
- # Although some schools and clinics continued to distribute condoms, teenage pregnancy has been reported to be on the rise in the rural provinces of KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo, which reflects the point that the spread of HIV/AIDS in rural areas would continue to be a problem.

The above-mentioned statements clearly show the socio-economic situation of the rural communities. Children who are born into poverty often lack any opportunity to alleviate their vulnerability, and losing parents to AIDS may worsen their economic and social circumstances. To be able to reduce the state of HIV/AIDS in rural provinces, the ANC-led government need not only educate, introduce HIV/AIDS related programmes and supply drugs, but also attend to the poverty rate that continues to plunge rural people. As the Department of Social Development (2002) succinctly notes: "The HIV/AIDS epidemic is the principal challenge/threat facing South Africa and has clearly an enormous impact on children in the coming decade".

## 6.6 INFRASTRUCTURAL AND RESOURCE PROVISION

Black Education in general continued to reflect serious infrastructural backlogs. These backlogs, due to inadequate funding resulting from past government policies, affected provinces, which incorporated former homelands (Seroto 1999). Shortages were extremely high in rural schools whereas schools in urban provinces like Gauteng, Northern Cape and Western Cape were fairly serviced. The infrastructural provision remained a daunting challenge, not only for the previous *apartheid* government, but also for the democratically ANC-led government. In his State of the Nation Address in February 2002, the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki said:

We must ensure that enough classrooms are built in the shortest possible time to ensure that no students have to learn under trees or in the open air. The provision of enough classrooms and basic furniture, equipment and learning materials and the availability of water and toilets at all our

schools are necessary to bring about fairness to all students. It is also important that each teacher should have a classroom to ensure that no classes are held under trees or that learners are crammed into available classrooms. A shortage of classrooms makes it impossible for schools to use their teachers appropriately and it leads to unpleasant learning and teaching conditions, sometimes even conditions that makes learning and teaching almost impossible (Mbeki 2002).

In the report entitled *The Financing of Education in terms of the Constitution of the RSA, 1983*, published by the former Department of National Education, reasons that were cited why there were infrastructural backlogs in, especially Black (rural) schools, were that there was a rapid growth in terms of the number of learners as well as the long-term underfunding of especially the departments offering school education to Black people. Another reason mentioned was the issue of high spending in the salary component (Republic of South Africa 1994). In 1993 huge funds were injected into infrastructural projects but there was still a backlog of 55 000 classrooms (SAIRR 1992). Later in 1994, an unpublished report titled *School Infrastructure: Needs, Costs and Implications for Free and Compulsory Education*, based on a study conducted by the former Department of National Education reiterated the fact that infrastructural backlogs were still enormous in, especially, Black rural schools. The Report stated that the classroom backlog was between 48 000 and 65 000 classrooms (Republic of South Africa 1994).

In 1996, *the School Register of Needs Survey* (SRN) was jointly conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council, the Education Foundation, and the Research Institute of Education and Planning (DNE 1996). The intention of the SRN was to look at the provision of certain facilities in schools, province by province. In keeping with the Education Department's commitment to update the School Register of Needs of 1996 database, the second School Register of Needs Survey conducted in 2000 was released (DNE 2001). The estimates made by both the 1996 SRN and the 2000 SRN surveys, were regarded as a reliable indication of the extent of the national backlog in infrastructural provision (DNE 2001:1). In the following sections these backlogs will be briefly highlighted.

#### **6.6.1 Availability of running water, electricity and telephones**

High backlogs were prevalent in the rural provinces with Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo the worse off when coming to water, electricity and telephone provision. The three service shortages in these rural provinces ranged between 16 and 29 percent (DNE 1996). There was a significant improvement in the provision of telecommunication facilities at schools in rural provinces. The Eastern Cape had 81 percent of schools without any form of telecommunications in 1996, which declined to only 41 percent of schools in 2000 (DNE 2001:48).

Even though the ANC government has shown considerable commitment towards the upliftment of the rural population, many schools and districts offices especially in rural areas of the former Transkei (incorporated into present Eastern Cape), continued to operate without services such as running water, electricity and telephones (*The Teacher* 2003:1). In the Eastern Cape, for example, in 1996, 22,4 percent of schools were without electricity and the situation slightly improved in 2000 to 17,1 percent of schools (DNE 2001:56). In Gauteng 99,4 percent of schools were electrified in 1996 which indicates the fact that urban provinces enjoyed greater priority than the rural provinces.

### **6.6.2 Buildings**

The SRN reports that the classroom shortage in 1996 in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo were 27 percent; 26 percent and 23 percent respectively. In 2000, classroom shortages were not reduced with Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo experiencing 34 percent; 20 percent; and 25 percent of classroom backlogs respectively (SA/RR 2001:251). These provinces, as will be seen later, have still not been adequately addressed.

At the end of 2001/02 financial year 42 933 classrooms were needed in South Africa. Of the total classroom backlog of 42 933, the highest classroom backlog was still enormous in the rural provinces of Eastern Cape (13 874), KwaZulu-Natal (9 578) and Limpopo (7 735) which when combined constituted 73 percent of the total classroom shortages. According to the Report compiled by the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, there was a need of 10 276 administration blocks; 7 680 laboratories; 21 912 libraries; while 12 232 schools needed minor repairs and renovations; and 10 356 schools needed fencing in 2003 (Asmal 2003). These shortages were mostly experienced in rural provinces.



Classrooms that were available at different schools remained not conducive for learning and teaching. Other learners were taught in 16 350 'classes' which predominantly comprised of halls, offices, staff rooms, passages outside classes, shelters, and other structures like busses and toilet buildings. Sixty nine percent of these 'classes' were found in the three rural provinces of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo (Asmal 2003).

With regard to toilets, the accepted national norm is that there should be 41 learners sharing a toilet. In Limpopo, for example, in 1998, 100 learners shared a 'toilet' which was dilapidated and dangerous for the health and safety of the learners ( *Sunday Times* 1998[a]:4). The problem of ablution facilities remained a matter of concern also in the rural Eastern Cape province which led to the poor communities in 2003 resolving to erect their own toilets (*Sunday Times* 2003[b]:19).

Yet, given the previously mentioned policy initiatives, schools in rural communities continue to be without necessary classrooms, not to mention those who continue to be taught under trees, in church halls and other inappropriate buildings.

### **6.6.3 Teaching equipment**

The need for teaching equipment (photocopiers, computers, overhead projectors and televisions) and other media collections are enormous in rural provinces. The greatest shortage for teaching equipment reflected in the *School Register of Needs Survey of 1996* was prevalent in the Eastern Cape with a 28 percent shortage (DNE 1996).

Contrary to these shortages in rural provinces, the Gauteng Department of Education launched a project that aimed at connecting the province's 2 200 schools to the Internet, and place 25 computers with appropriate educational software in each school. The Department further aimed at providing each educator and learner with an e-mail address by 2004, at a cost of R500m over the next three years ( *SAIRR* 2001:279). According to the 2000 *School Register of Needs* (DNE 2001: 41), 24 percent of schools nationally had computers. Gauteng (82%) and Western Cape (78 %) recorded the highest number of schools with computers. Rural provinces such as the Eastern Cape (8,8%) and Mpumalanga (8,7%) had the lowest number of schools with

computers. This clearly indicates provincial inequalities that continue to prevail in the South African education system.

At a Presidential and Premier Education Award ceremony, held in Pretoria on 22 November 1997, the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, confirmed the fact that the majority of people especially in rural provinces, still either did not have access to basic education or lacked teaching media and equipment that were needed for effective learning and teaching (Mandela 1997:1).

#### **6.6.4 Textbook, stationery and furniture**

In 1996, schools in rural provinces were the most affected by textbooks and stationery shortages. Schools in the Eastern Cape (26%), KwaZulu-Natal (17%) and Limpopo (15%) experienced the most shortages in textbooks and stationery supply as compared to the Northern Cape with a shortage of only 1,7 percent (DNE 1996). Whereas it has previously been a norm that learners would start a year without textbooks and stationery, the situation was exacerbated by the introduction of Curriculum 2005, where at the beginning of each academic year Outcomes Based Education textbooks were not received on time in all schools and the need being most acute in the rural schools (*Sunday Times* 1998[b]:1).

The most need for furniture (learners' tables and chairs) was experienced in the Eastern Cape (27%) and the least in the Northern Cape (1%). In one of the schools in Limpopo in 1998, Grade 2 learners had to take to the floor, as there were not enough tables in the classrooms (*Sunday Times* 1998[a]:4).

A survey conducted by the Education Policy Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand reports that factors contributing to or undermining the establishment of a successful climate of teaching and learning (in Gauteng) were as a result of conditions of school buildings which correlates with academic standards. On average, schools with the worst pass rates had the worst facilities while schools with relatively higher pass rates had better facilities (Chisholm & Vally 1996). Educational facilities are an important factor in shaping the learning environment. A well maintained building, suited to the climate, with attractive, well furnished classrooms and good

ventilation and lighting, facilitates the teaching-learning process. All of these features of a good learning environment are lacking in most of the schools situated in rural provinces.

Problems relating to infrastructural backlogs, especially for rural communities, did not only lie in the budgetary processes in place, but the inefficiency of provincial bureaucrats occupying managerial positions, especially in finance departments. Secondly, not overlooking the fact that most of the rural schools were overcrowded due to lack of facilities, the issue of the correct enrolment (1:40 primary and 1:35 secondary) needs to be adhered to. This aspect will only be fully realised if the democratically elected government addresses infrastructural backlogs in the respective provinces.

Section 214 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states: “the Act of Parliament must provide for the determination of each province’s equitable share of the provincial share of that revenue” which have been raised nationally among the national, provincial and local spheres of government. Section 214 (2) (f)-(g) further states that in allocating the equitable share “developmental and other needs of provinces and municipalities” and “economic disparities within and among the provinces” should be taken into account (Republic of South Africa 1996[d]). Backlogs in each of the nine provinces were unique and as stated in the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the uniqueness and specific and special circumstances surrounding each province needed to be carefully looked at when equitable shares were allocated. It was also of primary importance for national government to prioritise which provinces needed urgent attention before the others. Rural provinces as reflected above were worse off in infrastructural backlogs and were the most neglected thereby needing redress.

The ANC government had good intentions to better the life of all South Africans as mentioned in the *White Paper on Education* by stating that “the State’s resources must be deployed according to the principle of equity, so that they are used to provide essentially the same quality of learning opportunities for all citizens” (Republic of South Africa 1995[b]). The principle of equity is also contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 as contained in the Bill of Rights (Republic of South Africa 1996[d]: Chapter 2). The government is not succeeding in realising its intentions as contained in the different pieces of legislation. Infrastructural backlogs, especially in rural areas as compared to urban areas, continue to

widen. Provinces such as Gauteng that are predominantly based in urban areas continue to benefit from most of the government resources.

As the inequalities between the urban and rural provinces continue to widen, there is a continuous exodus of learners from rural provinces to schools in better-resourced provinces. Learners in well-resourced schools obtain better pass rates that will acquire them good chances of university and technikon entrance, the benefit that most rural students do not enjoy.

