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STATE, REGION, ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL
INEQUALITIES IN POSTCOLONIAL NAMIBIA

presented by

Tangeni Cornelius Kakweno Iijambo

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Education

Douglas R. Campbell

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**STATE, REGION, ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES IN
POSTCOLONIAL NAMIBIA**

By

Tangeni Cornelius Kakweno Iijambo

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION

2001

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ABSTRACT

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By

TANGENI CORNELIUS KAKWENO IJJAMBO

This study identifies some of the practices that are shaping, in complex and sometimes contradictory ways, the persistence of educational inequalities, along regional and ethnic lines, in the transformation of postcolonial Namibia. The purpose of this study was to investigate the extant inequalities and lack of access to educational opportunity which continue to inhibit Namibia's educational development and which continue to manifest themselves in different ways in post-colonial Namibia.

Twenty education officers and two groups, each consisting of ten people from two disadvantaged marginalized ethnic groups, were given semi-structured and structured interviews to determine the extent to which educational disparities affect various regions and ethnic groups in post-colonial Namibia. Other data consists of original materials, reports, and other documents the researcher was able to secure both in and outside Namibia.

The study explored the forms and combinations of inequality and social stratification in education, as manifested along regional and ethnic lines. The report of this research provides evidence supporting the conclusion that the thrust for educational transformation in Namibia cannot be realized without responding to the need for fundamental educational reform. More specifically, the major finding of the study is that

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inequities and inequalities are a result of deep-rooted poverty and social stratification of the majority population that emanated from the inherited legacy of apartheid. In this study, “transformation” was defined as basic change in the structure of national institutions to allow the individual a maximum opportunity to ensure her or his advancement, without any restrictions in terms of socioeconomic, regional or ethnic background to participate in the nation building purpose.

This dissertation was completed at a time when the SWAPO-dominated, post-independence government had been in power for eleven years. This was a time of national self-reflection, both inside and outside government. This study makes a timely contribution to the national debate on educational inequalities, regional and ethnic stratification, and marginalization.

The significance of this study lies in its attempt to situate educational policies within an analysis of the colonial to postcolonial transition while also taking into account the international global context of funding, influence, and restructuring of policies and practices.

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DEDICATION

My sons, Takamitheni (literally translated, meaning, “Beware”) and Kuraushimane (meaning “Grow up and do something about it”) this is my dignity to you, this is your dignity from me. In Lusaka 1987, while Takamitheni was only six-and-a-half months old, and in Windhoek 1995, while Kuraushimane was only two-and-a-half months old, I had to leave you while you were babies. The first few years of our lives are the most delicate, and thus very important. To endure them without a father, or a father without his sons, has its consequences, for both father and sons. However, I believe the sacrifice was worthwhile and the wait justifiable to accomplish what may sustain us and in this complex world improve our future. Your mothers, Harriet Sithole Chatepa, then in Lusaka Zambia, and Mbatjiua Emla Kapitako, in Windhoek Namibia, have done a remarkable job in raising you alone during your infancy.

All the extended Iijambo and Ihuhua families, your encouragement, support, love and patience enhanced and improved my vision. My parents did not have much formal schooling but understood the value and power of education. All siblings and extended family cousins and nieces and nephews got an opportunity for the only available primary education. Ovandu Kombombo ete uina maatu zuvaka ombura ambura. Namibia one finger alone does not pick up anything. Our collective blood, sweat and tears as well as concerted efforts, therefore, led to our deserved independence. It is now up to us what we will make of the freedom. Ngele Namibia otwelihalela uuyuki, nuukaleleli otuna okuuvathana etatu hangana.

I honor all the martyrs, comrades and heroes who both in Namibia and in exile fell during the struggle for independence. Africa, understanding you may eventually help

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us save ourselves and ultimately serve you better. The global village is too fragile, multinational and diverse to continue with educational inequalities and social injustice and stratification indefinitely. Those left out, who in some cases never get opportunities to get an education, may well be our saviors. The universe and infinity, we the earthlings together, will try to curve our way into the endlessness. Last but not in any way the least, the deprived and marginalized communities in Namibia and beyond, I hope this study will serve as a mouthpiece for you to initiate the process of your VOICES to be heard.

The study is dedicated to all the above with hope for universal, equitable, and contextually quality education and understanding of the forces that shape our life and future. That seems to be inevitable because despite frequent conflicts, the world is daily becoming the desired “global village.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In our academic sojourns, we all accumulate huge intellectual debts. Over the long years of my student life many people have, the phrases ‘helped me’ and or ‘assisted me’ seem inadequate, shaped what I have become. In the writing of a dissertation, the old adage “no person is an island” certainly holds true. Throughout my academic career, I was fortunate to be mentored by outstanding individuals.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the professors who served on my dissertation committee: Drs. Douglas R. Campbell, David N. Plank, Susan L. Melnick and John D. Metzler. I am grateful that throughout my years of study at Michigan State University they served as colleagues, mentors and guides. I am sure that I was not an easy person to be guidance committee for, thus, I do appreciate their time, their patience, and their good advice. I also appreciate their continuous encouragement and support of my efforts to complete my dissertation.

Secondly, I would like to thank my sponsor Fulbright and the administrators of the program, the Institute of International Education, without whose sponsorship this study would but remain an idea in my mind. I highly value and appreciate the costly process they supported me through. I honor Michigan State University’s assistance for its payment of my out of state tuition. MSU also sponsored my extended visa, without which I could not have stayed in the US. The Office of International Students and Scholars was appreciably fundamental in that process. Drs. Villet and Amukugo were my pillars during the data collection stage in Namibia and my mother Ueitiraje Toini Carolina Iijambo deserves her appreciation for ozongama and for letting me use her delicate Isuzu KB during that process. I am also indebted to all of my participants for

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their professional conduct, objectivity as well as subjectivity and hospitality. Apaxu Maiz brother in solidarity, our hair will eternally inspire and connect us. Kev Stoffer, nothing could link us better than the stars.

All my colleagues in the Department of Education (past and present) have been wonderful sources of edification. They are too numerous to mention. Fellow graduate students urged me to reach for the sky, with their friendship, collegiality and concern, I will not mention names, lest I forget some. However, their humanity will sustain me throughout my life. Thanks for the work, play, frustrations and sometimes the joy we shared throughout my program. I do not know what I would have done without their friendship and support. Members of Hisa! (Never Die) and Uerikuua H. L. I. Hangula were the “punching bags” for receiving most of my frustrations and emotions in the process.

Survivors from years of colonialism, annihilation and destruction, this is for you! I relish the wonderful collective and extended family tradition that paved the way for all our successes. Our fallen heroes, I will always miss you but strive to represent you. Last but not least, thanks to all the other professors, staff, friends, and fellow students who contributed in various ways to my completing this dissertation and who helped in making my years at Michigan State University a worthwhile experience.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS – ACRONYMS

EPSSA	Education Policy for Sub-Sahara Africa
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Policy
HD	Human Development
HDI	Human Development Index
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LSMS	Living Standard Measurement Study
MBEC	Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
MHEVST	Ministry of Higher Education Vocational Training Science and Technology
MNC	Multinational Cooperation
NAMCOL	Namibia College of Open Learning
NANSO	Namibia National Student Organization
NANTU	Namibia National Teachers Union
NDP	National Development
NEC	National Education Certificate
NEPRU	Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit
NISER	Namibia Institute of Social and Economic
N\$	Namibian Dollar
PTC	Primary Teacher Certificate
SADEC	Southern African Development Cooperation
SAQMEG	Southern Africa Quality Measurement Education Group
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SSA	Sub-Sahara Africa
SWANU	South West Africa National Union
SWAPO	South West Africa Peoples Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIN	United Nations Institute for Namibia
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

Overview of

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Study's Main Goals and Questions

This study explores the enduring inequalities of access to educational opportunity and equitable distribution of educational resources experienced by various regional and ethnic groups in Namibia. Bradshaw and Ndegwa (2000) appropriately observed that

Since gaining independence from Pretoria in 1990, the Namibian government has attempted to reverse the decades-long educational neglect caused by apartheid. Beyond expanding access to schooling, the SWAPO-led government hopes to expand access to secondary schooling, desegregate White schools, and reduce race-based disparities in school quality at all levels.

Despite these good intentions and efforts the legacy of restrictive, unequal, and elitist apartheid education system has continued to haunt post-colonial policies and practices in Namibia. As a result, access to quality education is still denied to the majority of the population.

I define quality education here as that received in schools that have qualified teachers, adequate equipment, and a reasonable student-teacher ratio, and that are well resourced in terms of buildings, laboratories, books, library, water, electricity, and all the necessary conditions that facilitate a good learning environment. At independence in 1990, Namibia had inherited eleven different educational administrations based on ethnic and regional divisions with different funding and resource allocation. The Ministry of Education and Culture (1993, p. 21) states that

The transition between the eleven education systems and authorities of the past and the single Ministry of Education and Culture is a continuing challenge. Societal expectations remain sharply divided. On the one

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hand, the majority marginalized in the old system demands the redress of unequal allocations and social disadvantages: education for all. On the other hand, there persist concern, even fear among the privileged minority that this redress may lead to declining quality in education and other adverse effects for them and their children.

The educational disparities in Namibia are reflected in a lack of facilities in most schools (especially in the rural areas), poor teaching quality, high failure rates, and differential budget allocations to regions. In addition to the deep-rooted inherited inequalities, new inequalities exacerbate the lack of good quality education for the majority and enhance social stratification in Namibia. I therefore address the question, “Why do educational inequalities persist along regional and ethnic lines in post colonial Namibia?”

Large numbers of children from deprived communities have been left out, and those who manage to have access to schools have been left behind in the upper grades of all-age schools. Successive colonial administrations have prevented the majority population from receiving an education that would enable them to compete in the labor market, and the postcolonial administration has grappled unsuccessfully with the severe inherited limitations of the provision for access to schools, as well as economic resources. Cohen (1994, p. 4) posed the relevant question of whether “when a majority-rule government came to power, could they be relied upon from an ideological standpoint and would they be professionally competent to carry out the innovations needed after independence?” In a general sense, the patterns of inequality have tended to persist, although the details have changed. This study examined the differences between rural and urban areas, as well as the relation of social class and school achievement; I have

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Some of the issues that have been identified and extensively explored in this dissertation relate to rights guaranteed in the constitution, such as the right to equality of opportunity, the empowerment of the previously disadvantaged, and the right to be taught in one's own language. All these translate into sociopolitical, educational and ideological struggles by various stakeholders in the educational establishment. According to Brock-Utne (2000, p. xvii),

These struggles not only shape educational policy and practice; they also are dialectically related to more general relations of power among social classes, racial/ethnic groups, gender groups, and nations. Thus, the politics of education and the political work accomplished through education are ways in which existing social relations are reproduced, legitimated, challenged, or transformed.

This introductory chapter is about policy, practice, and legislation. It sets up and contextualizes the issues that are examined in other chapters of the dissertation, moving from the premise that education begins with policy formulation. It has been said that the education system of a country reflects what the country values and holds dear. The proliferation of education policies, laws, acts, and discussion documents in Namibia since 1990 mirrors the state of hope, desire, and urgency to move away from a painful, divisive, destructive, and self-defeating apartheid education system. The vision of the new government from 1990 is articulated in the new constitution and in the Ministry of Education and Culture policy document "Towards Education for All, a Development Brief for Education, Culture, and Training," and in numerous other local, national, and international policy documents.

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Statement of the Problem

As a historical consequence of structural inequalities in access to education, knowledge, and resources, students from some minority groups and deprived regions in Namibia face persistent barriers to educational opportunity. From the colonial experience it is known that the apartheid educational distribution was divisive and institutionalized along racial, regional, and ethnic lines to serve the hegemonic aims and objectives of the apartheid regime (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993; Brock-Utne, 2000; Young, 1994; Amukugo, 1993). Yet in independent Namibia, as in many other African countries, education has come to be considered a basic human right, to be available to all people. Article 20 of independent Namibia's constitution provides that

All persons shall have the right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining state schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge. (Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990, p. 12)

In spite of the constitutional mandate and in the face of this educational "bill of rights," some regional, "racial," and ethnic communities remain under-represented at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels and have less access to the country's educational opportunity at all levels. This unequal participation, therefore, raises fundamental issues that deserve close examination.

According to Melber (1997), "Resources continue to be concentrated in those regions that have received higher allocations in the past, and many schools are still without basic infrastructure such as teachers' housing, water, and equipment" (p. 24). This directly contradicts the well-enunciated government policy as stipulated in "Toward Education for All" of the Ministry of Education and Culture (1992, p. 25), that "to

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provide education for all, we must expand access to our education system. For that we need not just more schools but schools and other education programs where learning is truly accessible to all Namibians.” However, access, equity, or development in general, whether it is educational, political, social, or economic development, Adedeyi (1991, p. 2) argues, “is a process of interaction between human and material resources and the intervention of the application of technology for the purpose of producing goods and services to satisfy the needs of all the people.”

At independence the Namibian government unified the eleven educational administrations. All learners can attend any school of their choice. In reality, however, the majority of parents cannot afford to send their children to well-resourced schools, which charge high fees. According to the UNDP (1998, p. 20),

Rural households have, on average, only one third the income of their urban counterparts. As family sizes in rural areas are generally larger than those found in urban areas, rural dwellers have even smaller per capita incomes, equivalent to only one quarter of those in urban areas.