## **6.7 BUDGETARY PROVISIONS AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUDGETARY PROCESSES ON EDUCATION**

With the implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), the geographically marginalised homelands and rural schools became part of the public sector having the same rights, governance structures and financial status as other public schools. The degree of neglect by previous governments made it a challenging task for the new government to redress financial constraints that prevailed and hindered reform programmes in rural areas.

After 1994, the nineteen race-based education departments were amalgamated into one National Department of Education, which was funded out of the national budget. Provincial ministries of education received their budgets from their provincial legislatures having to negotiate over the allocation they receive with other ministries. Pillay (1995:16) argues that the fiscal centralisation policy adopted by the government was commendable though there were no mechanisms in place to ensure intra-provincial redistribution to areas where the need was most. Possibilities that rural areas would continue to be marginalised remained strong.

### **6.7.1 Budgetary provisions**

Formerly White education was financed at 185 percent of the national average whereas the education departments of the former non-independent homelands were funded at 74 percent of the national average and the former 'independent' homelands at 67 percent (SAIRR 1997:172). This clearly shows funding disparities with regard to the provision of education for White learners and for Black learners perpetuated by the former *apartheid* government .

After 1994, of all the social services, education has consistently received the largest share of the national budget, with the bulk of this money allocated to the provinces. In 1995/6, R32 billion was allocated to education: 13,6 percent of this allocation went to the national department and the remaining 86,4 percent was directed to the provinces (*SAIRR* 1996:94). In 2002/03 R59,9 billion was budgeted for education of which 14,8 percent went to national education and 85,2 was allocated to provinces (*Edusource* 2002:15). Funds for Provincial Departments of Education were allocated by the provinces out of a national grant and of their own resources. This fund further depended on the province's priorities. The national government did not determine a nationally global figure which would act as a tool in distributing funds among provinces. There are shortcomings with this model because it fails in establishing a single education budget in which resources could be shifted between different programmes, for instance from tertiary to secondary education or a direct transfer of physical and human resources from one provincial education budget to another (Greenstein 2003:366).

The actual expenditure on education in the provinces has considerably exceeded budgeted expenditure (by 7% in 1995/96; 24% in 1996/97) [*Edusource* 1998[a]:10]. From the amount which was allocated to the provincial education departments in 1995/96, the highest proportion of provincial education spending was allocated to KwaZulu-Natal (20%), followed by Gauteng (17%) whereas the Eastern Cape received 16 percent, Limpopo received 13 percent and Mpumalanga 7 percent (*SAIRR* 1997:172). Although the government increased its provincial allocation, especially to rural KwaZulu Natal, due to enormous backlogs that continued to prevail in that province, the allocation was not substantial in that it did not attend to major needs prevalent in the province. Table 6.1 below indicates education expenditure by the provinces.

**Table 6.1 Actual expenditure by province 1995/96 to 2001/02**

Province	Expenditure (1995/96)	Expenditure (1996/97)	Expenditure (1997/98)	Expenditure (2001/02)
Eastern Cape	R 4 517 000	R 6 183 000	R 6 750 000	R 7 863 000
Free State	R 1 964 000	R 2 426 000	R 2 539 000	R 3 174 000
Gauteng	R 4 931 000	R 5 577 000	R 5 865 000	R 7 268 000
KwaZulu-Natal	R 5 799 000	R 6 720 000	R 7 207 000	R 9 266 000
Mpumalanga	R 1 963 000	R 2 414 000	R 2 506 000	R 3 331 000
Northern Cape	R 714 000	R 809 000	R 855 000	R 1 022 000
Limpopo	R4 160 000	R 5 348 000	R 5 696 000	R 6 673 000
North West	R 2 455 000	R 2 966 000	R 3 240 000	R 3 972 000
Western Cape	R 3 468 000	R 4 164 000	R 3 912 000	R 4 273 000

**Source:** *SAIRR* (1996:111); Republic of South Africa (1999); Department of Finance (1995;1996;1997;1999[b]); *Edusource* (2002).

Before 1997, in terms of the budgetary process, the National Minister of Education, together with the Education Function Committee, were mandated to take a decision on how much each provincial education department received. Rural provinces such as the Eastern Cape and Limpopo were able to increase spending by 49 percent and 39 percent between the period 1996/97 to 1997/98 compared to relatively small increase in urban provinces such as Gauteng and the Western Cape with 18,9 percent and 12,8 percent respectively. This was a positive step by government to address the imbalances that were already there in most of the rural provinces. It also reflected the influence that the national education ministry had on the issue of budgetary redress in South Africa. Even though provinces which are predominantly urban received a relatively small budgetary increase, they were better off as compared to provinces which are predominantly rural.

There were changes put in place after 1997 which meant that transfers of funds were now made from the National Revenue Fund to Provincial Revenue Funds, and provinces themselves became responsible for how education funding was to be allocated. This arrangement was not without problems. Since 1997, there has been a call - not only in education, but in all sectors - for national government to intervene with the sole purpose of safeguarding the transformation

process which ensured redress of past imbalances. The following were some of the limitations that resulted from national government funds being transferred to Provincial Revenue Funds:

- # poor financial management and budgeting processes by provinces (Naidoo & Pintusewitz 1998);
- # poor management capacity and inadequate use of information systems for proper planning (Ncholo 1997); and
- # exacerbation of inherited backlogs in education (Chisholm, Motala & Vally 1999).

According to Motala (2000:78), the complexity of the national-provincial relationship, that is, the implications of fiscal federalism and the specific conditions in education reform were not clearly laid out, presenting enormous difficulties for those responsible for policy implementation at provincial level. Rural provinces were most affected since the bureaucrats from former homelands were not capacitated enough to cope with the level of expertise that was required by the Finance Department to perform their work effectively.

In 1994 there were suggestions that the national ministry impose upon provinces plans to introduce “basic per learner education expenditure” because one way of eliminating disparities across provinces would be to establish a basic per capita level and then measure a department’s progress in attaining this goal (Wildeman 2001:132). In 1996, the Review Committee, which made recommendations to the national education ministry also made the same proposal, that there should be a basic per learner expenditure. Table 6.2 clearly indicates that provinces which are predominantly rural did not receive the same resources as their counterparts in Gauteng, Free State and the Northern Cape.

**Table 6.2 Per capita expenditure in total provincial education budgets in Rands**

Province	1999/2000	2000/2001	2002/2003
Eastern Cape	R 3 340	R 3 398	R 3 804
Free State	R 4 201	R 4 307	R 4 422
Gauteng	R 4 696	R 4 706	R 5 248
KwaZulu Natal	R 3 025	R 3 116	R 3 590
Mpumalanga	R 3 506	R 3 476	R 3 963
Northern Cape	R 4 166	R 4 325	R 5 609

**Source:** SAIRR (1998; 1999; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003).

Ten years after 1994, the government had not yet reached a situation where learners in all nine provinces were exposed to similar levels of resources in education. Generally lacking in this regard, rural provinces were the ones which needed to be prioritised by the present government.

### **6.7.2 Personnel and non-personnel expenditure**

In 1998, the then Minister of Education Kader Asmal, after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers, the Financial and Fiscal Commission and the Minister of Finance, in Government Notice R2362, published the *National Norms and Standards for Public School Funding* (Republic of South Africa 1998). The *National Norms and Standards for Public School Funding*, currently is the most significant equity instrument available to redress past financial imbalances.

This policy document provides a framework for allocating recurrent costs on the basis of need. Each provincial education department is required to produce a 'resource targeting list' informed by the physical conditions, facilities and degree of crowding of the school, teacher-learner ratios, the availability of basic services and relative poverty of the community around the school (Republic of South Africa 1998). The main effect of the revised formula is that the poorest 40 percent of schools will receive 60 percent of the provincial schooling recurrent costs budget allocation, and the least poor 20 percent will get 5 percent of the resources.



In the nine provinces, redistribution of funds is dependent on the size of recurrent non-personnel expenditure (classrooms, textbooks, stationery, equipment, water and school maintenance), which, due to high personnel expenditure, leaves little room for effective redistribution. The non-personnel allocation was divided into two categories: capital costs and recurrent costs. Capital costs referred to building of new classrooms and other constructions. A target list was then developed by each provincial education department so that it could target funds to build in the neediest schools, where the classrooms and toilets were not enough or where learners were overcrowded. Recurrent costs, which were continual, referred to immovable capital improvements, electricity and water bills, textbooks and stationery and other small capital equipment costs. A target list was also drawn up in this regard to prioritise poorer schools to receive a larger contribution towards their recurrent costs (Republic of South Africa 1998).

Personnel expenditure continues to constitute 92 percent of provincial budgets, although this varies from province to province. Over time provinces are expected to reduce personnel expenditure to 85 percent of their provincial education budgets and the most important consequence of this reduced expenditure is that parents will be forced to make a larger financial contribution, and parents' inability to pay will negatively influence the quality of service provided. Table 6.3 gives a broad view of the personnel expenditure in the nine provinces:

**Table 6.3 Personnel expenditure as a percentage of total education budgets**

Province	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Eastern Cape	95.1	90.9	90.9	90.9
Free State	88	86.3	85.1	85.6
Gauteng	85.3	85.2	85.1	84.9
KwaZulu Natal	89.8	89.8	87.3	86.5
Mpumalanga	88	91.3	90.2	90.1
Northern Cape	80.3	81.9	84.7	84.8
Limpopo	95	90.2	89.9	90.1
North West	90.8	91.4	90.2	90.4
Western Cape	91	89.6	89.4	88.9

**Source:** Department of Finance (2000[a]; 2000[b]; 2001[a]; 2001[b]; 2002[a]; 2002[b]; 2003).

In the financial year 1999/2000, the non-personnel expenditure in rural provinces still remained low with the Eastern Cape and Limpopo being the lowest. The highest non-personnel spending

in the financial year 1999/00 was the Northern Cape with 9,7 percent. The success of the government in attending to backlogs which were mostly in rural provinces, depended much on the ability of provincial education departments to examine at their personnel expenditure. A consultant employed by the Department of Education has estimated that, over and above the annual education budget, merely dealing with *apartheid* backlogs will cost R3 to R4 billion every year for the next ten years (Vally 1999:58). The long term patterns of unequal spending were therefore unlikely to be eradicated in the 2001/2002 to 2003/2004 MTEF<sup>37</sup> year.

What was entailed in the *Norms and Standard for Public School Funding* document was commendable but the following remained questionable. Many schools in rural areas would continue to be without services for some time whereas schools in urban areas would continue to benefit from allocations made by provincial government for services and bills. There were basically no services in rural areas and as a result, funds would not be channelled in those areas for the purpose of paying bills. However, nothing prevented the provincial government from appropriating 'services' funds to rural areas, which would alternatively be used for other capital projects. Consequently, the gap between schools in rural areas and schools in urban areas with regard to service delivery would continue to be widened defeating the ends of equity. As mentioned previously that poverty has a regional dimension (cf 2.6.2), targets should therefore take account of the proportion of needy households precisely in each province allowing provinces to make redress according to their poverty rate.

The most depressing constraint, as dealt with above, facing provinces was that nearly their entire budget was spent on salaries. In most provinces, personnel expenditure accounted for more than 90 percent (cf Table 6.3), which left too little for infrastructural development, an aspect that is crucial in rural education. It should also be pointed out that the high personnel spending will continue as long as there are no proper and clear mechanisms in place to ensure that capacity exists at provincial level for implementation by bureaucrats.