This problem is also recognized in responses from some of the government educational officials who were interviewed. For example, one of the questions asked what the new government has done to eliminate the apartheid legacy of unequal and inaccessible education. The majority of respondents were concerned about “access to education without quality” and “inequality in resource allocation” as the dilemmas after independence. Mungazi and Walker (1997, p. xxiii) emphasize that “as critically important as it is, educational reform must be initiated within the environment of fundamental change that must take place in the social system.” This means that the political system has to change to embrace the general concept of reform itself. This study

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sought to address the vexing question of why, in spite of reforms, economic growth, and poverty, equity at the national level remains a cause for concern.

In stark contrast to schools in and around Windhoek and other major towns, most schools in the densely populated but rural north, where most of the historically disadvantaged population resides, suffer from a chronic lack of resources. Many schools lack a basic infrastructure, i.e., buildings and shelter. In schools that have water and sanitation, books and resource centers are lacking. Many respondents indicated that in this regard, electricity and laboratories are “luxuries” inconceivable in some rural schools. Many schools also lack qualified teachers and basic instructional materials and equipment.

Despite high growth rates in school enrollments since independence, Namibia’s education system is still unable to provide even minimal quality education to the majority of its school children, as evidenced by high failure rates and low learner achievement. The realities are that 25% of the students will not complete primary school, and 32% of adult Namibians remain illiterate.

Inequality in education reflects social and economic realities in postcolonial Namibia. Inequality remains endemic in all arenas of Namibia after a decade of post apartheid policies and practices. The UNDP-UN report (1998, p. 5) shows that

The richest 10% of society still receive 65% of income, leaving only 35% for the remaining 90%. In other words, half of Namibia’s population survives on approximately 10% of the average income, while 5% enjoys incomes that are five times the average.

Generally, as one moves from the south to the north, the regional human development indices decline. The northern regions this study concentrated on are at the bottom of the development list. Land ownership and use are the most visible signs of the

brutal colonial and apartheid past of Namibia. Issues of equity confront many areas in Namibia. Some regions have average class size twice those of other regions. This study was designed to contribute to the understanding of the changing Namibian education system and its fledgling role in the nation building process.

The importance that the government and the people of Namibia attach to education as a means of national development cannot be overstressed. Since independence, on average, the government has spent about 18 – 20%, and in some years as much as 25%, of its annual recurrent budget on education. Communities have contributed materials and labor force liberally to build schools. School fees are regarded as a first call on family incomes. Unemployed parents do indeed sell their livestock and even land to send their children to school and to keep them there. In many cases pupils walk long distances to school, and endure many hours of coaching in order to cross the hurdles of external examinations. The importance of formal schooling as a lever of social and economic advancement is almost everywhere fully embraced. Namibians have always placed a great deal of faith in education. This is evidenced by the way parents strive to send and keep their children in school. As Sadovnik et al. (1994, p. 1) indicate, “Schools have been viewed as providers of opportunity for social mobility, as places that nurture and develop the hearts and minds of children, as antidotes for ignorance and prejudice, and as solutions to myriad social problems.” The returns from education take generations, and the upgrading of teachers’ qualifications and schools is a long-term process. Nevertheless, there is an ultimate link between educational performance and economic efficiency.

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The accomplishments of Namibia in the field of education since independence have been remarkable. In terms of quantitative expansion, for example, the number of school children who leave school having completed the primary cycle rose from 57% in 1989 to over 96% in 1999 Brock-Utne 2000. The number of secondary schools has grown tremendously throughout the country. The University of Namibia enrollment has increased yearly since independence. By and large, the University and other tertiary institutions, as well as primary and secondary schools, have coped well with the tremendous difficulties caused by political instability, globalization trends, and economic hardships.

Yet, in spite of this public zeal and relatively heavy public expenditure on education, the gap between social demand and public supply is still very wide and in some cases critical. For instance, only about 60% of the children of primary school age are able to receive more than a few years of schooling, and there is such a narrow bottleneck at the end of primary school that the stream of young people for whom neither secondary education nor employment outlets are available is a major problem.

At the same time, the government and the people, as well as professional educators, have expressed concern about the inequitable education system and its failure to meet the needs of society. Education is failing to promote a sense of national unity, self-reliance, social justice, and equity, and is failing to impart scientific and technological knowledge, cultural values, literacy, and a sense of social responsibility.

All levels and sectors of Namibian society value education for both its intrinsic worth and its practical utility in strengthening the individual and community. Society invests tremendous resources in education based on the belief that education leads to

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Moreover, since independence, education in Namibia has taken the largest single share of the national budget. However, access to educational opportunity is still lacking for some people in the country, especially historically marginalized ethnic groups. Consequently, education in Namibia is a contested terrain and it is highly politicized. The Ministry of Education and Culture (1994, p. 1) indicates that

At independence Namibia inherited an education system best characterized by five key features. First, the system was unequal and fragmented along racial and ethnic lines. Second, there was a lack of access, or unequal access to education and training at all levels of the system. Third, the system was inefficient in terms of low progression and achievement rates and high wastage rates. Fourth, the curriculum and teacher education programs were irrelevant and ineffective to the needs and aspirations of the individuals and the nation. Fifth, there was a lack of democratic participation within the education and training system.

Learners, teachers, parents, administrators, and workers were excluded from the decision-making process. On the whole there was an extremely unequal financial resource allocation for the different educational administrations. The colonial government spent ten times as much on a learner in a school in the White administration as it did on a learner attending a school under the Owambo administration. The Owambo administration is one of the apartheid eleven administrations that were based on ethnic and regional divisions. The Ovawambo people are half of Namibia's approximately 1.7 million population (see Table 1, which shows the disparities in the then different administrations).

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Table 1

Government Expenditure on Education in Rands, 1974/75 and 1975/76

Ethnic Group	Fiscal Year 1974/75	Fiscal Year 1975/76	Expenditure Per Pupil 1975
White	12,351,000	14,451,000	614.94
Coloured	3,156,700	4,160,000	163.00
Black	7,374,000	9,135,000	68.38

(Source: Thomas, 1978.)

The unequal financial allocation naturally resulted in inequalities all through the system. The legacies of colonial education continued in post-colonial Namibia. Most changes have been quantitative while quality is lacking for the vast majority, and many of the changes have actually exacerbated inequalities. Generally, educational systems are change resistant; undoing the legacies of apartheid is a lengthy, costly, and difficult undertaking. The continued inequalities and discrimination in Namibian schools are evident in a number of factors, including the low quality of teachers in terms of formal education and professional training in some schools, especially in rural areas and under served regions. The Ministry of Education and Culture (1994, p. 5), for example, indicates that “in 1991 Rundu region had 49%, whereas Windhoek in the Khomas region had 82% qualified teachers. Since then the disparities between regions have increased in this respect and in 1993 only 44% of the teachers in Rundu were qualified.” There are schools, mainly in towns and privileged areas, which enjoy the services of highly qualified teachers, have a low student-teacher ratio, and have better resources in terms of books, libraries, buildings, laboratories and other educational resources.

The continued lack of access to educational opportunity for some groups is due in part to the apartheid legacy. However, this condition can also be attributed to the emerging elite who after independence assumed positions of power and are working

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towards its consolidation and maintenance, and thus are in the process of perpetuating inequalities. Zvobgo (1997, p. 40), writing on postcolonial Zimbabwe, holds a similar view and concludes that “educational disparities during the colonial period were based on race but the current inequalities are rooted in the class structure of society and the unequal distribution of resources to various regions.” The new elite, consisting of government officials and the business community, have joined the former oppressors and created a class based on economic status, income or affordability. These are the groups enjoying the privileges of the best-equipped schools, which the working class and the disadvantaged of society cannot afford. Jauch (1998, p. 107) states that “the realization of equity will require large amounts of money to be spent on the provision of adequate facilities and qualified staff to rural schools. Students in rural areas will, otherwise, remain at a competitive disadvantage compared to their urban counterparts.” The same can be said about disadvantaged schools in urban areas.

Research Objectives

In exploring and analyzing the continued lack of access and unequal educational opportunity available to various regional and ethnic groups in Namibia. This study paid particular attention to the inequitable distribution of educational resources, as well as to the ways in which inequalities in education manifest themselves along regional and ethnic lines.

Within the framework of this study’s explorations necessary historical background on the development of regional and ethnic divisions is presented. This will enhance the understanding of the ways in which education contributes to the creation of the inherited colonial social order, as well as to contradictions within that process. In its

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“National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalized Children,” the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1998, p. 32) suggested that “the inclusion of issues related to the education of marginalized children should be a feature in both in-service as well as pre-service education of teachers, and in workshops and seminars for other education staff, social workers and other stakeholders.” The study examined the extent to which ethnicity and region restricts access to educational opportunity.

There is tremendous historical and contemporary evidence showing ethnic, race, class, gender, regional, and even age tensions and contestations within Namibia. Nevertheless, this study limited its focus to the unequal access to education opportunity based on region and ethnicity. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to explore, analyze and document the crucial issues of inequitable educational distribution and limited access to educational opportunity, which continue to perpetuate social stratification in Namibian society. Analysis of these inequalities cannot, however, be understood without looking into the historical factors, which partly contributed to the current educational and social inequalities.

This study also was designed to help the stakeholders involved in education learn more about the current situation over the entire country, with regard to social stratification and the whole spectrum of minority group education among all marginalized communities. The study was intended to lead to concrete recommendations to sensitize not only the government but also other stakeholders to work towards sustainable solutions to the plight of minority ethnic and regional groups. I compared how the educational problems found among various groups relate to the general

development problems minority ethnic groups face, and I suggest in which ways stakeholders could intensify the dialogue or provide answers to these crucial problems.

Research Questions

This study investigated why educational inequalities continue to exist on regional and ethnic lines given ten years of independence and the unequivocal support for equal education for all as enunciated in the constitution and government policy documents.

The primary research question which guided this study, was:

- In what ways do inequalities in education manifest along regional and ethnic lines and to what extent, why, and how do regional and ethnic divisions continue to restrict access to educational opportunity in postcolonial Namibia?

The subsidiary questions were:

- What forms do the inequality take? For example access to funding, availability of facilities, teacher training, financial resources, staffing, equipment, school buildings, and language policy?
- What political, social, and economic factors explain these inequalities?
- What evidence if any exists that the disenfranchised minority groups are aware of the educational inequalities? In what ways do they seek educational parity?
- Does social background account for a higher proportion of the variance in achievement than between school differences in resource inputs?
- Which factors peculiar to region and ethnicity improve or constrain access to schooling and affect the quality and nature of education provided?
- What political (state), social (regional and ethnic) and economic factors explain persistence of these inequalities?

Significance of the Study

Previous studies of education in Namibia fall short of examining the aspect of inequalities on regional and ethnic lines, particularly the new inequalities that have resulted from policies and practices of the independent government. The vital roles of

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actual structures; personnel involved in the control, administration and policy of education; and the involvement of the marginalized communities themselves have been overlooked. There has been little recognition of the efforts of marginalized ethnic groups in Namibia. There is limited knowledge about their experiences, and lack of keen understanding about how they survive in the numerous ethnic communities they represent. This research aimed to fill the gap and in so doing has broken new ground. For the first time there is an attempt to link policy and practice on the provision, control, and focus on regional and ethnic challenges of post apartheid inequities.

The significance of this dissertation is that it provides an opportunity for the voices of the educationally marginalized and the often-ignored socially stratified communities' to be heard. The data collection and analysis styles employed in this work assisted me in relating information on the culture, context, and history of various groups' and education officers intentions, potential and work. Furthermore, this study attempted to interrogate the experiences of both the marginalized communities and the government employed education officers who both have various views about persistent educational inequalities along ethnic and regional lines. The study also furthers scholarly understanding of educational inequalities and clarifies ethnic myths and realities that play out in the process of nation building process in Namibia.

The study provides additional information about some of Namibia's hitherto overlooked minority regional and ethnic groups who were neglected during the colonial demarcations and also during the current post colonial dispensation. This work is also meaningful because there are no Black Namibians who are looking at this topic in this way, which places the issues of educational inequities and ethnic and regional disparities

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at the center. I am one of the few Black scholars not only addressing these important issues, but also suggesting further research for in-depth understanding. Hopefully, the lessons learned from this study will contribute essential reference and insight to other educational as well as national leaders, policy makers, and researchers in Namibia, Africa, and beyond who are just beginning to look at regional and ethnic experiences of educational inequalities. Jiobu (1990), for instance, states, “Ethnic issues are becoming increasingly prominent, both in the United States and around the world (p. 1).”

Finally, this study is also important as a case study for other researchers interested in identity and deprivation, indigenous cultures, and social stratification on regional and ethnic lines across the globe. Most other similar studies’ reluctance to embrace the notions of ethnicity, race, and class as socially constructed elevates this study to an important position. It is noteworthy to examine how interaction with the respondents revealed reality that is shaped by social, ethnic, political, gender, cultural, economic, racial, color, and language issues formed and solidified over time. It is also crucial to hear the respondents speak for themselves about their struggles in defining inequities and ethnicity from their own perspective within these social constructs. And it is crucial to learn how being from another ethnic group with a different home language may result in different experiences and understanding of these experiences. Perhaps more than any other social variables, regionalism and ethnicity impact the policies and practices of governmental institutions in Africa today, which makes inquiry into these factors of utmost importance in contemporary Africa.