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<sup>37</sup> One of the core elements of GEAR strategy is a renewed focus on budget reform to strengthen the redistribution thrust of government expenditure. To give effect to this, the government introduced a three-year rolling expenditure plan known as the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Its intention was to assess how reconstruction and development could be addressed by means of the budget and reprioritisation of expenditure and also to ensure greater alignment of official development assistance (Mazibuko 2000).

## 6.8 GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

It was a milestone in South African history when the *Education White Paper 1 on Education and Training* was gazetted in February 1995 (Republic of South Africa 1995[b]) which subsequently led to the gazettement of the *South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996* (SASA). By introducing the SASA the government devolved responsibility for school development and management to institutional level, in particular, to schools' governing bodies which have the power to promote school development in a number of ways. Among others, the school governing bodies have powers in eliciting additional funds and improving school facilities. By introducing this piece of legislation the ANC government wanted to emphasise the issue of equity and access to basic education.

### 6.8.1 Governance

The SASA created a democratic, yet decentralised system of education with strong emphasis on parental involvement (Republic of South Africa 1996[e]: Chapter 3). The involvement of parents in the education system is directly or indirectly linked to the country's political and ideological commitment to the democratisation process. In fact, decentralisation of the education system means the decision making processes concerning education are brought closer to local communities. It is further argued that the decentralisation of education system will encourage local innovation, increase local accountability and further stimulate community participation and ownership in education (*The Educator's Voice* 2004:20).

Contrary to the idea that decentralisation of education would enhance parent participation and democratic interaction, it seemed in certain cases to exacerbate group conflict in the context of diminishing resources for education investment. The shift of control of education to school governing bodies may be viewed as an attempt by the government to diffuse responsibilities of interacting with education challenges and problems that continue to persist in the country, especially in rural areas. The other argument that is advanced is that the government further attempted to shift financial responsibilities to local governing bodies. In other words, the government wanted to shift the financial responsibilities of the State to communities under the guise of ownership despite financial hardships which many, especially, rural communities experience on a daily basis. The democratically elected school governance structures have

increasingly been placed in a fund-raising role. Their capacity to fund-raise differs and middle class communities have greater skills and capacity as compared to other social classes which are illiterate and historically marginalised by former governments.

The school governing bodies have been given powers by the South African Schools Act of 1996 to play a major role in public schools (Republic of South Africa 1996[e]: Section 20). Section 20 of SASA stipulates the following compulsory functions of all school governing bodies. They should:

- # promote the best interests of the school and ensure its development;
- # adopt a constitution;
- # adopt the mission statement of the school;
- # adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- # support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions; and
- # determine times for the school day consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school.

Some of the aspects that are contained in SASA are:

- # compulsory school attendance between the ages of seven and fifteen; exceptions may be granted by the provincial head of department;
- # no admission tests in public schools and children may not be refused admission on the grounds that their parents cannot afford school fees;
- # language policy of the school determined by school governing bodies provided such policy is not used to implement discrimination; and
- # the governing body can decide on the school's code of conduct in consultation with parents, teachers and students.

This stipulations are in line with the government framework for the restructuring of the education system as enshrined in the then Interim Constitution of 1993 and subsequently the South African Constitution of 1996. The 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa established the right (Republic of South Africa 1996[d]):

- # to basic education;
- # to equal access to education institutions;
- # to choice of language of instruction where reasonably practicable; and
- # to establish educational institutions based on common culture, language and religion, provided that there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of race.

There are still enormous challenges that remain unresolved after the SASA was introduced in 1996. It will not be possible to deal with all challenges that arose as a result of this Act in this section. However, a glimpse at the impact of some of the aspects of this legislation on education, especially in the rural areas, will be reflected in the following section.

#### *6.8.1.1 Basic education*

The SASA clearly stipulates that school attendance between the ages of seven and fifteen is compulsory, whereas exceptions may be granted by the Provincial Head of the Department (Republic of South Africa 1996[e]: Section 3). It is further mentioned in this Act that it is the responsibility of the Head of the Department to investigate circumstances surrounding the learners' absence from school and subsequently take measures to remedy the situation. While the government is credited for introducing compulsory attendance of learners between the years seven and fifteen, there are no monitory measures put in place to make sure that this aspect of the Act is adhered to as a legislative requirement. Parents are not monitored to ensure that their children are at school, especially during the prescribed age cohort. In 2000 approximately one-sixth of the country's 6,4 million children aged 0-7, and just less than half of all children aged 5-6 years, attended Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres<sup>38</sup> (SAIRR 2003:241). In other words, there were still many children not at school as prescribed by law, but what still remained a challenge was how the government endeavoured to respond to ensure that these children were at school. The situation was worse in 2003, in that 40 percent of the ECD centres were located in rural areas as compared to 60 percent which were predominantly located in urban areas (SAIRR 2003:141). The lack of ECD programmes also has an obvious effect on schooling, because especially young girls may be kept at home to look after their

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<sup>38</sup> ECD centres included day-care centres, nursery schools, crèches, preschools, and other places where a minimum of six children are being cared for (SAIRR 2003:241).

younger siblings, especially in rural areas. According to the 1996 Census, the out-of-school population is highest in rural areas (CSS 1996).

Ten years into democracy (2004) the government is still faced with the serious challenge of making sure that basic schooling as stipulated in both the Constitution of South Africa and the SASSA of 1996, is provided to South Africans, especially basic schooling to formerly neglected rural homeland regions (*City Press* 2003[a]:17). In most of the schools in the former rural homelands, like the Transkei many schools continue to operate without telephones, electricity, toilets, running water, stationery and desks not to mention proper school buildings (*The Teacher* 2003:1).

#### 6.8.1.2 Section 21 Schools

Other functions that may be allocated to the school governing body are stipulated in Section 21 of the SASSA. The Head of the Department of a provincial department of education may allocate this function if he/she is satisfied that the school governing body can perform them. In most cases, governing bodies which were allocated this function could not perform their responsibilities adequately because they had not been trained to carry out duties as prescribed in the law and were inexperienced in the administration and supervision of schooling. Section 21 of SASSA further stipulates:

Subject to this Act, a governing body may apply to the Head of Department in writing to be allocated any of the following functions:

- to maintain and improve the school's property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;
- to determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy;
- to purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school;
- to pay for services to the school; or
- other functions consistent with this Act and any applicable law (Republic of South Africa 1996[e]:Section 21).

A school governing body which managed to perform functions as prescribed in Section 21, encountered serious challenges. In order to perform Section 21 functions, enough funding is a prerequisite. Due to a high poverty rate, most Black schools charge school funds which range between R100 and R300 per annum. These schools further receive funds from their respective education departments which are allocated according to the Norms and Standards formulae. Funds received from education departments are normally not enough to meet all the requirements of a particular school. In a move aimed at implementing free and basic education for poor learners, in early 2004, the previous Education Minister, Professor Kader Asmal, announced a plan entitled "Plan of Action to improve access to quality basic education for all" to abolish school fees in almost half of the poorest schools across the country (*City Press* 2004[b]:6) which invariably meant those situated in the rural areas of South Africa. According to the plan, recipients of grants such as the childcare orphans' grant, the disability grant and the social grant will also be exempted from paying school fees (*Sowetan* 2004:2). With the government planning to abolish school fees in the poorest 40 percent of schools across the country, rural schools are faced with a greater challenge than ever before. Most of them previously generated a little income from school fees. They will now be without that income, making the running of the school inefficient.

The move by the government to shift resources from wealthier schools to poorer schools may be viewed as commendable. Yet the government should devise a well-thought strategy and formulae that will ensure that its objective of redress will be achieved without hindering schooling in, especially, rural areas. Moreover, the government has introduced this plan in schools without taking precautionary or contingency measures to ensure that school management processes continue undisturbed. A further implication is that those who are actually not poor would be able to access more resources from government at the expense of the rural poor.

### **6.8.2 Management**

The underpinning philosophy of the SASA is that schools are encouraged to become self-managed and self-reliant. In the past, the school principal was expected to run the school but according to Section 16 of SASA, School Management Teams (SMT's), with senior personnel at the school are expected to be formed. The SMT's are expected to address day-to-day

running of the school as contained in the policies of the Department and the school governing body. Most managerial posts in rural provinces were not filled by 2003. In the predominantly rural provinces of Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, 3000 of head of department posts were not filled in 2003 (*City Press* 2003[b]:1). The filling of these posts is imperative for the sake of proper management of schools by SMT's as prescribed by legislation. This situation affects the quality of education provided to learners, especially those residing in rural areas.

For the school to be effective and well-managed, the SMT and the school governing body should be interwoven. Legal documents such as the School Development Policy, HIV/AIDS policy, school governing body constitution, admission policy, language policy, code of conduct for learners and a Mission Statement for the school should be adequately implemented. While the new education policy requires that governors and managers work in a democratic way to ensure an efficient and effective education milieu, governors are left behind because they need to understand the significance and scope of their duties as members of the governing body. Governors should be able to interpret educational legislation and further be able to apply principles as contained in the legislation to a particular situation. It is the responsibility of both the government and the managers at school level to capacitate school governing body members to be able to perform their duties effectively.

The other important aspect of school management is the question of evaluation and appraisals of teachers. On 28 July 1998, the Developmental Appraisal System (Resolution 4 of 1998) was introduced with the aim of enhancing quality education in the rural Limpopo Province, and on 10 April 2003 the Performance Measurement System (Resolution 1 of 2003) was agreed upon by the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC). In August 2003 another appraisal system known as the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was introduced aiming at integrating the previous appraisal systems. It is disappointing to note that, since the democratic order came into being in 1994, there has been no official appraisal system in place in public schools. The absence of an evaluation instrument does not only make managerial work difficult, but it also contributes to lowering educational standards, especially in rural schools where most of the teachers need evaluation and support.

## **6.9 CURRICULUM**



The government effort to transform the curriculum has been one of the most far-reaching projects since 1994. The *apartheid* education emphasised memorisation, fact-based learning and acceptance rather than critical engagement with the content. The new curriculum introduced after 1994 was deeply integrated with the process of redefining 'quality' in the context of the new century. The curriculum was to be in line with what was contained in *the White Paper on Education of 1995* (Republic of South Africa 1995[b]:22). This meant the curriculum should encourage independent and critical thought, the capacity to question, enquire, reason, weigh evidence and to form judgements. The government responded by introducing a curriculum based on these core outcomes.

### 6.9.1 Curriculum 2005

In 1997, the Council of Education Ministers, made the decision to replace the old *apartheid* curriculum with a new Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) curriculum in the General and Further Education bands. The curriculum was introduced in to the General Education and Training (GET) in 1998. The then Minister of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bengu, announced that Curriculum 2005 was to be implemented in Grade 1 in 1998 and to be gradually phased in until all grades have been changed.

The government's intention of introducing the new curriculum as a way of moving away from an old content-based education to a new outcomes-based education which basically aimed at addressing the legacy of the past was perceived as a move in the right direction (Le Roux 1997:6). OBE puts emphasis on the learner as a unique person with his/her own capabilities and background. Educators are seen as facilitators to assist the learners to move forward at their own individual pace (UNISA 2000:22). This approach requires that:

- # learners not only gain knowledge but have to understand what they have learned and be able to develop appropriate skills, attitudes and values during the learning process;
- # learners become active participants in the learning process and take more responsibility for their own learning; and
- # learners be given the opportunity to work at their own pace and in different ways according to their individual abilities and levels of development (UNISA 2000:22).