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Background – Historical and General Description of Namibia

Education in Namibia is greatly influenced by its geography, population, socio-economic, and political experiences. All of these shaped the education systems and the inequalitarian educational distributions discussed in this study. Namibia became an independent state on March 21, 1990, after more than a century of colonial rule. Namibia was colonized first by Germany, from 1884 – 1915, then by South Africa, from 1915 – 1990. The country was declared a mandate of the League of Nations in 1915 after its initial German colonizers lost all their colonies in Africa. The mandate of South West Africa, as the country was formerly known, was regulated by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers. Harlech-Jones (1997, p. 9) clarifies that

The question of authority over Namibia, and the legitimacy of South African rule in the territory, dated back to the disbanding of the League of Nations and the founding of the United Nations shortly after the Second World War. In 1915, South Africa militarily occupied South West Africa (as Namibia was formerly called) by defeating the German colonial forces that occupied the territory. When South Africa established its control over the territory, confirmed by the granting of a mandate by the League of Nations in 1920, it inherited a country in which the indigenous inhabitants had been devastated and dispossessed in wars against the German colonial forces.

Early in the twentieth century German genocide against the inhabitants consolidated German colonial power and placed the prime grazing land under White control. During the 1960s, as the European powers granted independence to their colonies and trust territories in Africa, pressure mounted on South Africa to do the same for Namibia. In 1966 the United Nations General Assembly revoked South Africa's mandate. Intense negotiations with South Africa, the liberation war, and international pressure led to the beginning of Namibia's formal transition to independence in April 1989. During the eleven months' transition, political prisoners were granted amnesty,

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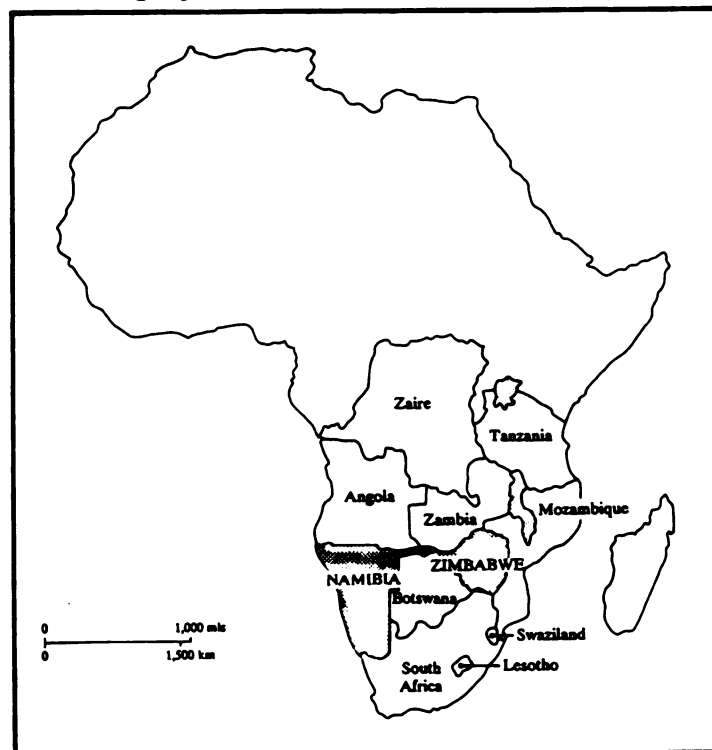
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discriminatory legislation disappeared, South Africa withdrew its forces, and thousands (more than 42, 000) of refugees (including the author of this dissertation) returned to Namibia under the UN auspices of Resolution 435. The first multi-ethnic elections took place in November 1989, and by February 1990 the Constituent Assembly had drafted and adopted a constitution.

The third largest land area in southern Africa after Angola and South Africa, Namibia covers 824, 392 square kilometers. Situated on the west coast of southern Africa the country is bordered by Angola and Zambia in the north, Zimbabwe and Botswana in the northeast and east, South Africa in the south and the Atlantic Ocean on the western coastline.

Figure 1

Geographical Position of Namibia in Africa

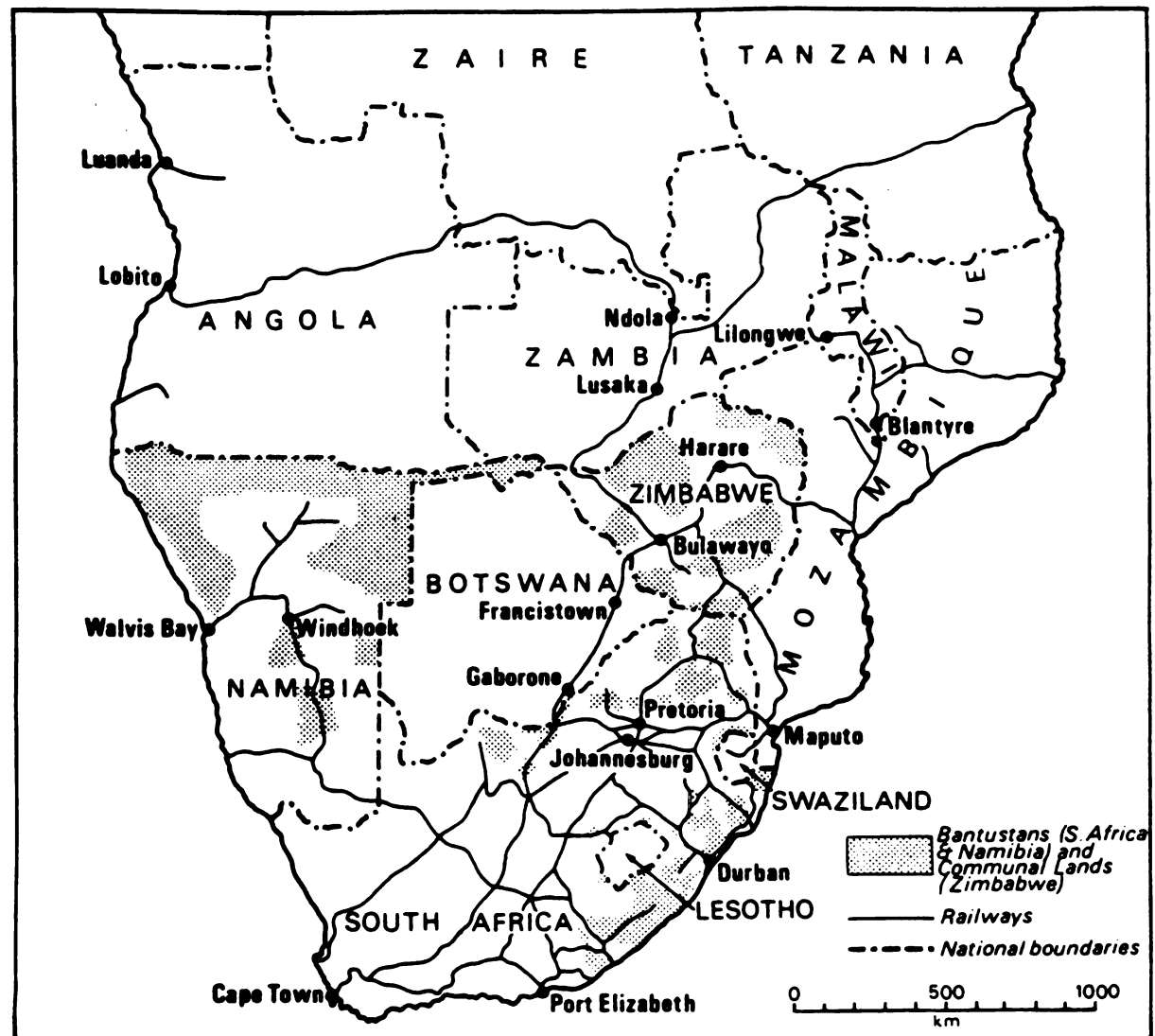


(Source: Cohen, 1994.)



Figure 2

Political Geography of Southern Africa



(Source: Simon, 1989.)

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The Namib Desert, arid and desolate with high, shifting dunes with a width varying between 80 and 150 km, extends along the entire coastline. The name Namibia was derived from this oldest desert in the world. With a population of 1.6 million people, Namibia has one of the lowest population densities in the world. The population is scattered all over the country, with the largest concentration in the northeast, north, and northwest. According to Mbamba (1982, p. 28), "The altitude varies from 1000 to 2000 meters, forming a diversified landscape of mountains, sand valleys and gently undulating plains. The Kalahari Desert lies along most of the east of the territory." The Kalahari is a semi-arid desert composed of monotonous plains covered with thick layers of terrestrial sands, and limestone, various shrubs, and grasses grow in scattered areas.

At independence, the new Namibian government inherited eleven educational administrations, designed and demarcated by the apartheid regime according to the different ethnic, racial and regional groups. Some ethnic groups were not recognized during the colonial period of division. These were either lumped together with others or just left out by colonialists. These ethnic, racial, and regional groups had unequal access to formal education during colonialism.

Other basic facts: capital city, Windhoek; GDP, US\$2.8 billion, GDP Per Capita, US\$1,860; literacy – 76%. Namibia is one of the most unequal societies in the world. It is a more unequal society than countries such as Brazil and Bangladesh (UNDP 1990). The richest 10% of the society receive 65% of income. Conversely, the remaining 90% share amongst themselves only 35% of national income. The inter-census annual population growth rate between 1981 and 1991 was 3.1 % (Republic of Namibia –

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Central Statistics Office, 1994:7). By the beginning of 1999 the population growth rate stood at 3.4 % according to one of the interviewees for the study.

Despite the high priority the post-independence government has put on education, spending 25% (in 1993) of total government recurrent expenditure on that sector, the historically disadvantaged communities still face a combination of problems pertaining to unequal access to educational opportunity, poor teacher quality, lack of facilities, student quality, and high drop out rates, especially in rural schools in the outlying regions.

The government of Namibia has been successful in improving some of the infrastructure, and in raising the enrollment rates, particularly at grades 1 – 3, where repetition rates and drop out rates have been severe. Improved educational infrastructure and less emphasis on formal selective mechanisms have resulted in reduced drop out rates, especially during the first years of schooling. In 1990, for example, over 70% of school leavers were finishing at or before the end of primary grades, and almost half of these after grade one. By 1994 this had fallen to 50%, with a marked reduction in the number leaving after grade one (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996). Similarly, the number of qualified teachers is increasing, albeit slowly.

However, despite these overall improvements and progress aimed at spreading development to previously disadvantaged communities after independence, the White population lives better, remains richer, and is better educated. Resources continue to be concentrated in those regions that have received higher allocations in the past, while in less well resourced regions many schools are still without basic infrastructure such as teachers' housing, water, libraries, and equipment. Out-of-school rates for particular communities are still extremely high: over 80% of San speaking children of school going

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age are not in school; the average for other language groups is less than 20% (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996).

The Distribution of Regional and Ethnic Groups in Namibia

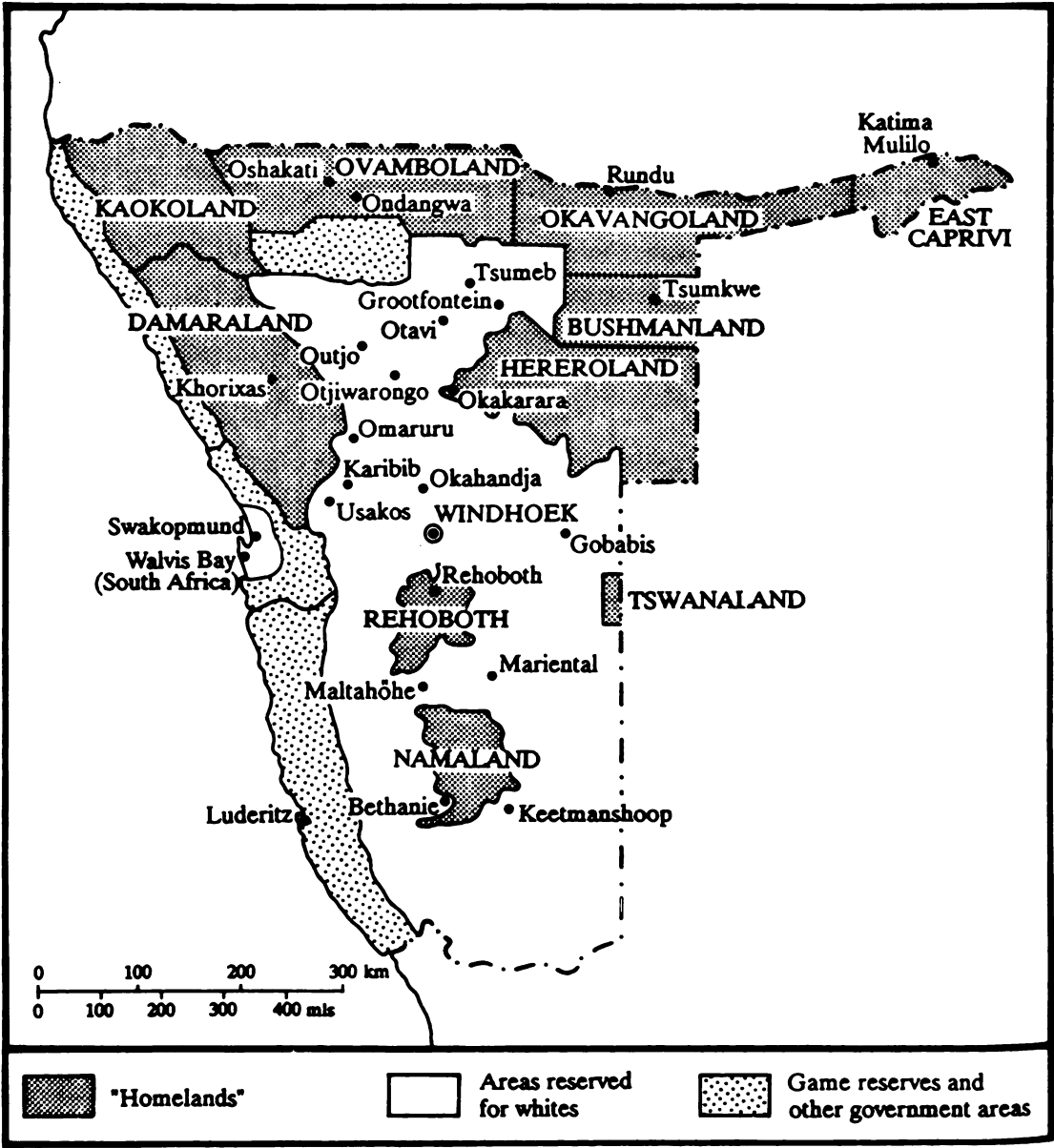
Before independence, the boundaries between regional and ethnic groups were reinforced by geographical separation and by an administrative and social system, which used ethnicity for many purposes. The UNDP analysis of human development for Namibia has revealed a pattern of inequities along regional, linguistic, gender, and urban-rural lines.

Ethnic categorization was the principle upon which access to educational opportunity, along with other economic and social services, was patterned and organized. Mbamba (1987, p. 43) points out that “the geographic distribution of the population in Namibia was determined by the apartheid laws and regulations which, while allowing temporary labor migration, restricted non-White population to the ‘reserves’ or ‘homelands’ or ‘Bantustans’ areas.”

For the sake of clarity and proper explanation of the factors that led to the current unequal distribution of resources, it is necessary to give the colonial and post colonial distributions of both human and natural resources. For purposes of administration and control, Namibia was divided into northern and southern sections, with the ethnic homelands clearly demarcated and the rest of the fertile farmland reserved for the White population. (See next page, map of Namibia showing homelands). These demarcations were also known as White Stan and Bantu Stan, or the police zone and the semi-autonomous reserves. The northern section contained only Blacks’ reserves, which were exclusively for the Black population; Whites and Coloreds were not allowed to settle

there. The map shows the general ethnic and regional population distribution in apartheid Namibia.

Figure 3
Ethnic 'Homelands' According to the Odendaal Plan



(Source: Cohen, 1994.)

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The homelands were administered and controlled by White European representatives of the Bantu Affairs Department of the South African government. The map above is a clear indication of the lack of understanding for and misrepresentation or limited categorization of various ethnic groups in the country's regions. In all these regions, for example, the various Khoi-San ethnic groups shared the habitat with other ethnic groups but were not shown or represented.

The rest of the country, which was the major portion of fertile land and with the most natural resources, was then referred to as the police zone. This zone was solely earmarked for the White settlers and for pockets of Colored and Nama (Nama are a light skinned people whose language is closer to the staccato San languages) settlements. Nama is one of Namibia's ethnic groups which, due to their lighter skin color, the colonial regime granted second-class position equivalent to the Coloreds. The current, post independence distribution of people, mainly by the thirteen political regions and seven educational regions as well as by language groups, still leaves out minority ethnic groups who are unaccounted for or are lumped together with the main recognized ethnic groups. Language is often centered on particular regions of the country, but urban migration has led to many languages being spoken outside their speakers' home regions. The table below shows the distribution of the population by language spoken at home. The category "Afrikaans" includes people of European descent as well as many of mixed origin whose mother tongue or the language used at home is Afrikaans.

Table 2

Namibia Population by Language Group

English	10,941
Afrikaans	133,324
German	12,827
Nama-Damara	175,554
Tswana	6,050
Otjiherero	112,916
Lozi/Caprivi	66,008
Oshiwambo	66,008
Other	66,008
San	14,503
Rukavango	136,649
Total	1,409,920

(Source: Population and Housing Census, 1991.)

The current government, as described by the respondents, aims to discourage ethnicity by not openly having ethnic categories. Nevertheless, the inherited system, which did not change in terms of settlement of various ethnic and regional groups, was systematically divided according to ethnic and language groups. Specific concentrations of ethnic groups still live in their former homelands, which are referred to as communal lands in post-colonial Namibia. According to the second Delimitation Commission (1998, p. v), “Thus far, Namibia’s population is predominantly rural based. About 69% of the country’s population live in rural areas, and only 31% in urban areas.” Since most of Namibia’s population is rural, people who live in towns and in the city go back to their respective reserves, villages, or regions to settle or visit. Schools in specific regions will teach in the language of the area for the first three grades as per government policy. However, there are dilemmas about parents’ reluctance for their children to learn languages other than their own in the preliminary grades. This in turn restricts movement of professionals and other workers from region to region. There is denial of ethnicity;

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most government officials interviewed expressed the fact that at independence, after abolishing the eleven educational administrations, ethnic categories are discouraged. This is partly an attempt to create a homogenous “one Namibia one nation” (a concept tried in many postcolonial societies in vain) by the government, in an era of growing ethnic and regional awareness that offers contradictory characteristics in Namibia’s nation building process. The Second Delimitation Commission (1998, p. v) emphasizes that

The sparsity of the population, compounded by the country’s immense land surface area, creates difficulties for communities in securing the reception of government services. The prevalent inadequate infrastructure, especially of roads in the regions, makes it difficult for communities to reach the administrative centers from where government services are rendered.

Not only does the incidence of poverty vary considerably from one region to the other, its profile in terms of dimensions varies also. According to the UNDP (1989) report, in terms of poverty, Otjozondjupa is the most representative region of the whole of Namibia. It comprises the richest commercial ranching and farming areas, as well as the least developed district of Tsumkwe, inhabited by the most deprived population group, the San. Kunene, however, is by far the most neglected region in terms of education, based on the number of schools in that region, qualified teachers, resources to those schools, and the people’s nomadic/pastoral lifestyles. “Like the Ovahimba, the Ovaherero in these areas need their children for herding their livestock and other chores, and some children may thus not be attending school, or are taken out of school for periods when their manpower is needed for the family economy” (Hvidsten and Kavari 1997, p. 11).

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Among the indigenous Black groups, there are no large differences except for the San and other minority groups like Ovazemba and Ovankhumbi, who are by far the most disadvantaged. Although the different Black communities have more or less similar levels of human development, a small Black elite has emerged since independence and is likely to continue to grow. Differences between urban and rural areas mirror discrepancies along other lines. The majority of those in rural areas are involved in subsistence agriculture. They have lower than average literacy rates, access to education, health care, and employment opportunities. This leads to high levels of inequities and deprivation with concomitant low levels of human resource development.

The Ministry of Education and Culture (1993, p. 34) states that “equality and equity are of special importance to Namibia. Our country is emerging from a sad history of racial discrimination and inequality. Continued privilege based on region, race or ethnicity is not acceptable.” Unfortunately, inequalities still persists at various levels. A comprehensive rural development strategy must form a major part of future efforts to eradicate or at least alleviate inequitable distribution of educational and other resources and promote sustainable development for various ethnic and regional groups in Namibia.

The next chapter deals with the literature and the explanatory theories used for this study.

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Chapter II

ENDURING PATTERNS OF INEQUALITIES BASED ON REGIONAL AND ETHNIC DIVISIONS WITHIN THE STATE

Background Literature on Educational Inequalities in Namibia, Africa, and Globally

This chapter reviews literature and theoretical frameworks for understanding the state, ethnicity, and educational inequalities from various global perspectives. The state and ethnicity were central to the planning of this study because educational inequalities are a product in Namibia, as in other African countries, of the state as manifested along regional and ethnic lines (gender and social class are also important). It is asserted here that educational inequalities exists in every country that has a formal education system, and that educational inequalities can be better understood in the context of understanding the concept of and function of the colonial and postcolonial state. It is also especially important to understand socio-political, as well as regional and international, developments (Samoff, 1998; Appadurai, 1996; Young, 1994).

Analyzing the complexity of unequal access to educational opportunities for ethnic and regional groups calls for the consideration of multiple conceptual frameworks and data sources. This study drew on various bodies of literature based on theories of the state. According to Hartshorne (1999, p. 6), "The state is not an impartial provider of education. The particular political social and economic context in which education exists is used by the state to achieve purposes which it considers to be advantageous or expedient."

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The other bodies of literature drawn on were theories of ethnicity including those about Africa. Young (1994, p. 234) documented that “asymmetric with the colonial state, subject societies acquired an array of ethnic fault lines far more pronounced than those in the pre-colonial world.” These theories explain the nuances and elaborate the different perspectives of the making and unmaking of ethnicity in the African continent. Rothchild (1997, p. 4) suggests that “ethnicity acts as a pole around which group members can mobilize and compete effectively for state controlled power, economic resources etc.” On the flip side, ethnicity is the mechanism of patrimonialism – the method by which relative weak and under-resourced post colonial states maintain power and a semblance of legitimacy.

The chapter explores the state’s origin and definition, then moves on to the colonial state and society. Basically the colonial state was weak, and thrived on race and class, as well as ethnicity, in a divide and rule manner. Exploration and explanation then moves on to the post-colonial state, which inherited the “weakness” and “softness,” and thus lacks capacity and legitimacy. As a result, the aspirations and expectations of both the people and the state are not met. The chapter expounds the inevitable patrimonialism, at both group and individual levels, which accentuates ethnicity. This seems to be important for various groups as they compete for “voice” in the political state arena and the distribution of resources in the civil arena. To mediate multi-ethnic and pluralistic cultural interests, the state must mediate competing interests by becoming more liberally tolerant of competing cultural frames (Bradshaw and Ndegwa 2000, p. 316).

These approaches were important and relevant to this study as they suggested more in-depth understanding of the endemic educational and social stratification

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problems experienced in Namibia, which are caused by multiple factors in the educational, cultural, social, economic, and political spheres. Additionally, the literature review examines the intersection of ethnic, race, class, and regional dichotomies to present a comparative analysis of the colonial state and its neo-colonial successor, the post-colonial state. Young (1994, p. 45) suggests that “exceptional features of the African colonial state, arising from the exigencies of its own reproduction, reproduced a singularly difficult legacy for the post-colonial state.” The concept of reproduction enhances the post-colonial state to be the major manufacturer of not only educational inequalities but also the unequal distribution of resources in all spheres of its operation. In this literature review it is important to explore how the dynamics of inequalities are demonstrated in the ethnic, regional, class, and general social stratification of Namibia.

The existing Namibian educational literature indicates that the problem of unequal access to educational opportunities has not been fully explored (Mbamba, 1982; Tjitendero, 1976; Pakarae-Kandjou, 1985; Ellis, 1984; Kamatuka, 1988; Amukugo, 1993; Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993; Kustaa, 1997; Melber 1997). Most of these works recognize the existence of inequitable access to schools and the skewed allocation of educational resources. Particularly noted are learners’ outcomes such as the high drop out, repetition, and failure rates for Black students, especially in outlying regions where distances between schools and villages are enormous and are key factors rather than ethnicity.

There is a need to provide research accounts that explore and conceptualize educational opportunities or the lack of them in Namibia. Jauch (1998, p. 102) reminds us that “the uneven allocation of resources during colonial rule left Namibia with gross

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inequalities between former White and Black schools, as well as between rural and urban schools.” Factors that contributed to the foundation of a dysfunctional elite colonial educational system that kept many Black children out of school, or prepared for failure those who were enrolled in school, deserve to be emphasized. In so doing, policy makers and the powers that be can have guidelines for determining future policies and practices aimed at equitable resource allocation to various ethnic and educational regions. The challenge to equalize educational opportunities through equitable resource allocation requires careful investment in time and budget reallocation.

At independence, equitable access to schooling was identified as an aspect of education that warranted special consideration because of Namibia’s history of discrimination and inequality. The Ministry of Education and Culture admits that spending on some students far exceeds that on others. These inequalities can only be eliminated by making all schools universally accessible and using the available resources optimally (Ministry of Education and Culture 1993). This has, however, been problematic due to various reasons. Educational inequalities on ethnic and regional bases in Namibia are a direct result of the restricted and divisive form of education that German and South African colonizers provided the colonized people of Namibia. This was in line with the divide and rule policies and practices of colonialism imposed on the population. Historically, educational inequalities are, in part, the result of the way in which formal school systems in both rich and poor countries have developed into social institutions that unequally distribute credentials and resources to unequally empowered social groups (McDermott, 1989; Nkomo, 1990; Brock-Utne, 2000). The argument here is that inequities in education as they have affected the native people of Namibia were the

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Policies that were designed on notorious regional and ethnic lines have denied education to nationality groups in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Despite government attempts to change these policies and practices at independence, their deep-rooted legacy and the conditional compromises for independence, as well as the new inequalities as a result of socioeconomic class, resulted in inherited inequalities that persist in the post-colonial dispensation. This chapter provides a discussion of the relevant international literature in which educational inequalities, social stratification, and ethnic divisions are conceptualized as social, economic, and cultural dilemmas of or within the state. Existing primary and secondary sources on Namibian education are utilized in order to strengthen the explanatory power of the theoretical perspectives on educational inequalities discussed in this chapter. The persisting educational inequalities on ethnic and regional lines, the dynamics of race, class, and gender, and the endemic social stratification in Namibia can be fully understood by exploring and understanding the nature of the colonial state and post colonial state.