The Curriculum 2005 aimed at the following:

- # integrating education and training;
- # promoting lifelong learning for all South Africans;
- # focusing on outcomes rather than content;
- # equipping all learners with knowledge, competencies and orientations;
- # developing a culture of human rights, multi-lingualism, multiculturalism and a sensitivity to the values of reconciliation and nation building; and
- # producing thinking and competent future citizens (DNE 1997[a]; UNISA 2000:3).

For general basic education, the traditional content-based subjects of the first ten years of schooling have been reorganised into eight learning areas:

- # Communication, Literacy and Language Learning.
- # Numeracy and Mathematics.
- # Human and Social Sciences.
- # Natural Sciences.
- # Arts and Culture.
- # Economic and Management Sciences.
- # Life Orientation.
- # Technology (DNE 1997[b]:14-15).

These learning areas are aimed at allowing learners acquire an understanding of and ability to function in a larger political, social and economic context (DNE 2000[a]:27). For example, Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences are rooted in the increasing global importance of mathematical fluency, but at the same time motivated to empower people to work towards the reconstruction and development of South African society as a whole. However, the introduction of Curriculum 2005 has not been without problems.

Academics, labour formations, educationists and the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal were sceptical about Curriculum 2005. In response to the concerns raised by members of the public and those who had interest in education, the Minister, Kader Asmal, appointed a committee, under the chairpersonship of Professor Linda Chisholm, to review Curriculum 2005 in February 2000. Problems espoused by the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005, among others, were:

- # lack of alignment between curriculum and assessment policy;
- # inadequate orientation, training and development of teachers;
- # learning support materials that are variable in quality, often unavailable and not sufficiently used in classroom;
- # policy overload and limited transfer of learning into classrooms;
- # shortages of personnel and resources to implement and support Curriculum 2005; and
- # inadequate recognition of curriculum as the core business of education departments (DNE 2000[b]).

### **6.9.2 Concerns raised about Curriculum 2005**

Firstly, the implementation of Curriculum 2005 was unduly rushed since there was an inadequate time frame for consultation. Little real consultation took place with the educators, communities and learners who were the recipients of the new system. In particular, those who were the least powerful, the inhabitants of the rural areas had little or no say in the changes in education. According to Luthuli (1990:83), the curriculum should be so constructed that it draws on both the truth and the right opinion for its subject matter. In this sense Curriculum 2005 did not reflect the suggestions and opinions of the rural community in particular.

Additional concerns were raised about the absence of appropriate learning materials, textbooks, poor preparation of teachers, unclear and untested assessment methods, lack of international compatibility, and the undermining of the content for the sake of vague and difficult-to-measure outcomes (Greenstein 2003:375). The other problem facing teachers was to reorganise their teaching, allocate more time to measure learners progress against outcomes, administer forms of assessment, and maintain comprehensive records. Given the increase in class sizes as a

result of teacher rationalisation, the tasks facing teachers, especially in rural provinces, became too numerous to sustain effectively.

As reflected in the report by the Review Committee, Curriculum 2005 was practicable in well-resourced schools. Rural schools, undersourced as they were, ran short of apparatus such as photocopiers, computers, not to mention basic needs such as electricity. Most rural teachers' immediate needs are much more basic than a new curriculum: water, toilets, classroom furniture, adequate buildings with space for large classes, and textbook supplies. Most of the resources and textbooks that are available are urban-biased. This clearly shows the government's and society's concentration on modern sector job-related skill development. Learners in rural areas could, as a result, be left behind.

Professor Jonathan Jansen, a critic of OBE in South Africa, has continuously argued that Outcomes-Based Education "needs highly qualified and theoretically sophisticated, imaginative teachers. Without them the new curriculum will be applied in a mechanical way which would be the old system in disguise". He further criticised the new curriculum for being jargon-laden, and he predicted that it will further accentuate the gulf between well resourced urban schools staffed by competent teachers and poor schools since more competent teachers are better able to adjust to the new culture of teaching and learning (Jansen 1997). Perhaps Jansen's greatest criticism, however, was that the National Department of Education was ignoring the rural experience with curriculum reform generally. Rural teachers need a lot of help in professional development, without that help, there is a risk that this curriculum reform could undermine the already fragile environment in most of the predominantly rural schools.

Due to heavy criticism levelled against the introduction of the OBE, revision and reconsideration of the new curriculum by the Department of Education was unavoidable.

### **6.9.3 The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)**

After the Review Committee made submissions to the Minister of Education in 2000, Professor Kader Asmal, launched what he described as a simplified, streamlined and strengthened version of Curriculum 2005 in July 2001. The RNCS for grades R-9 was finally approved in April

2002. It would be phased in at grades R-3 in 2004, grades 4-6 in 2005, and grades 7-9 in 2006 to 2008 (*Edusource* 2003[b]:13). The RNCS also is not without problems (cf DNE 2002[a]).

Continuous concerns have been raised by the labour movements that educators and Learning Support Material (LSM) developers, especially for Grade 10 are not adequately trained to introduce the OBE curriculum for the Further Education and Training (FET) phase. Also, in revising Curriculum 2005, curriculum planners are much involved in aspects such as terminologies and streamlining of the curriculum, and unfortunately, the voice of Black people, residing in rural areas, was still left out. The ANC government appears to fall in the same trap of the previous governments in neglecting the Black rural masses.

## **6.10 EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS AFTER 1994**

After ten years in government, the ANC can be evaluated on a number of aspects which will give an indication whether it is succeeding in providing basic education to South Africans as stipulated in the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The following section will then deal with some of these indicators, namely, the illiteracy rate, the Matriculation examination results and teacher qualifications with the aim of measuring the degree of success or failure of the government.

### **6.10.1 Illiteracy rate**

The majority of people in South Africa, as mentioned by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), in 1991 were illiterate<sup>39</sup>. Approximately 11,3 million people (29 % of the population) had no formal education at all. About 8,1 percent (3 million people) had Matriculation only and 3 percent (1,1 million people) had some form of post-Matriculation qualification ( *SAIRR* 1995:218). In 1996, 19 percent of people over 20 years old had no formal education, 6 percent had some form of post-matriculation education and 16 percent had grade 12 (*SAIRR* 2000:110).

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<sup>39</sup> Illiterate people are defined as those people without a standard five (grade 7) qualification (*SAIRR* 1996:99).

The illiteracy rate in South Africa has both race and regional dimensions. In 1996, the majority of the illiterate people were found in the rural provinces of the Eastern Cape (20,9 %); KwaZulu Natal (22,9 %); Mpumalanga (29,4 %) and Limpopo (36,9%) as compared with the urban provinces of the Western Cape with 6,7 percent and Gauteng with 9,5 percent (*SAIRR* 2000:110). Urban provinces like Gauteng and the Western Cape had a higher proportion of people with post-Matriculation educational qualifications than the other provinces, with 8 percent and 11 percent respectively. In the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo fewer than 5 percent of the population had post-Matriculation qualifications (*SAIRR* 2000:111).

In 2000, almost 71 percent of people aged twenty or older were functionally literate. White people at 99 percent had the highest level of functional literacy, followed by Indians with 88 percent, Coloured people with 73 percent, and Black people with 65 percent (*SAIRR* 2002:239). The illiteracy level among Black people was higher in rural areas than in urban areas and also higher in households which were poverty-stricken (*SAIRR* 1996:99).

#### **6.10.2 Matriculation examination results**

The Matriculation examination plays a role as it indicates the training or level of education that a learner has achieved. The Matriculation examination is regarded as one of the most important certificates in South African education because it is an entrance to the world of work. In rural areas, especially, where the unemployment rate is high, passing the Matriculation examination is imperative, not only for the learner, but for the entire society.

In 1995, after the racially-based education departments were amalgamated into one national education department, the Matriculation examination results were a concern to all South Africans. The results were as follows: the Western Cape ranked highest with 84,27 percent; KwaZulu Natal came second with 76,64 percent; followed by Northern Cape with 74, 83; North West with 66,6 percent; Gauteng with 63,51 percent; Free State with 50,9 percent; Eastern Cape with 48,16 percent; Mpumalanga with 42,28 percent and Limpopo with 38,64 percent. The last three provinces were those normally referred to as rural provinces. The national average stood at 55,25 percent (*SAIRR* 1996:100-101). The Western Cape, with predominantly White and Coloured people and less Black people performed better than the predominantly rural and mostly Black population of the Limpopo province. As has already been mentioned, historically

accumulated racial inequalities in the distribution of resources and facilities have much to do with the results. Schools in rural Limpopo province comprise overcrowded classrooms, poor management by bureaucrats and under- and unqualified teachers which impact negatively on results. It should also be mentioned that learners in the Western Cape in 1995 were four times less than those in the Limpopo province which made schooling in the Cape more manageable and effective.

In 1997, Matriculation examination results were the lowest recorded since 1979. The national pass rate in 1997 was 47 percent compared to 54 percent in 1996, while the percentage of those passing with Matriculation exemption were 12 percent and 15 percent respectively. The breakdown of results in 1997 was as follows: the Western Cape still ranked as the highest with 76 percent; Northern Cape came second with 64 percent; followed by KwaZulu Natal with 53 percent; Gauteng with 52 percent; North West with 50 percent; Eastern Cape with 45 percent; Mpumalanga with 46 percent; Free State with 42 percent and Limpopo with 32 percent (*SAIRR* 1998; *Edusource* 1998[a]:2). University exemption in the Western Cape was 24 percent and in rural provinces (Mpumalanga; Eastern Cape; KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo) ranged from 6-18 percent (*Edusource* 1998[a]:2). Low university exemption rates diminish the chances of rural learners to be admitted at most of the universities.

The other issue that was of major concern in the provision of education to Black learners, was the decrease of Matriculation learners over the past four years. Since 1999, the annual numbers writing the Matriculation examination dropped by some 50 000. The numbers were as follows: in 1999 there were 511 474; 489 941 learners wrote in 2000; whereas in 2001 they were 449 371; and in the following year it was 443 821 and in 2003 only 440 276 learners wrote the Matriculation examinations. The decrease in learners sitting for the Matriculation examination was alarming since in 1995 there was a total of 531 453 learners writing the Matriculation examination as compared to 443 821 in 2003 (*SAIRR* 2000:113). This decrease is mostly experienced in rural provinces. For example, in Limpopo 129 951 learners sat for the Matriculation examinations in 1994 as compared to 114 621 learners in 1998 (*SAIRR* 2000:115). There are a number of reasons cited by the National Education Department for a decrease in Matriculation enrolment figures:

- # This is due to stabilisation of the system (i.e. the exclusion of over-age learners and repeaters).

- # Schools and learners have altered their optimistic expectations of who is required to succeed in grade 12 (i.e. schools are preventing weak learners from progressing to grade 12 in order to shore up their pass rates; or are entering learners at standard grade rather than higher grade) (*The Educator's Voice* 2003:10).