Theories of the State

The state is central and relevant to this study because Namibia appears to be a very state-permeated society. People regard the state as powerful, and extensive penetration of state power into people's private lives is often tolerated fatalistically, regarded as normal, or even advocated as appropriate. State power is regulative and controls all aspects of the state machinery. In spheres as diverse as education, health, business, and transport, the state has laid down rules and norms, and has attempted to

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police them. Yet the Namibian state also seems a huge, sprawling, uncoordinated, internally divided machine. It has, on occasion, seemed to lose control over some of its segments, especially at the geographical and institutional peripheries. There have been several competing centers of power: central, regional, and local levels are often not well synchronized; different departments may have conflicting goals; different geographical regions influence government officials with different social ethics; and officials from different ethnic groups often interpret their tasks and interests in conflicting ways. All these result in the Namibian state having too many internal tensions.

It is also necessary to emphasize the importance of the state to this study because the state sets education policy, and the state is the major provider, funder, and controller of education. The state distributes resources unequally, and the state also contributes to “ethnicity” through patrimonial practices and clientilism favoring one group over others. Overall, explanations for present conditions in society, especially in Africa, are lodged in the state, in state policy, and in reactions to state actions. Rothchild and Chazan (1988, p. 121) explain that

State centric approaches have stressed the centrality of the state as a historical actor, the key collective agent of macro-political processes. This perspective views the state as the central organ for the extraction and distribution of resources, the determination of binding principles for society, and the maintenance of external and internal security, social harmony and political and economic well-being.

This is fundamental to understanding the way the state has developed in post-colonial Africa. It is vital to emphasize that the state in Africa is an extension of the colonial state based on European models implemented since colonialism. It is also necessary to note that in spite of its premier position in education policy formulation and implementation, the state can no longer be viewed as the sole or the only influence of

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social, economic, and political exchange. The state encounters pressures from stakeholders and interest groups like socio-economic classes and ethnic, regional, as well as global economic structures, thereby constantly shifting social reactions to the state and to each other at various local, regional, national and transnational levels.

The Definition of State Qua State

The question of the origin and definition of the state is one that has been of concern for centuries. Functions of the state differ from state to state depending on education, the nature of politics, or the ideology that is operative, and also on the composition of and the way various ethnic groups operate within a society. According to Sicker (1991, p. 19),

The questions of the origins and intrinsic character of the state have therefore been considered as issues of great theoretical significance, since they can affect the perceived legitimacy of existing states and their governments, and have been considered in the writings of some of the most important thinkers in the history of political thought.

Accordingly, the question with which the political theorist must grapple is how it came about that the political authority of the state exists and is so universally accepted as natural to human society. Among the various, numerous, and at times contradictory definitions of state, a somewhat serviceable notion was postulated as a generalized proposition by Willoughby (1928, p. 14), who contended that “Wherever there can be discovered in any community of men a supreme authority exercising a control over the social actions of individuals and groups of individuals, and itself subject to no such regulation, there we have a state.” This idea was recast by Wolff (1970, p. 11) into the concise definition, “The state is a group of persons who have and exercise supreme

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That moment of the organization of every society in which it presents itself as independent, dominant and capable of asserting its own conditions of life by force, forms always a distinct phase in the process of association; and whenever any particular society assumes this form it appears as the state. The state is properly a law-creating and law-maintaining society, which proclaims and asserts the conditions of its existence in connection with its own conduct and that of its subjects, through commanding, permissive, and prohibitory rules.

Pulszky’s introduction of the element of force into the definition of the state is particularly noteworthy. There can be little doubt that the ability to mobilize and apply force is a significant feature of the state throughout history. In modern times there has been an evident tendency for the state to assume an increasingly absolutist role in the life of society, irrespective of its form of government. Lippmann (1929, p. 30) stressed that:

A state is absolute in the sense that it claims the right to a monopoly of all force within the community to make war, to make peace, to conscript life, to tax, to establish and disestablish property, to define crime, to punish disobedience, to control education, to supervise the family, to regulate personal habits, and to censor opinions. The modern state claims all these powers and in the matter of theory there is no real difference in the size of the claim between communists, fascists, and democrats.

In contrast to the presumed similarity of governmental structures in the earliest stages of state formation, in the course of their actual development states tend to assume widely divergent forms because of their unique historical experiences, geographical configurations, ethnic composition, economic foundations and other relevant factors. There is not, it seems, a single universally agreed upon definition that captures the essence, function, and completeness of the state. For the purpose of this study, to understand the overwhelming nature of the state I briefly refer to Young’s ‘attributes’ and

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imperatives. According to Young (1994, p. 25), the most satisfying definition he encountered, by Dyson, triumphs by its comprehensiveness, if not its verbal economy:

Besides referring to an entity or actor in the arena of international politics, state is a highly generalizing, integrating and legitimating concept that identifies the leading values of the political community with reference to which authority is to be exercised; emphasizes the distinctive character and unity of the “public power” compared with civil society; focuses on the need for the depersonalization of that power; finds its embodiment in one or more institutions and one or more public purposes which thereby acquire a special ethos and prestige and an association with the public interest or general welfare; and produces a socio-cultural awareness of (and sometimes dissociation from) the unique and superior nature of the state itself.

Despite the differences in various definitions, there are certain aspects, words or phrases which seem to capture common characteristics of the state. Some of them will reappear in the following attributes and imperatives by Young: ***Territory*** – The state is a territorial entity. ***Population*** – The population of a state is not only subordinated to its rule but also organized into a formal set of statuses stipulated by the polity. ***Sovereignty*** – Internally viewed, refers to the amplitude of state authority over its subjects. ***Power*** – The aggregation and accumulation of power is inherent in the state. ***Law*** – Everything touched by the state is transformed into law, which is crucial to the bonding of state and civil society. ***The state as nation*** – In conventional discourse the word nation and state are joined by a hyphen or used interchangeably, as if synonyms. ***The state as an international actor*** – In enacting its external role the state must ensure its survival and preserve its independence in a violent arena. ***The state as idea*** – The whole policy process of the state is best understood as a mere performance, “constructing the political spectacle” in order to conceal the patterns of inequality and exploitation that the state upholds through its power.

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Following are the six imperatives developed by Young, which I also consider necessary to explain the characteristics of the state and are relevant to support the claims of the study: ***Hegemony*** – All states are continuously engaged in a struggle to ensure the supremacy of their authority. ***Autonomy*** – The quest for autonomy within the global system of states is perpetual, governing policy choices for states large and small. ***Security*** – Some form of national security council, whatever its title, is to be found at the institutional core of any state. ***Legitimacy*** – Weber with good reason places patterns of legitimation at the core of his nation of the state; absent this property, the state is in a condition of extreme vulnerability. ***Revenue*** – The revenue imperative is the bedrock postulate of state behavior. The state, in pursuit of its revenue imperative, is cast in a predatory role. The revenue imperative is essential to nurturing all other imperatives. Revenue enhances the ability of rulers to elaborate the institutions of the state, to bring more people within the domain of those institutions, and to increase the number and variety of collective goods provided through the state. ***Accumulation*** – This is a determinant of state behavior that becomes clear only in the modern era. Merchantilism became absorbed into the reason of state in the sixteenth century; from that point on, state managers could readily grasp the urgency of fostering expansion of the economic base, from which the state derived its revenue. Thus, the commitment to accumulation has become institutionalized as a constant; what has shifted over time is the recognized means of accomplishing this goal. Young (1994, p. 39) emphasizes that “The delicate mission of the state is to sustain conditions in its economic management conducive to investment, while simultaneously pursuing revenue-consuming distribution policies indispensable to its legitimation.” For many developing countries, especially the African

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Conceptual Behavior of the State

To attribute the words 'omnipresent' and 'omnipotent' to the concept of the state may sound comparable to God but it certainly sounds like an exaggeration of the concept of the state. Nevertheless, considering the potential overall power, hegemony, and control of every aspect of society by the state, it seems appropriate to emphasize its supreme sovereignty over the infrastructure – roads, schools, electricity and other social services and the superstructure the legislative, executive and judiciary in Namibia's case. This is what Young referred to as 'state as actor' using all the state apparatus, power and hegemony. My conception of the state as such does not necessarily overlook different models of the state. The state can be argued to be a form of government, which could be democratic, autocratic, socialist, authoritarian, military or police. It can be seen that all these forms of states are derived from who rules, who is in the superstructure, who actually governs, and who sets the rule of the game of running the affairs of the physical entity called the state (Zvobgo, 1997, p.4).

Central to the notion of "state as idea," rising above its visible institutional machinery, is the discovery of a reason embedded within it. According to Meinecke (1957), the classic exegesis of Machiavelli opens with the reason for the state (the logic that governs state action):

Whatever the circumstances the business of ruling is . . . always carried out in accordance with the principles of *raison d'etat*. *Raison d'etat* may be deflected or hindered by real or imaginary obstacles, but it is part and parcel of ruling. It is not realized, however, as a principle and an idea until a particular stage of development has been reached; namely when the state has become strong enough to break down those obstacles and to lay

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The modern state indisputably meets this qualification. In its original Machiavellian sense, *raison d'etat* essentially sprang from the desire to accumulate and maintain power. The ultimate objective of the state is to ensure its own reproduction through time. Power in the useful conceptualization of Giddens, quoted in Young, "is regarded as generated in and through the reproduction of structures of domination." This structuration of power, bracketing time and space, rests both on material (allocative) and ideological (authoritative) resources (Young, 1994, p. 21).

On the basis of Weber's definition, the state consists of the government or legislature, which passes laws; the bureaucracy, or civil service, which implements government policies and decisions; the police, who are responsible for law enforcement; and the armed forces, whose job it is to protect the state from aggression. Apart from these functions, the state is supposed to play a crucial role in almost every aspect of an individual's life, be it economic, political, religious, or educational. The state is supposed to come up with a notion of which all citizens are in favor. But of course the state, as already pointed out, is not neutral. The state normally is dominated by the interests of the dominant group of people in that given state. But that domination does not necessarily have to be expressed in a cohesive form. The domination can be exercised in such a way that the lower groups, in the final analysis, come to share in the perception of what is good, the perceptions that are shared by the dominant group of that state. The state's responsibility is to provide security for its people, social amenities, education, health, employment, infrastructure, and systems which enable citizens to function productively.

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The Concept of the State in Africa

A number of important questions are raised when conceptualizing the state in Africa. The concept itself has been interpreted from different perspectives by a variety of players, stakeholders and academics for a very long time since the 15th century. It is necessary to look at various definitions which have been offered over centuries in a variety of fields and disciplines. Consequently, it is important to look at and understand the implications of these definitions to the state in Africa and how they shaped its evolution which continues to be influenced by various local and global forces.

The concept of the state raises a number of fundamental questions in postcolonial Africa. The concept itself has been interpreted from various premises over centuries. Munro (1996, p. 113) phrased it this way: “The state is pivotal to the political future of African countries. Even in the most abject cases of political chaos in Africa, some institutional form of political and administrative organization exists which calls itself, and is recognized as, the state.” Around the world, not least in the industrialized West, the state has been challenged both from ‘below’ and from ‘above’ by ethnic, religious, regional and other pressure groups, by international stakeholders and actors, supranational bodies and institutions, and indeed by the state elite itself.

It is also necessary to look at the form of the state cherished by African nationalists during their struggle for independence, and compare it with the state that eventually evolved. For such an exercise to succeed, we need to consider, first, the colonial philosophy of statehood; secondly, the impact of colonialism on the African subjects; thirdly, the educational, social and economic background of the African

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political agitators; and fourthly, the decolonization method adopted by the European colonizers (Zvobgo 1997, p. 6).

In his preface to the classic survey, *African Political Systems*, edited by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard and first published in 1940, Radcliffe-Brown concludes on the following note: “The political organization of a society is that aspect of the total organization which is concerned with the control and regulation of the use of physical force” (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987, p. xxiii). This definition derives a very clear inspiration from Max Weber’s definition of a ‘political community’ as “a community whose social action is aimed at subordinating to orderly domination by the participants a territory and the conduct of persons within it, through readiness to resort to physical force, including normally force of arms” (Weber 1978, p. 901).

Weber’s original discussion was concerned with identifying the distinctive features of the modern state, which he defined as a type of political community possessing a monopoly of the legitimate use of force in addition to the association with a ‘territory’ highlighted in the quotation. Radcliffe-Brown, however, had to extend his discussion to include ‘stateless’ segmentary societies. Fortes and Evans-Pritchard proceed to explain that authors in the volume charged with studying such societies – as distinct from what they defined as ‘primitive states’ like the Zulu or the Bemba – were unable to base their analysis on a description of governmental organization but were “forced to consider what, in the absence of explicit forms of government, could be held to constitute the political structure of a people” (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, 1987, p. 6). For the modern definition, Zvobgo (1997, p. 6) argues that

The modern definition is that the state is a form of political association which, in the main, enjoys the unique right of being able to use legitimate

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cohesion over a particular territory. The rights and duties of office holders of the state are set down in law including constitutional law. Many regard it as a means of achieving national unity and throughout history, several writers have attributed a mission or wider purpose to the state over and above its individual parts. In real practice, it is difficult to define precisely what constitutes the state unless it is simply seen as a set of public rules and offices and there is considerable disagreement over what it is or should be.

Machiavelli believed that the power of the state was a single whole and could be centrally controlled irrespective of whether a particular state was a monarchy or a republic. If people are corrupted, Machiavelli preferred a situation where the state needed a single ruler with a strong hand, ready to be ruthless in preserving order. Machiavelli's definition of the state was modified by Hobbes, who limited liberty in a state to make way for authority. He believed that man is largely selfish, roughly equal in strength and liable to compete with each other in satisfying their wants. He goes on to say that the authority of the sovereign must be absolute and undivided; otherwise there may be conflict between holders of different offices. Absolute rule may be oppressive and autocratic, but Hobbes concludes that at least it secures man from the worst evil, a state of war. Across Africa, this seems to be the dominant pattern stemming from the colonial legacy of the 19th and 20th centuries. This is evident in virtually all of African states.

Marxists viewed the state as a condition of class exploitation. They had three assertions about state characteristics, that the state arises when society is divided into classes, that the state is an instrument of class rule, and that when society becomes classless there will be no need for a state. Although most African countries at independence did not have attributes of being Marxist states, they used this Marxist view when they set up state structures in order to consolidate their position of control.

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To fully identify and comprehend the disparities in African states, these definitions and explanations are necessary as they give evidence about the institutionalization and or maintenance of inequalities in the provision of various policies and practices. The state in Sub-Saharan Africa as parasite, as predator, even as vampire: such language emerged in article and book titles around 1990 and dots the current literature. The French scholar Jean-Francois Bayart touched a common metaphoric nerve most deeply with his 1989 book about Africa's Politics of the Belly. It aptly translated the idiom of the "body politic" in Chinua Achebe's sense from *A Man of the People*.

Colonial African State and Education Policies and Practices

As indicated earlier and will be alluded to throughout the study, the colonial state preceded and was the basis of the post-colonial state in Africa. In Namibia, from the early years of colonialism, the existence and expansion of education has been dependent on state funding. This was crucial, as the colonial regimes perceived education of the colonized as potentially a threat to their agenda and establishment, but also, most importantly, as an instrument to further specific colonial goals and objectives. "Initially, education for Black Namibians was justified in terms of its vocational utility. For the most part, its task was to prepare people for the specific jobs that German and then South African rule required" (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993, p. 2). The manifestations of dominance, subjugation and divisions are clear in the colonial state and in its crisis-ridden education, which reproduces inequalities. The colonizer practiced a policy of ethnic and racial "separate development" (apartheid) which culminated in the establishment of "homelands" Bantustans for most Namibians. For the majority of the

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indigenous population of Namibia this policy became a policy of deprivation, social and economic injustice, political suppression, persecution and, for many, legal prosecution. Discrepancies between Black and White in the fields of education, medical care, social services, and others contributed to severe disadvantages for the majority of the Black population (Tottermeyer 1991, p. 3). Class differences predominantly based on region, ethnic, and racial criteria consequently still characterize Namibian society.

In considering the African colonial state in comparison with the broader universe of imperial formations, Rothchild and Chazan (1988, p. 41) reflect on three major specific features that stand out: Firstly, the conquest of Africa was much more competitive than that in any other major region. In Africa the scramble was concentrated and intense, and in many areas involved multiple competitors for given territory. Secondly, the colonial state-building venture in Africa included in most areas a far more elaborate and comprehensive cultural project than was the rule in Asia or the Middle East (although the new world was comparable). Racist ideas were much more ideologically elaborated than they had been in earlier centuries at the time of African colonial occupation. The European ruling class had a more pronounced conviction of its own cultural, biological, and technological superiority, and held a more systematically negative view of the Africans. Africa was a *tabula rasa* (except for Islamic areas), a fitting field for the surge of evangelical energy welling up in the Christian Churches. The disposition to remake African society was less pronounced on the part of the British than the others, but it was present in all. Thirdly, colonial expansion in Africa occurred at a historical moment when European states were far more comprehensive and elaborated than was the case in earlier centuries. There was, of course, a deepening of the colonial

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state in Asia in tandem with the elaboration of the state at home. But this proceeded by degrees, and lacked the intensity of first encounter, which characterized colonial state building in Africa (Rothchild and Chazan 1988, p. 40).

According to Young's discussion, given vast differences in the historical development of the modern state in Europe and North America, in comparison with Sub-Saharan Africa, the perspectives and theoretical constructs developed for analyzing the state in the former areas are not always applicable to the analysis of the contemporary or colonial African state. Nevertheless, a discussion of theories of state is necessary and instructive given the fact that colonial African states as "superstructures" were European imports.

Therefore, considering all these observations as indicated in this chapter, the state (colonial and post-colonial), in spite of its premier position in the policy process, was not totally autonomous. It encountered pressure from interest groups (socio-economic classes, ethnic regional and religious), and was limited by the realities of the domestic and international economic structures. Certainly the presumption of the perennial aspect permeates reason of state. Exceptional features of the African colonial state, arising from the exigencies of its own reproduction, produced a singularly difficult legacy for the postcolonial state.

Postcolonial State

The theoretical model of postcolonial analysis has been extended, as issues of ethnicity, gender and social class, have moved center stage. Whether informed by or in opposition to colonial discourse theory, critical and historical inquiry has begun to focus on the material fabric of postcolonial societies, in which the memory and the legacy of

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the colonial encounter interact with other elements (Fhlathuin 1989, p. 1). Colonizer and colonized are fixed in a relationship of dependency and inequality. Scholars from a variety of perspectives and approaches have converged in describing African states in such terms as “fictive states” (Sandbrook 1985), “quasi-states” (Jackson, 1990) “shadow states” (Cruise O’Brien, 1991). The African state as a category might also be described as a “personalized state” in the sense that it has been characterized by paternalistic forms of government shaped by the personality of one key individual player (Jackson and Rosenberg 1982a). The phenomenon of the personalization of the state must also be closely linked to various other characteristics of African states.

Expansion of education and the growth of the state sector at independence were particularly remarkable features of the African state, as more and more people were absorbed into the state apparatus as a strategy to maintain political support. Consequently, schools were built to provide access in order to fulfill the state promise of education for all. Brock-Utne (2000, p. 20), for example, explains that “increased primary school enrolment was one of the direct results of a significant development in post independence Africa.” Post colonial African states have also, almost universally though again to varying degrees, exhibited the characteristics that have earned them the label of ‘prebental’ or ‘rentier’ states, referring to a means of allocating resources collectively to a group (at times identified as a “ruling class” or “ruling alliance”) with preferential access to the state. The particular forms of prebentalism that have characterized African states have left them permeated by clientelistic networks, in which patrons reward clients with positions that can be converted into sources of private accumulations (Joseph, 1987). This strategy can also serve the interest of facilitating the

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consolidation of power of a regime and hence of maintaining political stability for a period of time. As a result of this process, however, the very exercise of state power inhibits economic growth, and thus the state eventually undercuts the very basis of its own survival.

Two aspects summarize the history of Africa since independence. These are “the search for political stability” and “the search for economic development.” The state in sub-Saharan post-colonial Africa as parasite, as predator, even as vampire: such language emerged in article and book titles around 1990 and dots the current literature. The French scholar Jean-Francois Bayart touched a common metaphoric nerve most deeply with his 1989 book about “Politics of the Belly.” The mainstream reveals a good deal about the birth of the independent African state, and the mixed signals about its current health. The colonial system had used the weapon of racism effectively to keep Black Africans at the bottom of the ladder of development politically, economically, and socially. The post-colonial state has been variously described as an instrument of the international bourgeoisie, thus a dependent formation (Leys, 1975; Mandaza, 1986); a tool of the ruling political classes and the bureaucratic/administrative bourgeoisie (Shivji, 1980); a “predator” or piranha feeding off societal elements; an organization for prebendal, patrimonial and patron-clientilist relations; a tool for militarized and ethnic/kinship-type modes of economic surplus extraction; and an extractor of obeisance from the mass publics, the extreme cases of which has given rise to that monstrosity Mobutu in former Zaire, Houphuet Boigny in Ivory Coast, and Bokassa in Central African Republic (Callaghy, 1990; Chazan, 1988; Herbst, 1992). Further, the post-colonial state has been defined, variously, as a relatively autonomous entity, or a site/theater in which ethnic and

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class conflicts play out, and or resolve themselves (Herbst, 1990; Hyden, 1990, 1992; Sachikonye, 1986); and as a connective link in the hierarchicalized global division of labor (Wallerstein, 1974, 1979, 1988, 1995; Balibar, 1995). State managers play key roles in organizing and directing the economies of social reproduction and accumulation, and consequently the elaboration of identities and consciousness of the population.

It is a matter of argument whether after liberation/independence the triumphant nationalist fully appreciated, at first, the immensity of the prevalent problems and that the struggle to find solutions to them was going to prove more difficult and more long lasting than the campaign against the colonial masters. At independence, the newly established African governments, including Namibia at her independence in 1990, adopted democratic processes and, as such, constitutionalism and democratic principles were to be the guidelines. However, with the handing over of power, constitutionalism came to be generally something that had to be centered on the relationship between power and law. The post colonial state had to reflect commitment to good government principles and rules, but in reality the very constitutions which provided the framework for democratic processes were soon destroyed or violently abrogated by elected presidents who became dictators, and by military personnel. This has had some impact on the features and character of the post-colonial state in Africa's development (Zvogbo 1997, p. 8). In Namibia for example, the ruling party amended the constitution for the incumbent president to run for president for a third term. This sent shock waves both nationally and internationally, but again it represents the concept of personalized rule.

The state is not synonymous with government, although in the developing world, particularly in Africa, the two are often treated as one by politicians. The difference

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between the state and government is a distinction that should be made clear from the beginning. The state includes all infrastructures often referred to as superstructure. The state is much larger than government. Government is what administers the state and includes branches of the Judiciary, the Executive, and the Legislature i.e. the law courts, cabinet and parliament. The government acts to mediate between the state and its subjects and operates by using the apparatuses of the state. Any party and the government have limited life spans. In a democracy, the life span of a government usually extends to two parliaments or two elected bodies. In most of the African states, the life of government is unlimited as there are no easy means of changing governments because of dictatorial political leaders and their ruling parties. The state, on the other hand, is supposedly permanent and not subject to the rise and fall of any political party from power.

It can logically be argued that the political parties in Africa have not yet understood that they cannot be states and that, at best, they can only be parties in government and not the entirety of government itself. This inherent (political party equal to government and state) misconception in African political parties has contributed to poor governance which is party-centered, instead of good governance which is state-centered, and some of the consequential problems which prevail across the social fabric of African countries today. The point of this study is that the nature of state and government in Africa determines the nature of national policies and programs that emerge and the delivery of services to the people.

The theories and characteristics of states are necessary to understanding the way states in Africa have evolved, how they operate and in particular how they plan and

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deliver services to the people. They help me to explain the philosophies that guide states in planning and implementing educational services and the rationale behind those services. Throughout the study I examine and discuss the link between the state and education. The post-colonial state inherited the weaknesses of the colonial state and thus perpetuates inequitable distributions of virtually all services to the population. Theory and data show that the cultural, constitutional, and economical weakness of the state is directly attributed to the acute lack of resources, capacity, and legitimacy. Bayard argues that "In Africa as elsewhere, the state is a major manufacturer of inequality. The 'development,' which it boastfully claims to promote, and in whose name it attempts to ban political competition and social protest, plays its part in this process (Bayard 1993, p. 60). The colonial African state failed to deliver per the aspirations and expectations of people or perhaps failed to fulfill its obligations. Thus, it turn to patrimonialism (at both individual and group level), which in turn accentuates ethnicity on which basis groups compete for VOICE, in political and economic state arenas. The patrimonial framework encompasses the concept of clientilism, a system of decision making that is based on an exchange of substantive favors, legal privilege, or protection from punishment among political actors. The patrimonial state, whether in its populist stage or a rigorously authoritarian manifestation, relies on corporatist forms of organization to ensure the dominant position of the state over society. It has been defined by Roett (1992, p. 35) in the following way:

A system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange

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The term 'patrimonial state,' as used by Roett, is more appropriate, I believe, because it conveys a more comprehensive image of politics and society as they are found in Namibia today. The term has the advantage of focusing on the national political system and its continuation over time. Control and domination are essential ingredients of the actions of the patrimonial state. The weakness of state is not just constitutional and cultural but more so economical, whereby it lacks resources, expertise and capacity then turns to patrimonialism.

It is not that the leaders or elite who control the state are reluctant to offer education to all or provide education equally to all, but the issues of lack of capacity in infrastructure, capital, and resources limit the state from equal distribution of services to all. The theories of ethnicity will expound the social, economic, political and philosophical complications and clarifications.

Theories of Ethnicity in the Ideology of the State

As has been indicated earlier in the study, state, ethnicity, educational inequalities and societal social stratification were the key concepts in the formulation of this study. In order to grasp the dynamics of socio-economic, political and cultural interactional processes incarnated in the materialization of the ethno-tribal creed, it is necessary to have explanatory theories that deal with issues and questions related to ethnic identity and how it is generated and shaped. There emerged in recent decades a number of theoretical attempts dealing with different dimensions of societal issues related to ethnic interactions, stratification, and identity.

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Theories of ethnicity are not, however, homogenous; one may divide them into two contrasting schools of thought: the primordialist and the modernist schools. While the modernist school argues that ethnic groups will disappear with modernization, the primordialist school believes that ethnic groups are based on primordial sentiments of solidarity that continue into modern and post-modern eras. Between the primordialist and the modernist schools of thoughts is the “perennialist” school, also called instrumentalist or situationalist. It perceives ethnic groups as based on “social” human characteristics, but they are perennial (Lema, 1993, p. 22). I understand him as referring to ethnic groups as everlasting.