There is currently a slight difference in the aim of the Matriculation examination, as compared to the previous *apartheid* government, which intended that the education provided to Black learners would ultimately channel learners into potentially skilled labour whilst on the other hand the remaining learners (drop-outs and failures) would be channelled into unskilled work and unemployment (cf 2.5.1.4). The present Matriculation examination continues to reflect stratification, but not along lines of race as the previous undemocratically elected governments did, but this time along lines of class (cf 2.5). The General Secretary of SADTU, Thulas Nxesi, confirmed the notion that structural inequalities which had their roots in the *apartheid* ideology, continue to be reflected in the Matriculation examinations (*The Educator's Voice* 2003:10). He further mentioned that there are major provincial disparities between relatively well endowed provinces (Western and Northern Cape, Gauteng) which perform best. The lower pass rates are continuously experienced in poorer rural provinces. The following Table reflects this statement:

**Table 6.4 A comparison of the Matriculation percentage pass of rural and urban provinces**

Province	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Eastern Cape	57	48	49	46	45	40	50	46	52
KwaZulu Natal	68	69	62	54	50	51	57	63	71
Limpopo	44	38	39	32	35	38	51	60	70
Mpumalanga	48	38	47	46	73	48	53	47	56
Gauteng	61	58	58	52	56	57	68	74	78
Northern Cape	78	74	74	64	65	64	71	84	90
Western Cape	86	83	80	76	69	79	81	83	87



**Source** : DNE (2002[b]); *SAIRR* (2000:115); *Edusource* (2003[c]).

The majority of learners who obtain Matriculation exemptions are predominantly residing in urban provinces. For example, in 2002, in the Eastern Cape, 7 percent passed with endorsement (exemption) whereas in the Western Cape 27 percent passed with endorsement (*Edusource* 2003[c]:2). This situation negatively affects rural learners since their entrance to higher education is threatened and they are consequently unable to enter the global market.

In 1996 the majority of candidates who wrote mathematics and science were in Gauteng and the Western Cape (52% and 51 % respectively). Not many candidates passed mathematics with proportions ranging from as high as 39 percent in the Western Cape and as low as 7 percent in the rural Limpopo Province (*Edusource* 1997[b]:15). *Apartheid* legacy is also reflected in gender disparities. Whilst female candidates continue to exceed males, the pass rate amongst females is lower. In 1996, more girls wrote mathematics than boys, but the pass rate among girls was lower. Fifty five percent of boys who wrote mathematics passed, compared with 45 percent of girls (*Edusource* 1997[b]:15). This has consequences for the skills required to support a modern economy upon which jobs and sustainable quality of life for the majority of people, whether male or female, depends.

Another aspect of the Matriculation examination which requires analysis deals with specific subject results. It was established that in 1998 the number of Black candidates taking mathematics and physical science increased by 3,2 percent and 2,5 percent respectively. Nevertheless, the pass rate for mathematics dropped from 49,5 percent in 1996 to 42,1 percent in 1998. The mathematics learners leaving grade 12 in 1998 (20 250) were inadequate to meet the science and technology needs of the labour market (Motala 2003:667). Of those who could, only 25 percent could be better placed to enter science and technological world (*CHE* 2000:19).

An analysis of the mathematics results have shown that for every 100 candidates in grade 12, only 45 took mathematics, of whom only 21 passed. Of the 21 that passed, only four attained a higher grade pass, while 14 attained a standard grade pass, and three a lower grade pass (*SAIRR* 2000:117). The reason why most learners attained standard and lower grades passes was that the education departments encouraged learners to take subjects at a lower level. The other reason is that a mere 25 percent of higher grade paper was converted to a standard grade

pass. In 2003 only some 150 000 (34 %) learners out of 440 267 candidates actually wrote and passed mathematics (*The Educator's Voice* 2003:10). The situation was worst in 2003 in the rural provinces with, for example, a pass rate in Mathematics in Limpopo of 22 percent, 32 percent in the Eastern Cape, 23 percent in Mpumalanga and 35 percent in KwaZulu Natal compared to 44 percent in Gauteng and the Western Cape (*Edusource* 2003[c]:12). One contributory factor to the low pass rate in mathematics was that most mathematics teachers were not fully qualified to teach this subject. For example up to 1996, in KwaZulu Natal, 72 percent of teachers were not subject qualified to teach mathematics.

The other matter of concern with regard to the Matriculation results is the issue of manipulation. In a confidential report which was handed to the parliamentary portfolio committee, it was stated that the results of the 1996 Matriculation examination were hugely adjusted to assist disadvantaged learners<sup>40</sup> (*Edusource* 1998[b]:10). In rural provinces such as Limpopo, marks were so low that they would have had to be doubled to enable candidates to pass. Marks for most of the papers were increased by more than 9 percent. Professor Jonathan Jansen, the University of Pretoria's Dean of Faculty of Education, seriously questioned the rise in the pass rates in some of the provinces. He contended that there were several opportunities for the so-called moderation of results to be manipulated, allowing large numbers of marginal students to be pushed over the basic minimum requirement for a pass (*Edusource* 2003[c]:5). The 2003 results were also accepted with scepticism when 73,3 percent of Matriculants passed, up by 24,4 percent since 1999 (*Sunday Times* 2004[c]:1). Furthermore, candidates who wrote examinations in a language other than their mother tongue were believed to have been compensated with 5 percent of the mark they achieved in order to reduce the disadvantage they suffered as a result of the 'other' language (*Edusource* 2003[c]:5). Statements cited above implicated most of the rural provinces.

The culture of fraud and irregularities has been one of many factors which makes tertiary institutions and academics doubt the authenticity of the Matriculation results. Mpumalanga, one of the rural provinces, Matriculation results in 1998 bear evidence to that effect. There was a serious increase from 47 percent in 1997 to 72,5 percent in the 1998 Matriculation results.

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<sup>40</sup> The manipulation process is believed to occur irrespective of the work of Umalusi (the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Council) which, as one of its major tasks, is to ensure that standardisation, marking and moderation of examinations are fair and credible.

These results were confirmed by the MEC for Education in Mpumalanga, Mr David Mabusa, as being in accordance with the standards as set out by the examining bodies (Sowetan 1999:9). The extraordinary pass rates, as indicated above, came after a history of poor results. In February 1999, the former South African Certification Council (SAFCERT) reported to the National Ministry that there had been a misconduct by high ranking officials and public servants in the 1998 Mpumalanga Senior Certificate Examinations (Republic of South Africa 1999:29). This further brings to light the aspect of a legacy of and current practice of mismanagement in the previously homeland education systems. The bureaucracy was blamed for irregularities that took place in Mpumalanga. Instead of promoting the culture of learning in schools, government officials contributed to lowering the standard of education. This practice was and is prevalent in rural provinces.

There has some scepticism that the improvement of pass rates, as reflected in Table 6.4 was due to, among other factors, the lowering of the standard of the examinations. Professor Jonathan Jansen consistently pointed out that there has been a general lowering of standards.

### 6.10.3 Teacher qualifications

Before 1994, the majority of Black teachers were found in the former homelands. In 1993 there were 65 965 teachers at the former homeland schools. Rural KwaZulu Natal had the greatest number of teachers (58 992), followed by the Eastern Cape (54 383). In the same year 12 percent of teachers at Black schools did not have a teaching qualification (SAIRR 1995). Though statistics were not available for the qualifications of teachers in White schools, it could be assumed that most White teachers were qualified in the same year. In 1998, of the total of 93 640 teachers, the highest number of un- or under-qualified teachers were found in the Eastern Cape (20 800) and KwaZulu Natal (25 261) as compared to the Northern Cape (1 412) [SAIRR 2000:132]. These un- and under-qualified teachers were especially those trained in the former homelands (Seroto 1999:121).

In 2000, 22 percent of teachers were underqualified, that is, they possessed less than the required Senior Certificate and a three year-teaching qualification. This figure had declined from the 36 percent experienced in 1994 (SAIRR 2002:239). Even though the average national figure has reduced, it should be pointed out that most of the teachers who were still underqualified

were predominantly found in rural areas. For example, in 2000, 26 percent of teachers in the Eastern Cape were underqualified as compared to 11 percent in Gauteng and the Western Cape (*SAIRR* 2002:252).

The following was reported in the media with regard to teacher qualifications (*Sunday Times* 2004[c]:1):

- # One out of every six educators in rural Limpopo was underqualified.
- # Most of the underqualified teachers came from formerly Black homeland colleges, which offered the Junior Secondary Teachers' Certificate (JSTC) and Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) both of two years, compared to the four-year courses offered by the formerly White institutions.
- # In 2004 in Limpopo, 16 percent (10 000) of the total of teachers was still underqualified and in rural KwaZulu Natal the number of underqualified teachers was as high as 12 145 in 2001.
- # Some of the teachers in the Limpopo Province in 2004, had the equivalent [knowledge] of a Grade 10 learner with no further expertise in a subject.

Statements cited above clearly indicate the situation of low teacher qualifications which still prevail in rural provinces. The government intervention in upgrading teacher qualifications is perceived as a positive step towards addressing past imbalances. However, there are still teachers in rural provinces who continue to lower the quality of education due to their lack of professional expertise in the field of education. The government is further presented with the challenge of making sure that unqualified and underqualified teachers in rural provinces are adequately trained so that they can uplift (rural) education. The number of teachers without relevant qualifications has not been substantially reduced because during the *apartheid* government there were many teachers who were not qualified and this trend continues in the democratic era with rural schools being the most affected.

## 6.11 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Learners with special education needs in rural areas were and are still neglected in terms of resources and funding. Education of the learners with learning barriers has been historically iniquitous because the focus of provision has been on the White population and remained inadequate for the Black population, particularly in rural areas. An estimate of approximately 70 percent of learners with disabilities, of which the majority are Black disabled learners in rural areas, are currently outside the formal education and training system (DNE 2004). Inadequacies and inequalities in the education system and its contribution to learning are evident in most rural areas which have the lowest level of basic service provision, the highest level of unemployment and sustained poverty. This ultimately affected disabled learners.

It is the government's long-term plan that learners with learning barriers be incorporated in ordinary or mainstream schools. Although not the focus of this thesis, the introduction of inclusive education will have a direct bearing on the provision of education to all learners in South Africa, since the majority of disabled learners are found in rural areas. It is therefore imperative to look at critical issues entailed in the Inclusive Education and Training System contained in the *Education White Paper 6 of 2001 on Inclusive Education* and the impact it will have on provision of education in rural areas.

#### **6.11.1 The Inclusive Education and Training System**

The Education White Paper No 6 which responded to the challenge of special education in South Africa has been a milestone since the democratic government came to power in 1994. This aspect of education (special needs education) was of particular importance because it is in line with the Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) which emphasises the need to provide basic education for all South Africans. Section 9 (2) commits the government to the achievement of equality, and Section 9 (3), (4) and (5) to non-discriminatory practices. All learners, whether disabled or not, are particularly protected by these clauses.

*The Education White Paper 6 of 2001 on Inclusive Education and Training:*

# acknowledges that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support;

- # accepts and respects the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience;
- # is about enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners;
- # acknowledges and respects differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or HIV status;
- # is broader than formal schooling and acknowledges that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal modes and structures;
- # is about changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners;
- # is about maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning; and
- # is about empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning (Republic of South Africa 2001:16).

In a nutshell, inclusive education means that

...schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized area or groups (UNESCO 1994: par 3).