Against this theoretical diversity, one notices that underlying much of the confusion in ethnicity studies is the absence of a commonly accepted definition of the concept of ethnic group among scholars. Each one of the scholars has made their own definition of the concept in accordance with their own ideological and theoretical perspectives. The concept of ethnicity is wide and substantially addressed by various scholars. Shils (1957), who is among the scholars advocating the primordialistic position, defined ethnic attachment as most commonly arising from ties of blood and shared common territory. He argues that

Ethnicity, ethnic identity is perceived as a primary bond; it expresses the original primitive solidarity with those one is related to in kinship, ties of blood, language, religion, customs, etc. In other words, territorial bonds, kinship ties and value systems form the central basis for ethnic integration. Ethnicity for the primordialist becomes then a matter of natural nearness that creates social ties, rather than a matter of social interaction that creates primary nearness and bonds.

The subject of contention between the primordialist and the perennialist schools is whether an ethnic group should be defined objectively through a number of social criteria

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or subjectively by its members. While the primordialist school, with an objective definition, interprets ethnicity (ethnic identity) as a primary sentiment of solidarity, the perennialist school defines it subjectively, looking at ethnicity as a transitional phenomenon, situationally expressed. Discussing the differences between the two approaches, Isajiw (1974, p. 115) noticed that

In contrast to the objective approach by which ethnic groups are assumed to be existing as it were “out there” as a real phenomenon, the subjective approach defines ethnicity as a process by which individuals either identify themselves as being different from others or belonging to a different group or are identified as different by others.

Although there is a divergence of views, a critical analysis of the main ideas advanced by the two schools indicates that they are not completely incompatible. There are in fact advantages of fusing them into a composite definition. For example, both positions emphasize the importance of culture in the understanding of an ethnic group. They share the view that ethnic groups are cultural groups that can be defined in different ways.

As I understand it, ethnic group identity is not a question of either/or, it is a transfer/transient phenomenon. Taking that position, my approach becomes a composite one combining both primordial and the modernist definitions. This view, particularly as expressed in the works of Peterson-Royce (1982) and Horowitz (1985), influenced much of the analysis in this study. Horowitz's (1985, p. 64-70) conceptual abstraction of short and long term changes of ethnic identity as a question of widening ethnic group boundaries through assimilation and differentiation is an idea that I refer to.

In this interpretation the change of ethnic identity in terms of assimilation can be seen as a process of amalgamation or incorporation. The colonial state in Namibia used

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this strategy to divide the people. For example, the Ovahimba and Ovaherero became two separate groups, and the different San groups were all lumped together under the name Bushman. The Ovankhumbi, who are not recognized as one of the Namibia's authentic ethnic group but are lumped together with other larger groups, although they practice their own culture and speak their own language, are clear manifestations of the misappropriation or misapprehension of ethnicity. Lema (1993, p. 24:) discloses, "Ethnic identity change may also occur in the shape of differentiation or proliferation. A change of ethnic identity through differentiation means that a group is divided into its component parts." That is the situation for the majority of socio-cultural groups in post-colonial African states. Ethnic proliferation, however, refers to a new group that arises without its parent group, or to a group losing its identity. In Horowitz's view these are the processes erasing boundaries between ethnic groups and creating new identities.

Ethnic groups are also typically class stratified and the class identities of a group's member cut across their ethnic identity. "Current historical discourse suggests that much of the processes involved in the evolution of collective identities cohere around two organizing principles: class and ethnicity. Both are significantly shaped and defined by the state which serves as a primary arena for social interactions" (Lema, 1993, p. 24). As advanced in the preceding analysis/discussion, the ethnic marking, the ethnic management, and the adoption of the ethnic based collective identities took place both in the colonial and post-colonial state and were orchestrated by the state apparatus.

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General

Ethnic issues are becoming increasingly prominent both in the United States and around the world (Masao Jiobu 1990, p. vii). That may be a strong assertion, but impressionistically, at least, it encompasses events such as the minority - majority conflicts in the United States, Armenian conflicts in the Soviet Union, the Basque conflicts in Spain, the Hutu – Tutsi conflicts in Burundi-Rwanda, and the discrimination of the San in southern Africa. Several far flung places with different cultures but having in common ethnic unrest suggest that ethnicity has taken on more importance than scholars have heretofore realized, and with that importance has come prejudice, discrimination, hostility, inequality, and, sometimes, death. Several explanations have been offered for the persistence of ethnic inequality, ranging from the purely psychoanalytic to the purely rational-economic.

Ethnic identities are in general articulated around ancestry, culture, and language, which are subject to change, redefinition, and contests. Thus we cannot talk simply of 'ethnic groups.' Rather, we should understand ethnicity as a social process, as the moving boundaries and identities which people, collectively draw in their social lives. Central to this process is the production and reproduction of culture, of acknowledged ancestry and the use of language as a marker of social difference and the emblem of a people. The social relations and classifications include political and economic relations that have an ethnic dimension, and this dimension is activated or suppressed in a wide variety of contexts.

At the level of individual action ethnicity is a signal of identification. At the social system level ethnicity refers to the "systematic and enduring social reproduction of

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basic classificatory differences between categories of people who see themselves as culturally discrete” (Eriksen, 1993, p. 10). These categories are not stable or permanent orderings of people or symbols. Three important modalities on which ethnicity varies are scope, scale, and formality. The scope of ethnic identity may reach from the most local to the global, the scale may vary from the macro-social to the interpersonal exchanges of micro-social life, and ethnicity may be a matter of regular but informal practice or formalized into legal and constitutional principle.

Africa

In all African countries, politicians and bureaucrats make frequent claims to the effect that they are concerned with the well-being of all citizens and not with that of any particular ethnic group. In fact policy makers never openly admit that they make policy decisions that reflect preference for their ethnic group or that they discriminate against others.

The reality, however, is that ethnic attachment is alive and well in Africa. To be sure, individuals still consider themselves as members of particular groups and they are proud to be members of those small groups. According to Kimenyi (1997, p. 21), “While they may consider themselves loyal members of the nation, they also identify with particular groups. There is no question that most Africans are patriotic with respect to their nations. Equally so, however, they are patriotic and loyal to their tribal groups.” There are clear cases and situations when individuals identify with a particular state or nation state (for example, during times of war with other countries). However, many of the issues that confront persons on a day-to-day basis, e.g., schools, labor markets, businesses, and so on require that individuals identify with a smaller group. This group is

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often the ethnic group. Thus, the institution I refer to as 'ethnic group' in this study is not only important but it also allows the reader to understand the dynamics of ethnicity and the state in Africa.

To appreciate the argument about the persistence of inequalities on ethnic and regional lines, it is necessary to understand the complications of ethnic diversity in Africa. As noted earlier, the map of Africa largely reflects boundaries drawn over 100 years ago following the 1885 Treaty of Berlin. Although it is well accepted that colonial boundaries did not take into account ethnic or cultural boundaries, the inherited boundaries have remained largely intact. This conforms with the Organization of African Unity's principle of inviolability of colonial frontiers. Although the principle of inviolability has held, for the most part there is nothing special about the boundaries. They remain as unnatural as they were at the time of partition. For example the boundary between Angola and Namibia separates the Kavango, Ovawambo, Ovankhumbi and Ovahimba people, placing some in Angola while their families are across the border in Namibia. Likewise, the Maasai of Kenya are separated from their families in Tanzania.

Ethnic units differ in various ways. In most cases, the most "objective" noticeable difference between two groups is language. More often than not, ethnic units will differ in various aspects including their history, language and customs. While groups living close to each other may have several similarities in their ways of life, they also have characteristics that make them distinct. Whether the difference between ethnic groups is large or small, the point to keep in mind is that each ethnic group considers itself different and frequently identifies with a particular region (Knight, 1984, p.12). Each ethnic group resides in a particular area and fairly meaningful boundaries separating

ethnic territories can be drawn. Also, some African countries are geographically large. Namibia's population is, for example, sparsely scattered over vast areas, making it difficult for the government to serve local communities effectively. Frequently, far-flung local communities feel totally isolated from the central government.

Southern Africa

For social scientists working in Southern Africa the breakdown of apartheid creates a need to consider whether the moment for abandoning the concept of 'ethnicity' or at least for 'fresh and independent' approaches to ethnic relations (Fosse 1992, p. 4) has come. Particularly for some scholars working with Southern African hunter-gatherers, ethnicity now seems more like a stifling problem than an identity or a cultural and tradition upholder. Having overcome the political channeling of ethnicity by apartheid, people seem to feel free to reconstruct separate ethnic and cultural identities, which are no longer seen as threatening to national identity.

At present, ethnicity's most conspicuous role is political. This is not entirely new. Ethnicity has long been one of the factors determining political choices in Africa, as it has in many parts of the world. Given the nature of African societies, it would have been strange indeed if this were not so. It was the case even before independence, when many of the anti-colonial nationalist movements were founded on an ethnic base. Political movements claiming to represent ethnic constituencies and forging cultural symbols into ideological weapons have appeared everywhere, particularly in southern Africa.

Ethnicity has emerged as a major contender for political power. Its claims are strengthened by the populist movement for democratization, respect for human rights, and grassroots development. It could be best to view ethnicity in a state as a functional

indigenous institution, and to study the functions it performs at particular junctures in the history of the state in Africa. Markakis (1996, p. 301) appropriately observed that

Commonly ethnic political movements struggle for political as a means of securing access to material and social resources. Since independence, the state throughout Africa has controlled the production and distribution of resources, and state power has been the best, if not the only, means of obtaining them. Ruling groups use the state apparatus to defend their privileges, while others struggle to gain a share of state power in order to gain access to resources. This makes the state both the object of the struggle and the means wherewith it is waged. It also makes a mockery of the currently fashionable concept of 'civil society' with its presumed dissociation of state and society; at least when it is applied to Africa.

Ethnic political mobilization at this level has a corrosive impact on the post-colonial state. The Western unitary, centralized model, with its presumption of exclusive authority and assumption of cultural homogeneity, has proved a misfit. For any process of reconstruction to succeed in southern Africa, it will have to address the claims of ethnicity for a share of state power. The reconstruction model is often equated with the concept of democracy, which is widely promoted as the panacea of Africa's multiple problems. Nevertheless, Africa, especially southern Africa, with its inherited apartheid legacy, manifestly lacks the material and social foundations for western style democracy. The experience of the post-colonial state proves that. According to Bradshaw and Ndegwa (2000, p. 303),

African Policy élites rarely voice the earlier debates over how social relations within schools might become more democratic, what educational "quality" actually means in a multi-ethnic context, and whether the school should primarily serve an assimilationist agenda to help integrate labor markets.

Within multi-ethnic societies, such as those in southern Africa, we see localized chiefs and regional or provincial leaders challenging the central state, seeking a federalist political structure organized along ethnic and regional boundaries.

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The Construction of White Ethnic Closure and Maintenance of the Status Quo

Namibian social formations, since the advent of colonialism in the mid-1800s, were largely defined in specific sociocultural and ideological asymmetries erected around Black –White cleavages of politics, race-ethnic, class and gender. The possession of war –making technologies facilitated the subjugation and domination of indigenous groups. White settler intrusion and subsequent involvement in the construction of a resident culture responsive to its own (and imperialist) interests created the conditions for the emergence of inequitable but symbiotic exchanges among modernizing and indigenous social forces. White ethnic groups, through legal and extra-legal social closure mechanisms, sustained the educational and political economy based on anarchical and conflicting interventions into the existential modes of indigenous populations for more than a century. The settler economic model founded by the Whites and their imperial overlords was based on domination and racial exclusionary principles, commitments to a White nationalist economy, and global capital accumulation (Arrighi, 1973).

The intractability of the problems of the racial division of labor in Namibia (then known as South West Africa) easily surpasses the South African and USA apartheid political economies (Harris, 1995; Hacker, 1992; Wilson, 1987). In the USA for instance, process of racial closure led not only to the civil disturbances of the 1960s, but also to the explosion in Los Angeles in 1992. Hacker (1992) sees the renting of the USA social fabric from the vantage point of political struggles aimed at capturing some power by Blacks and other minority groups. Such a perspective informs, to some extent, the happenings in the Namibian social, cultural and political economies of transformation.

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Typically, racialized planning has remained a key methodology in the distribution of social surpluses and other largesse wherever and whenever White Europeans cross the paths of people of color (Davidson, 1992). Thus, as Blaut (1993, p. 33) argues, color, class, and culture tend to intersect and cohere in manifold ways: certain cultural groups, particularly Europeans, tend to form “a single ethnogeography and ethnoscience” based on permanently held beliefs, which then go on to erect a “cohesive” category that protects its privileged location throughout the world. In Africa, Davidson (1992) calls the whole thing “The Black Man’s Burden” in a title to his book.

To a large extent, the educational and political economies of social reproduction and accumulation emerge on the basis of some degree of “color” and or ethnicized divisions, which might in turn engender explicit economic, social, political and educational marginalizations, and peripheralization of subordinated racial-ethnic formations. Implicated in the “ethnoscience” above are also analyses of processes of knowledge formation and modern (White) rationality, which ideologically anchor and justify social inequalities (Said, 1990). To some extent, Said’s (1990) rendition coheres with Foucault’s (1977) notion of the reproduction of “normal”/disciplined” subjects through a variety of mechanisms, as suggested above.