In its endeavour to eradicate past backlogs, not only in ordinary schools, the ANC-led government intended at redressing backlogs that existed also in special education. Table 6.5 reflects backlogs that existed with regard to provision of education for learners with special needs.

**Table 6.5 Distribution of special schools and enrolments**

Provinces	Total disabled	Learners in special schools	No. of special schools	% of total special schools
Eastern Cape	462 179	6 483	41	10.79
Free State	257 154	3 127	19	5.00
Gauteng	455 542	25 451	96	25.26
KwaZulu Natal	502 090	7 631	58	15.26
Mpumalanga	211 913	2 692	15	3.95
Northern Cape	46 995	1 392	8	2.11
Limpopo	296 869	4 250	19	5.00
North West	279 534	4 364	42	11.05
Western Cape	145 438	9 213	82	21.58
Total	2 657 714	64 603	380	100

**Source:** Republic of South Africa (2001:13-14).

A number of factors emerge from Table 6.5 as follows:

- # Rural provinces have the majority of learners with learning barriers with the most learners found in the Eastern Cape consisting of 17,39 percent ; KwaZulu Natal has 18,8 percent of the total disabled learners. Gauteng, which is predominantly urban has 17,14 percent of the total disabled learners.
- # The incidence of disabilities in the Eastern Cape constitutes 17,39 percent of the disabled population, yet the province has only 10,79 percent of the total number of special schools. Gauteng, which has 17,14 percent of disabled population has 25,26 percent of the special schools. The Western Cape has 5,47 percent of the disabled population but has 21,58 percent of the special schools.
- # Most of the disabled children or youth are not even at school. In the Eastern Cape, for example, 455 696 disabled children or youth were not at school. These children or youth might be at ordinary schools or may be at home since no facilities are available in their province of residence.

Rural provinces have continually spent less on the education of learners with special needs even though figures above indicate that there is a considerable number of them in those provinces. Table 6.6 gives an indication of what provinces have spent on special needs education:

**Table 6.6 Percentage of Provincial Education Expenditure spent on special needs education**

Province	1995	1996	1997	1998
Eastern Cape	7,19	1,56	1,66	2,6
Free State	1,61	1,80	2,80	2,81
Gauteng	4,02	3,94	4,54	4,28
KwaZulu Natal	1,80	1,60	2,14	2,12
Mpumalanga	1,41	2,30	1,95	1,86
Northern Cape	3,18	3,10	2,52	3,17
Limpopo	0,94	1,50	1,44	1,06
North West	2,34	1,73	1,49	1,69
Western Cape	7,19	8,05	6,87	7,18
Provincial Average	3,30	2,84	2,82	2,97

**Source:** Department of Finance (1995-1999[b]); Provincial Estimates of Expenditure (1995/96-1998/99).

From the Table 6.6 above, the following comes to light:

Provinces which are predominantly rural spent less on education for learners with special needs. For example, in 1995, the Eastern Cape with nearly four times the number of disabled learners than the Western Cape, spent the same 7,19 percent of the provincial education expenditure. This clearly indicates special needs education in rural areas was not well attended to by the government.

The trend of allocating limited resources to special needs education continued into the dispensation of the democratically elected government. Table 6.6 reflects that instead of the allocation being increased, especially in rural provinces, it decreased.



The government was faced with the daunting challenge of attending disabled children or youth who continue to reside in their less resourced rural provinces. This is one of the many reasons why the ANC-led government introduced the Education White Paper No 6 on Special Needs Education of 2001 (Republic of South Africa 2001:3-4). However, the approach by the government to address the problem of disabled learners is not without difficulties as is clearly reflected in the fore-mentioned paragraphs.

### **6.11.2 Challenges facing inclusive education**

The government's intention to address the issue of disabled learners in a holistic way is commendable, but there are a number of factors that range from resource provision, funding, curriculum and educator provision that need to be looked at. These factors, as mentioned in previous chapters were prevalent also in ordinary schools, schools mostly situated in rural areas.

#### *6.11.2.1 Challenges arising from funding*

It has been established in the Education White Paper 6 on Special Education (Republic of South Africa 2001:15) that expenditure per learner varied significantly across provinces, ranging from R11 049 in Gauteng to R28 635 in the Western Cape, R22 627 in the Free State. This clearly demonstrated the inefficiency in the allocation of funding among provinces. Looking at the Western Cape, for example, it is difficult to find a reason why this province was allocated such an amount per learner. This also demonstrates that there is no uniform resourcing strategy and national provisioning norms for learners. The uneven distribution of resources to the disabled children or youth, if not attended to, will continue to disadvantage the rural population.

One of the aims of the government when introducing inclusive education is to accommodate learners who need low intensive support in ordinary schools. Those who need moderate support are to be accommodated in full service schools whereas those who need high intensive educational support are to be accommodated in special schools. These categorisations of schools therefore need adequate funding. There were already infrastructural backlogs prevalent in most of the rural provinces. The government's sources of income to finance inclusive education are donor funding and conditional grants, intended at redressing existing educational

backlogs and converting these schools to accommodate learners with learning barriers, which is a financially demanding exercise.

#### *6.11.2.2 Problems arising from the curriculum*

Inclusive education requires changes to mainstream education so that learners experiencing barriers to learning can be identified and appropriate support be provided. The Education White Paper No 6 of 2001 further mentioned that the process of learning and teaching should be flexible. There are still many questions that remain unanswered with regard to the curriculum and its application to learners with certain barriers.

Curriculum 2005 which most teachers still continue to grapple with, has not been fully implemented in all the bands, especially the Further and Education Training (FET) band. It is acceptable to assume that the curriculum of the mainstream or ordinary school is in a continual state of change, with the content, classroom organisation, methodologies, learning materials, equipment and assessment tools requiring continual scrutiny. Given the challenge due to high enrolment figures at predominantly Black schools in rural areas, the OBE approach has become problematic in these areas. This has been complicated by the fact that resources in rural schools are limited and it makes the offering of OBE difficult. With the introduction of inclusive education, the government should not fall into the trap of disadvantaging rural schools as the past government did maintaining a curriculum which did not meet the needs of a wide range of different learners. The curriculum issue poses a impediment to the provision of inclusive education. Given that education for Black learners with special needs has been inadequate, inclusive education, unless properly implemented, could lead to increasing drop-outs and failure rates.

#### *6.11.2.3 Problems arising from upgrading and training teachers*

Several programmes are currently (2003-2005) offered at various universities with the aim of upgrading teachers qualifications and enhancing their knowledge of OBE approach. The Northern Province Education Programme (NPEP), offered at the University of the North, is one such example. This clearly shows the government's willingness to reduce the number of teachers who are under-qualified. After completion of this type of programme, teachers will be required to undergo additional training for inclusive education.

The introduction of inclusive education requires the government to retrain teachers as far as this approach is concerned. Retraining or upgrading of educators is also an expensive exercise. Taking into consideration that the majority of teachers who are under-qualified and mostly found in rural areas, the government is further faced with the challenge of ensuring that those teachers upgrade their qualifications and be trained in inclusive education.

#### 6.11.2.4 *Infrastructure*

The government's intention to convert ordinary primary schools (and later secondary schools and colleges) to schools which are able to provide disabled learners with learning support, is a sound educational move. However, it should be pointed out that classroom shortages and shortages of laboratories and libraries form the basis of serious infrastructural backlogs in South Africa. These backlogs, as already alluded to, are most evident in schools which are situated in rural areas. To be able to realise the government's intention to introduce inclusive education in primary schools, for example, the government needs to address previous infrastructural backlogs as reflected above.

Schools in rural areas are likely to experience added backlogs as a result of the introduction of inclusive education. To be able to put schools which are situated in rural areas on *par* with their counterparts in urban areas, considerable finance is needed which extends beyond the conditional grants and donations which the government relies on for funding of inclusive education.

### **6.12 THE DILEMMA OF USING *APARTHEID* AS THE YARDSTICK BY WHICH TO EVALUATE GOVERNMENT PROGRESS**

For the past ten years (1994-2004) the ANC government has generally being commended for doing fairly well. Given the *apartheid* past, the performance by the government has been judged as phenomenal. Since 1994 significant legislation which aimed at addressing the inequities of the past was introduced. Such legislation was, among others, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa which was based on democratic principles. One can conclude that today South Africa is a better place for all its inhabitants than before.

The President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, stated correctly that, among others, the government has built 1,6 million houses, supplied water to nine million people and sanitation to 6,4 million and created two million jobs (Mbeki 2004). The President has, in many instances, made poverty the most important priority of his government (*Sunday Times* 2004[d]:15), committing the government to addressing pressing issues that affect the people of South Africa.

What the ANC government did since its inception, however, should be critically evaluated. Adam Habib, Executive Director of the Democracy and Governance Unit at the *Human Science Research Council (HSRC)*, argues that “we cannot use *apartheid* as the yardstick by which to judge our progress. After all, did we not describe *apartheid* as a crime against humanity” (*Sunday Times* 2004[a]:21). Habib argues that we cannot judge the progress made by the ANC government on the basis of what the *apartheid* government could not do. However, it is imperative to assess if the current government is progressing in its endeavour to address rural education.

Joel Netshitenzhe, the Chief Executive Officer of Government Communication and Head of the Policy Unit in the Presidency, argues that “we have to understand the present against the backdrop of the past. Otherwise we may end up conjuring up all kinds of warped theories” (*Sunday Times* 2004[a]:21). Whether one uses *apartheid* as a yardstick or not by which to judge the progress made by the ANC government, the ANC government has achieved much compared to previous *apartheid* government’s effort. Nevertheless, the ANC as the ruling party, has not done much in other areas such as alleviating poverty, decreasing crime and particularly, little has been done in the area of rural education.

### **6.13 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

It has been established in this chapter that while the government was doing everything in its power to increase budgets in historically disadvantaged provinces, inefficiencies, continuous infrastructural backlogs and rural-urban disparities in the education system continue to exist and as a result undermine the impact of government spending in the education system. Financial formulae and legal frameworks, even if they were commendable, did not necessarily achieve the goals they were intended for – i.e. providing basic education for *all*.

This chapter has also been devoted to the discussion on socio-economic conditions in rural areas. Significantly it has been pointed out that the government macroeconomic strategy (GEAR) is most likely to have a negative impact on the provision of education to learners, especially in rural areas.

Backlogs such as unequal resources, educational infrastructure, class sizes, availability of support learning material and others were still not adequately addressed by the government. These have impacted negatively on, for example, the Matriculation results as there is a correlation between high levels of resourcing and high Matriculation rates and endorsement rates.

The government's intention to introduce inclusive education was a positive step in addressing the education of learners with special needs, an aspect which was not adequately addressed by the *apartheid* government. The approach to 'incorporate' education for learners with special needs into ordinary education shows the democratically elected government's intention to uproot discrimination of whatever kind at all levels. The government should take precautionary measures when introducing inclusive education of not exacerbating backlogs that continue to plague rural communities which would ultimately impact negatively on rural education.

Even though the responsibility for improving the quality of education has been falling increasingly on poor rural communities, the problem of inequalities between urban and rural provinces has been further exacerbated by the large backlogs, which continue to exist in the provision of other social services such as health and housing, and the need for an improved infrastructure that impacts hugely on effective teaching and learning. In this situation, rural provinces are the worst affected.

Having dealt with a number of issues with regard to rural education in South Africa, the final chapter will deal with findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER 7**

# **EVALUATION: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



## **CHAPTER 7**

# **EVALUATION: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this thesis an attempt was made to give an exposition of historical-educational perspective of rural education, and the impact of government legislation on Black education in rural areas of South Africa. An evaluation of rural education will follow in subsequent sections.

### **7.2 METABLETIC APPROACH**

The metabletic approach took cognisance that the educative occurrence, in this case, rural education, took place in a different social setting and world-view as that of the researcher. Thus, the historical data collected will be interpreted from a dynamic point of view, taking into consideration changes that took place. The metabletic approach further reflects elements of time and space as changing realities which makes evaluation of past situations a challenging task. It is imperative to indicate that one needs to realise that all situations are constantly being interpreted and all interpreters are also bound by their own time and space in their interpretation.

### **7.3 FINDINGS**

After an intensive literature survey concerning rural education, several findings come to light. They are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

#### **7.3.1 Defining the concept 'rural'**

Defining the concept 'rural' has been problematic since to date a single universal definition does not exist. A multi-criteria approach, where different criteria, different levels of analysis and different methodologies, was used to arrive at a working definition relevant to this study. Several



criteria (e.g. geographical isolation, poverty, racism) were used to define what rural areas entailed from a South African context.

In this research, rural education prior to the democratic era has been categorised according to specific historical periods, and the findings will, therefore, be dealt with according to that categorisation.

### **7.3.2 Rural education in South Africa between 1652-1910**

In the following section, findings with regard to rural education during various historical epochs will be outlined.

#### *7.3.2.1 Pre-colonial period (prior 1652)*

There was basically no formal education during this period. The indigenous people like the Khoikhoi, San and the Nguni received what was normally referred to as 'traditional' or informal education which was based on customary and tribal traditions. The rural-urban divide line during this period was blurred and no legislation was in place to reinforce this line (cf 3.2).

#### *7.3.2.2 The Dutch Rule (1652-1806)*

This period is characterised by an invisible contrast between 'urban' and 'rural' settings. The predominant economic activity practised was agricultural in both the urban and rural areas of the Cape Colony. Although there was no formal legislation with regard to indigenous populations, there were signs of racial tensions between the White people and the Black people which arose from aspects that were related to the land issue and master/servant attitudes (cf 2.5.1.5; 3.3). The Dutch Reformed Church also played a role during this period to enhance racial divisions among different racial groups in the Colony.

With regard to the education of Black people at the Cape, most of the work was done by missionary societies. Informal education received by indigenous people outside the Dutch settlement was largely in the form of cultural transmission.



### *7.3.2.3 The British Rule (1806-1910)*

It was found that the British government channelled funding mainly to urban schools, which continued to be better off when compared to rural missionary controlled schools. The approach of the government to concentrate on urban schools exacerbated the rural-urban divide prevalent in the Cape Colony.

With the introduction of the Education Act No 13 of 1865 at the Cape Colony, the government divided schools according to three 'racial' groups. The category C school, mainly Black schools, were missionary controlled and predominantly located in rural areas. These schools suffered from inadequate or, in most cases, no funds.

The rural-urban divide was further promoted during this period by the establishment of mines in the Kimberley areas and the Witwatersrand. Urban areas became centres of attraction due to their economic viability and most of the rural dwellers moved to these areas. The government focused its attention on urban areas and rural areas were left behind. Rural schooling consequently lagged behind.

Conditions at most of the Black schools in the Transvaal were appalling with the result that the improvement of Black education demanded great resources which the government was not prepared to provide. With the introduction of the Education Act of 1907, which reflected racial prejudice, Black people were not allowed to attend White schools. They were confined to missionary education which was based on evangelisation of the indigenous people.

It was in Natal that the government tried categorically to apply geographic segregation where the Black people were to be confined to rural areas. The policy of the government (Shepstonian Policy) was that in those areas Black people were to be under the governance of the chiefs while at the same time remaining subordinate to the British rule. This policy was based on racial prejudice and practice. Black people were confined to rural areas (reserves) whereas the White people remained in well-resourced urban areas.

### 7.3.3 Rural education in South Africa between 1910-1948

There were a number of legislative Acts that influenced the rural-urban dichotomy in South Africa, among others, the Natives Land Act, No 27 of 1913 and the Native Trust and Land Act No 18 of 1936 (cf 3.5.2; 3.5.2). These two Acts of Parliament provided the statutory basis for territorial segregation (cf 2.5.1.3). Rural education during this period was characterised by the following:

#### 7.3.3.1 Administration

Education was fragmented according to different racial groups. Basically, Coloured, Indian and White children attended free government schools, whereas the majority of Black learners attended missionary schools situated in rural areas. *The Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education* recommended that Native education should be the responsibility of the Union government, but unfortunately, the Union government did not take this recommendation into consideration until 1953, when the Bantu Education Act was introduced. This indicated the reluctance of the government to amalgamate the education system in South Africa. Together with other racial laws during this period, the government was not willing to better rural missionary education which continued to lag behind (cf 3.6.1).

#### 7.3.3.2 Aim of education

The aim of education for Black people during this period was correctly summarised by Loram (1917:80-83) when he mentioned that Black people were a rural people and therefore their education was to be geared towards development within rural areas. Education of the Black people aimed at producing rural elites who would not aspire positions in White urban societies.

#### 7.3.3.3 Financing

This period is further characterised by a vast financial disparity between Black education as compared to White education with huge funds being appropriated to White urban schools. Despite inadequate funding of Black education by the Union government, Black parents were expected to supplement Black education expenditure by a portion of direct taxes (cf 3.6.3). The

poor funding by the government resulted in high drop-out rates, poorly resourced rural schools with no furniture and poorly trained teachers (Union of South Africa 1936[a]). The situation in rural areas became unbearable given the high poverty rate that existed in most of these areas (cf 2.4.2; 2.6.2).

#### *7.3.3.4 Curriculum*

The introduction of the curriculum which included manual and industrial-related subjects was a clear indication of the view of the government that there was no place for Black people in urban centres beyond certain levels of skills and expertise. The State was an important tool in the hands of a dominant White people and by means of ensuring that the Black people did manual-related subjects at school, advanced the interest of that dominant group. The government wanted to ensure that the Black rural population remained in their subservient position as workers in the bourgeois industrial State.

Vernacular was used for political purposes during the Union government because schools were grouped according to ethnic groups. This later led to the development of the Bantu Authorities Act (4.3.3) which promoted ethnicity.

### **7.3.4 Rural education in South Africa between 1948-1960**

When the NP took over the government in South Africa in 1948, there were government policies enacted as Acts of Parliament which clearly differentiated between Black education and White education and rural education and urban education. Prominent legislation included the Bantu Authorities Act No 68 of 1951, the Bantu Education Act No 47 and the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act No 46 of 1959.

#### *7.3.4.1 The Bantu Education Act of 1953*

The *apartheid* education in the form of Bantu education has its roots in the CNE ideology. Bantu education was introduced as an instrument that would ensure the dominance of White people, hence the creation of homelands or reserves.



#### 7.3.4.1[a] The aim of education

The Bantu Education Act aimed at educating the Black child so that he/she should not be on *par* with the White child, but he/she would be content to be confined to remote rural areas (cf 4.5).

#### 7.3.4.1[b] Governance and management

The government established two types of schools, namely, government Bantu Schools and the State-aided schools. The latter were generally under the control of mission societies. In order to ensure that Black Education was differentiated, the government introduced a separate Union Department of Native Affairs which removed control of Black Education from mission schools to specific White bureaucrats (4.7).

#### 7.3.4.1[c] Funding

Funding of Black schools during this period remained inadequate. Black parents, even though they were financially unable, were forced to bear the financial responsibility of the education of their learners. The government expected parents to pay school fees even though most of them lived in poor rural settings (cf 4.8).

#### 7.3.4.1[d] Curriculum

The education of the Black people was tailored in the direction which catered for the rural environment the child finds himself/herself in - hence environmental studies were emphasised. It did not take into consideration both the individual and community needs of the learner (cf 4.9).

### 7.3.5 Rural education in South Africa between 1960-1994

The period 1960-1994 was characterised by the practical implementation of *apartheid* laws and policies. These laws impacted negatively on rural education. The following findings were made with regard to rural education during 1960-1994:

#### *7.3.5.1 Governance and administration*

There were 19 education departments in South Africa before 1994 based on the racial segregatory thinking of the National Party government. When the De Lange Commission which aimed at investigating the whole issue of the provision of education to Black learners was established, it did not look into rural education intensively, but it concentrated more on education of learners in the urban areas (cf 5.5). The De Lange Commission recommended that the 19 education departments be amalgamated into a single ministry, but due to the government's *apartheid* model which was in place, the proposal was not deemed acceptable. The government was not prepared to move away from its policy of separate development.

#### *7.3.5.2 Financing of rural education*

Inadequate funding of Black education was the government's intention not only to ensure that Black people were poorly educated, but it was also the government's aim to ensure that they (Blacks) remained subordinated in rural areas with less political power. Most of the former homelands which were predominantly located in rural areas were starved of funding (cf 5.6.2). Due to inadequate funding of rural education, most learners in rural areas dropped-out and remained illiterate (cf 5.6.6).

#### *7.3.5.3 Teacher qualifications*

Most teachers in the former rural homelands were under- or unqualified. It was not until 1983 that a three-year diploma was introduced at Black Colleges of Education whereas the White student-teachers could acquire a four-year diploma. The low educational level of Black teachers reflected not only the general inadequacies of *apartheid* education, but the intention of the government to have particular types of teachers as to produce cheap labour required in the country (2.5.1.4).

#### *7.3.5.4 Teacher-pupil ratios*

Teacher-pupil ratios were high in former homelands. In some of the rural homelands, the teacher-pupil ratios were as high as 1:107 (cf 5.6.3). The high teacher-pupil ratios would seriously affect the provision of education in these areas.



#### *7.3.5.5 Matriculation results*

Comparatively, Black Matriculation results were lower than that of the White people. As indicated in Table 5.6 the high failure rates were most prevalent in rural homelands (cf 5.6.4). The high failure rates in Black communities could be attributed to the government's economic and political structures (cf 2.5.4.3; 2.5.1.4). The economy demanded docile workers and the education system in Black communities was to be tailored in that direction.

#### *7.3.5.6 Infrastructural provisions*

The policy of the government that schools in the former rural homelands be established on a Rand-for-Rand basis lowered the standards of school buildings since most of the parents in rural areas were poor and depended on social grants (cf 5.6.5).

#### *7.3.5.7 Resistance of Black Education*

Bantu Education was continuously resisted by, among others, the ANC, teacher formations and students. There was a call by liberation movements that there was a need for an alternative education. This call clearly indicated a serious need to re-look at the provision of education to Black learners. In simple terms, the government's economic and political policies were challenged as the education system during this period was imbued with the *apartheid* ideology (cf 5.7.1 - 5.7.2).

### **7.3.6 Rural education in South Africa between 1994 -2004**

The ANC-led government introduced a series of legislative Acts which aimed at eradicating past imbalances, among others, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the South African Schools Act, Revised National Curriculum Statement and the White Paper No 6 on Education for Learners with Special Needs. The following come to light during this period:

#### *7.3.6.1 The socio-economic conditions of rural people*

Although the ANC government has done much towards the upliftment of the Black people in general, the following could be highlighted as deficiencies (cf 6.4):

- # The socio-economic conditions like primary health-care services, transport, housing household income, poverty rate remain at an unsatisfactory level.
- # Electricity and sanitation provision have not been adequately addressed.
- # Household income for rural dwellers has not been fully addressed by the government.

#### *7.3.6.2 Economic policies*

The government GEAR policy did not adequately address the economic situation in rural areas because of the following (cf 6.5.1):

- # The unemployment rate continues to be high with people from rural areas being the most affected (cf 6.5.2.1).
- # People in urban areas continue to benefit from the country's redistribution of resources and the rural communities benefit the least from these resources (cf 6.5.2.2).
- # The contribution of the GEAR policy has not benefited most rural communities since there was only a slight improvement in the annual economic growth.
- # The government's restructuring programme has disadvantaged most rural communities since teachers did not want to take posts in rural school (cf 6.5.2.4).
- # The government's stance on the HIV/AIDS pandemic and their neglect of addressing poverty in rural areas could increase the rate of infections in those areas or provinces where the poverty rate is high (6.5.2.7).

#### *7.3.6.3 Infrastructure and resource provision*

Ten years after 1994, a situation where learners in all nine provinces enjoy similar levels of resources in education has not yet been reached. Schools situated in rural provinces are the most affected and they lag behind in the following areas (cf 6.6; 6.6.4):

- # running water, electricity;
- # buildings;
- # teaching equipment; and
- # textbooks, stationery and furniture.

#### *7.3.6.4 Budgetary provisions*

Up to 2001, the government did not take into consideration the recommendation of the Review Committee that there should be basic per learner expenditure. This exacerbated the rate of inequalities among provinces, the most affected being the rural provinces.

The personnel base of 1994 was also seriously skewed across provinces. Across provinces, the rural provinces, namely, the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga continue to shoulder large personnel expenses. What remains as non-personnel expenses is inadequate for redistribution in terms of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding.

The National Norms and Standards for School Funding is an important tool for redressing past fiscal imbalances, but there are ongoing concerns that there are insufficient human resources to effect implementation. The poor management of officials at provincial levels has meant that funds meant for the rural poor do not reach the projects and people for which it is intended (cf 6.7).

#### *7.3.6.5 Governance and management*

School Governing Bodies are not all fully equipped with necessary skills to manage and control the educational issues of their institutions. School governing bodies' in rural areas are the worst affected. There are no intensive monitoring systems to ensure that accounting, auditing and budgeting processes are in place and school governing bodies are not trained in that regard.

Due to many managerial posts that are not advertised in most rural schools, management and good governance standards are compromised at most schools in rural provinces. The delay in introducing evaluation tools for teachers in the education system affects the quality of the provision of education to rural learners, in particular (6.8).

#### *7.3.6.6 Curriculum*

Curriculum 2005 has been problematic, especially to rural learners. It was introduced in 1997 and was revised in 2001 but has not been effectively implemented. Some teachers were not adequately trained and whilst they were waiting for training, the Revised Curriculum came into place which indicated a lack of planning on behalf of the National Department of Education. There was a general feeling among teachers that the OBE approach was irrelevant, especially to the needs of predominantly Black rural learners (cf 6.9).

#### *7.3.6.7 Illiteracy rate*

The illiteracy rate remains high in rural provinces as compared to urban provinces. Most of the Early Childhood Education centres are found in urban provinces whereas rural provinces have few centres, even though the enrolment figures in the early childhood stage are high (cf 6.10.1).

#### *7.3.6.8 Matriculation examination*

The Matriculation pass rates during this period were generally low, especially in rural provinces which inherited past education backlogs. The university endorsement rates were also very low in rural provinces which stressed the point that rural education still requires grave attention. The pass rates have been questioned by academics which suggested that there have been irregularities with regard to the computation of Matriculation results (cf 6.10. 2).

#### *7.3.6.9 Teacher qualifications*

The rate of underqualified and unqualified teachers still remains high in rural provinces. The state of qualification of teachers will ultimately affect educational standards in those provinces (cf 6.10.3).



### 7.3.6.10 *Inclusive Education*

Provision of education to the majority of learners with disabilities, predominantly residing in rural areas has not been effectively attended to. Most of the resources have been channelled to urban provinces which were already advantaged when compared to rural provinces (cf 6.11).

## 7.7 CONCLUSIONS

According to the statement of the problem (cf 1.2) and the aim and objectives of the study (cf 1.3), the following conclusions with regard to rural education in South Africa were arrived at:

- # A number of legislative acts kept Black people in a mainly rural environment. This policy has been prevalent for centuries and only ended in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This in itself is something that is difficult to unravel and solve overnight as we are talking about centuries of thinking and practice. This is an inherent problem which poses many challenges.
- # Rural education was inadequately funded from the Colonial era up to democratic era. The *apartheid* government (1948-1994) used poor funding strategies to ensure that there were low pupil-teacher ratios and teacher qualifications. This was done with the intention of manipulating the daily activities in Black rural schools, so as to control the 'output' when learners reach Matriculation level, hence the high failure rate in most of the rural schools. Unequal patterns of education spending continued well into the democratic era. Poor funding of rural schools made infrastructural provision in rural provinces difficult. The infrastructural deficiencies and the high poverty rate in rural provinces resulted in poor provision of education of learners in rural areas.
- # Black rural people (especially parents) have not been part of the education system regarding decision making. This makes it difficult for them to now change their attitudes and become actively involved. Even in the democratic era, there is very little consultation among educational role players.

- # Educational policies since 1994 have been hastily implemented (e.g. OBE), and insufficient consideration has been given to contextual realities in South African schooling, particularly in rural areas.
- # Even though the intent to address the issue of rural education is there, the ANC government has not yet succeeded in addressing this aspect of education successfully at this stage. Legislative frameworks to address past imbalances resulting from previous *apartheid* government policies are not adequately implemented. The political weight of constituencies of the ANC as a ruling party in urban areas also puts pressure on the government which continues channelling resources to urban areas.

## **7.8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations which are suggested by this research project constitute a critical challenge to education planners and policy makers, especially to those involved with rural education.

### **7.8.1 Legislation**

The government should normally take the lead at national level, by means of co-ordinating the efforts of its departments and those of other various stakeholders. It should ensure that due attention is given to important legislation and principles that deal with equity and other aspects as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Government legislation and the challenge of implementation should be well-thought through before actual implementation takes place.

### **7.8.2 Social services**

Despite the transformational attempts by the ANC, it is evident that there are still many aspects, namely, the provision of social services, that need to be attended to because they will ensure effective schooling. The government needs to address the question of provision of electricity, housing, sanitation and primary health-care services. In their budgetary processes, the government should increase funding for social services, including education.

### **7.8.3 Budget**

Throughout the history of Black people in South Africa, Black education was under-funded. It is imperative that the government put into place implementable and practical strategies to address past imbalances which continue to prevail in rural areas. The following measures should be taken into consideration when the budgetary system at both the national and provincial departments are put in place:

- # The establishment of sectoral review teams, which should play a role in ensuring that expenditure trends and budgetary policies are regularly assessed.
  
- # There is a need to capacitate and develop sound management at a provincial level to ensure meaningful implementation of fiscal processes. There should be acceptable financial management capacities at both the provincial and national level.
  
- # Contributions to education expenditure from private sectors are becoming increasingly imperative and should be pursued more vigorously.

### **7.8.4 Curriculum**

Curriculum should take into cognisance the realities that exist in rural areas. To be able to implement the OBE approach, the government needs to provide rural schools with the necessary OBE kits and equipment such as photocopiers and computers. The move by the government to introduce inclusive education in public schools is commendable, but before it can be implemented, it is imperative to introduce efficient continual training courses for teachers in that regard, not merely workshops which last a day or two.

### **7.8.5 Pre-primary education**

The Early Childhood Education is a noticeable imperative. Numerous studies have revealed the importance of pre-primary education and the correlation between its absence and school failure, dropout and repetition rates. The government needs to establish more of these schools, especially in rural areas where they are minimal.



### **7.8.6 Staff qualifications**

Teacher qualification and recruitment are some of the major challenges facing rural education. The government needs to put in place recruitment strategies to make teaching in rural areas attractive. Salaries paid to rural teachers should be made attractive with more benefits that are normally applicable to teachers in urban areas.

### **7.8.7 Technology resources**

Researchers have posited that access to technology can greatly enhance the learning capabilities of learners, especially those in isolated areas where educational resources are not available in the immediate community (Stern 1994). Educational videos, instructional software and access to the Internet could be powerful solutions for poor rural schools with curricular disadvantages and few resources. Cognisance is taken here that to implement technological apparatus, infrastructure and resources are needed.

### **7.8.9 Resources and facilities**

There is a serious need to fast-track acceptable standards of basic facilities and conditions for teaching and learning (i.e. minimum learning conditions) in order to provide a context for quality education. The government needs to budget for infrastructural provision since it poses a serious threat towards quality education in rural areas.

### **7.8.10 Non-formal basic education activities**

The introduction of non-formal basic education activities in rural areas which will target various groups of illiterate and semi-illiterate adults, as well as children should be introduced.

### **7.8.11 Close co-operation among the providers of basic education**

Close co-operation among the providers of basic education is a prerequisite for making meaningful progress in rural areas. There should be meaningful co-operation between various stakeholders which have an interest in education, including both the governmental (e.g.

ministries of education, agriculture, rural development, health, environment) and non-governmental, operating at various levels, from national to local.

#### **7.8.12 Private sector involvement**

Although there are important public policy issues concerning private sector involvement in education (e.g. equity, standards, certification, public funding), the private sector cannot be overlooked as an actual or potential partner in expanding and improving the provision of schooling in rural areas. The involvement of private sector, as an important potential partner needs to be encouraged, for example, through tax incentives or other inducements, to join in developing non-formal basic education opportunities in rural areas.

#### **7.8.13 Promoting community ownership of basic education**

Promoting community ownership of basic education programmes helps ensure their relevance, sustainability and effectiveness both in terms of learning achievement and of contributing to other rural development objectives. Involving local communities in the planning process is a first step and this needs to be done in an open, inclusive way so that all interest groups can express their views and any potential opposition is removed or at least identified. In this case the government has a role to play in balancing individual's rights and community responsibility and to guard against possible domination and discrimination at local levels.

### **7.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Meeting the basic learning needs of rural people in South Africa is clearly a major challenge to achieving "Education for All". The provision of education in rural areas requires and merits far more attention, effort and resources than it presently receives. These sentiments are shared by Professor Jonathan Jansen in an open letter addressed to the new Minister of Education in 2004, Naledi Pandor, when he mentions that:

...[s]econd, stay focused on the schools that need you. Most Black children will not be accommodated within these few elite schools - your energies and resources should be deployed where it matters, in the *rural* and *under-served* schools (*City Press* 2004[e]:16 - emphasis mine).

The statement above clearly reflects an understandable concern that the government needs to deal with the many problems associated with and are the main causes of rural neglect. Basic education must be offered on an equitable basis so that *all* learners (rural learners included) have a fair opportunity to obtain a viable education and be able to continue learning throughout their entire lifetime.

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