Namibian social colonial historians have tried to excavate one of the benign features of colonization without ever attending to its anomalous effects – at least for the conquered peoples. There seems to be a pervasive tendency to obfuscate the material embeddedness of cultural and racial-ethnic divisive policies, and thus to argue effortlessly that Marxists are wrong everywhere. Marxism could be wrong or right but the crux of the matter is why all these ever take place. For instance, the often-repeated

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“civilizing mission” and “White benevolence” theorems are nothing but ideological justifications for barbarism and unbridled levels of human exploitation. Fortunately, they always generate intense counter-hegemonic and oppositional stances (Ranger, 1970). Indeed the countervailing strategies of the indigenes may serve as a ploy to restore the *status-quo ante*, if not to extract some benefits from the modernizing economy (Ranger, 1985).

Popular pedagogies vis-à-vis indigenous groups, such as participation, self-determination, and economic democracy, are anathema in nearly all discourses of colonial and postcolonial existence (Nyerere, 1966; Sachikonye, 1987; Cheater, 1993). Thus, to any revolutionary regime, the deracialization and reconstitution of the societal base are imperatives that can only be ignored at the risk of further confrontations – which this time might pit categories of people from the same camp against one another. The racist and ethnic confrontation in Namibia lasted throughout the colonial period and left a legacy that the post-colonial establishments will wrestle with for a long time.

Ethnicity, Race, Class, and Inequalities in Settler States

Whatever their variations in historical genesis and development, settler societies like Namibia, Australia, Zimbabwe, New Zealand, South Africa, or Canada, to mention some, share certain common features and challenges pertaining to the coexistence of diverse indigenous and migrant collectivities. Furthermore, these commonalities stem from the foundational claims made by European migrant groups intent on settlement and on building self-sustaining states independent of metropolitan centers. Further similarities pertain to the settlers’ political domination over the indigenous populations as well as other racialized minorities (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis, 1995, p. 1).

In many settler societies, including Namibia, the dominant groups have been forced to relinquish their dominance, sharing in the more general global decline in colonialism. In some classifications, however, they are considered to be just one of several sub-types of colonies (together with occupation colonies, mixed colonies and plantation colonies – see Fieldhouse, 1966; Fredrickson, 1988; Shafir, 1989).

Nonetheless, as Weitzer (1990, p. 24-5) argues,

Because settler states represent 'home' to a dominant group, the intransigence of settlers regarding both indigenous resistance and metropolitan or other external pressures for change complicate the transformation of these states. Change in the form of accommodation of the claims of indigenous peoples and non-dominant migrants offers quite different challenges in 'settler societies' than those involved in the decolonization of 'conventional' colonies where the imperial power has not rooted itself through settlement.

On another level, the cleavages and conflicts that characterize settler societies can be found in virtually all contemporary societies which have involved encounters between indigenous and migrant groups, and successive waves of free and coerced migration corresponding to different phases of capitalist development and political upheavals. Several authors have viewed settler societies as extreme examples of 'plural' societies, characterized by profound cleavages along racial, ethnic, and religious lines (Kuper and Smith, 1969; Weitzer, 1990, p. xi). Although these are not necessarily settler states, the current conflagrations in the former Yugoslavia Rwanda-Burundi, the fierce national and ethnic struggles in the former Soviet Union, and the racist violence perpetrated against 'foreigners' across Europe exemplify such judgements.

If settler societies are societies in which Europeans have settled, where their descendants have remained politically or economically dominant over indigenous peoples and where a heterogeneous society has developed in class, ethnic, and racial terms, then it

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becomes clear that settler societies must be seen as corresponding to plural and historical entities rather than as having clear and fixed boundaries. Comparatively, settler states, for example, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe in southern Africa, are more “developed” than the “normal” colonies. This is partly due to reasons that Stasiulis and Yuval Davis (1995:1) suggest:

Whatever their variations in historical genesis and development, settler societies share certain common features and challenges pertaining to the coexistence of diverse indigenous and migrant collectivities. Furthermore, these commonalities stem from the foundational claims made by European migrant groups intent on settlement and on the building of the self-sustaining states independent of metropolitan centers. Further similarities pertain to the settlers’ political domination over the indigenous populations as well as other racialized minorities.

Moreover, the extent to which a society is a ‘settler society’ is contested by the de-colonizing movements of various ethno-national groups within. Settler colonization may play a more formative role in state formation and nation building in some periods than others (Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis, 1995, p. 3). Different settler societies have ties to different colonial powers and forms of imperialism, as well as to diverse social movements. They have different demographic ratios of indigenous, European, non-European and mixed populations. Settler societies were characterized by a much larger proportion of settlers with European origin, for permanent settlement than the other colonies.

Settler states developed much more elaborate political and economic infrastructures and achieved *de facto* or *de jure* political independence from the metropole (Weitzer, 1990, p. 26). Curiously, most of these societies maintained relations of dependency with their original ‘sponsors,’ even as they achieved considerable political and economic autonomy from European colonial powers. Comparative analyses of settler

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states have led to various insights into states that have developed relatively advanced economies in conjunction with colonial and other hierarchies of privilege. Several authors have viewed settler states as extreme examples of 'plural' society, characterized by profound cleavages along racial, ethnic, and religious lines (Kuper and Smith 1969; Weitzer, 1990, p. xi).

Settler states like Namibia also have utility for multinational corporations who have profited immeasurably from the appropriation of indigenous lands and from the cheap and divided labor of racially, ethnically, and gender segmented labor markets. Hegemonic myths are both defended and contested in the competing claims of indigenous peoples, racially/ethnically dominant settlers, and other migrants over such issues as land ownership and use, sovereignty, state representation, and institutional and cultural pluralism. The political, economic, legal, and symbolic ramifications of these competing claims are apparent in the current movements of indigenous peoples in different settler societies to reclaim land and political rights usurped over centuries of European settlement. Land claims negotiations, litigation and constitutional struggles, as well as forms of direct action such as blockades, are being pursued to these ends (Jhappan, 1991, 1993). They are also evident in the anti-racist movements and politics of empowerment of racial and ethnic minorities who seek citizenship rights that are on a par with hegemonic settler groups, and policies that redress historical and contemporary forms of exclusion and oppression.

The various movements for social transformation, and for empowerment and resistance to colonial, racial, and ethnic domination in settler societies, reflect the complexities of these societies. The settler experiences, which marked Namibia for over

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a century, modified the internal dynamics of the pre-colonial society. Furthermore, its impact on both Germany and South Africa, as former colonizers, and Namibia did not disappear with independence of the colony in 1990. Privileged political and economic relations exist between these states and a number of cultural links are the legacy of German and South African colonialism in Namibia. Some of the long-term consequences of the encounter include the immigration phenomenon. Many Germans and South Africans settled in Namibia and some Namibians settled in these countries. Also notable is the German and South African media in Namibia. An unfortunate legacy of colonialism is the increasing reference to Namibian youth as “trilingual illiterates,” that is, people who are not able to speak German, Afrikaans, or now English correctly. Some ethnic identities resulted from the mixture of the settler colonists and the local inhabitants that added another layer of apartheid divisions therefore, socioeconomic inequalities and stratification.

Ethnicity is central to the discussion of the state and its incapacity to provide education or resources thereof inequitably to various ethnic groups within the state. The following explanatory interlude serves to emphasize and explains the actual role of the importance of understanding ethnic dimensions and ethnicity theories in this study.

Explanatory Interlude

The postcolonial theories of ethnicity in the ideology of the state that I have discussed in this chapter are what guided me at various points and situations throughout the work. Since the inherited regions in Namibia were demarcated along ethnic lines in the divisive apartheid system, the theories of ethnicity were helpful in understanding the enduring legacy of apartheid. I cannot agree more with Zou and Trueba (1998, p. 429),

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who argue that “questions of ethnic identity necessarily lead to concerns with schooling, the state and social justice.” Given the deeply ethnically divided Namibian society, it was relevant to use ethnicity theories because they also illuminate the realities being played out in current independence education policies and practices, and they are relevant to understand the socio-cultural context for the study.

However, the focus and central concentration of the results reported here are on educational inequalities on regional lines. In Namibia, however, regions and ethnic identities have been and continue to be inseparable. Therefore, although not the central focus here, ethnicity cannot be ignored in a comprehensive account of how and why contemporary disparities in education resources, opportunities, and outcomes are a lingering legacy of apartheid.

Post-colonial state governments do realize that education is essential to sociopolitical and economic development. In spite of partisan ideology, these governments are committed to provide good quality education to all people as enshrined in their constitutions and in the Human Rights Conventions of the United Nations. Although it is an ever highly contested terrain, education is generally regarded as key to all amenities. Carnoy and Samoff (1990, p. 7) argued that “in studying developing societies, the focus is on education because the most important reason is that the leaders of these states themselves attribute great importance to education as part of the means of achieving social transformation.” Postcolonial governments have empirical, political, and moral imperatives to address national inequalities in all aspects of the citizenry.

However, there has always been and continues to be crisis after crisis in the education dispensation. Among the leading factors that lead to endemic problems of

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inequalities are the crises of resources, capacity, and legitimacy. In most cases, postcolonial governments have insufficient resources to effectively execute and implement education according to intended plans. These governments lack adequate infrastructure, bureaucracy, and institutional framework to meet their obligations. The usually high expectations of the citizenry are thence not fulfilled, which is reflected in the unequal provision to various regional and socio-economic groups.

Post-colonial states are compelled to make choices in the distribution of scarce resources to different sectors in the process of maintaining legitimacy. As the largest provider and policy advocate, the future of education depends on the state's commitment to provide the much-needed resources and providing a new supportive ideological orientation.

The chapter on rationale and methods will further show the importance of studying regional relations in the study of inequality.

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Chapter III

THE RESEARCH DESIGN, RATIONALE, AND METHODOLOGY

Brief Introduction

Research questions in this study are based on the overarching question of why educational inequalities persist along regional and ethnic lines in post-colonial Namibia. In this chapter I provide a rationale for the methods used, preceded by a brief explanation of access to schooling according to different regional and ethnic groups. Then I describe the research design, regional and ethnic divisions in Namibia, the participants, the data sources, and my data analysis procedure. The triangulation method used in this work assisted me in the convergence of very different theories to throw light on aspects of otherwise murky issues. The analogy in Roe's (1998, p. 101) words is "that of multiple searchlights intersecting in the night sky." My goal has been to understand the complexities of educational inequalities, as a result of social, economic, political dynamics, and cultural and regional stratification in post colonial Namibia.

Access to Schooling According to Various Regional and Ethnic Groups

Regarding the desire to place all children into school, the choices involve issues such as affordability and implementation. More importantly, access involves a conception of the quantitative expansion of schooling, which is connected to the qualitative dimension of schooling. The argument made throughout this dissertation in general and in this section particularly is that the issue of access should be conceptualized within the constraints of the context of transition. The colonial legacy left an educational gap along different regional and ethnic lines; as a result, post-colonial countries find

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themselves wrestling with the quantitative expansion of schooling. Bradshaw and Ndegwa (2000, p. 316) talk of “new policy debates that flow from the two paradoxes of how school expansion has led to erosion of quality and why the new debates over school effectiveness and local governance are difficult to contain within the Durkheimian concepts of the modern state.” The inadequate resources coupled with competition with other state sectors, thus, result in perpetual inequalities for various regional and ethnic groups.

The deprived majority, mainly the Black population in Namibia, look to the new political dispensation to deliver living conditions based on universally accepted norms of human rights. With the shift in state power from the apartheid state to a legitimate democratic state which is committed to deliver these basic needs, it is presumed that state policy will be directed at overturning the apartheid planned and implemented development distortions. Kallaway et al. (1997, p. 81) have commented on this:

Education is a basic human right. Schooling should be free and compulsory for all children. The struggle for liberation from apartheid thus placed the demand for the provision of universal access to schooling firmly on the agenda.

Introduced in 1958 in Namibia, Bantu Education was imposed on the small Namibian population. Given this circumstance Namibia faces a massive task in its attempt to implement a program to provide universal access to schooling. The expansion of schooling is most likely to happen in historically under- resourced areas, i.e., Black, rural, commercial farms, and former homeland areas. A major challenge for access revolves around the qualitative dimension of schooling. A commitment to equal access will have to take into consideration the quality and type of schooling provided when placing all out-of-school children into school. Providing schools of poor quality, as is

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currently prevalent in Namibia, contributes to existing patterns of educational inequality in the country. Quantitative expansion, de-linked from the notion of quality, would tend to reinforce existing inequalities in presently disadvantaged schools.

Recent research in southern Africa illuminates the importance of regional and ethnic boundaries that the study diagnosed. Kallaway and Ndegwa state that ethnic differences in school achievement have been documented in Namibia, the second apartheid society where racial and ethnic groups were geographically segregated. This led to regional differences in the extent to which racial education authorities and Bantustan administrations invested in school expansion (Kallaway and Ndegwa 2000, p. 320).

Ethnic segregation in Namibia's schools, not just Black – White, but also between Black groups, remains stark because the inherited apartheid infrastructure was divided according to ethnic orientations. Most Oshindonga speaking children in the north attend schools with enrollments that are almost entirely from this ethnic group. Even in towns and commercial centers, Black Nama – Damara children attend schools that are made up almost exclusively of this particular ethnic group.

The Fieldwork Situation and Type of Data Collected

This study is based on a wide range of written and oral source material, field research, and use of available data. I employed a process of triangulation, which involves the collection and cross checking of confirmatory data from multiple sources at different points in time, and through the use of multiple but integrated methods (Levy and Hollan 1993). Consequently, Singleton et al. (1988, p. 360) state, "Given the limitations and biases inherent in each of the main approaches indeed inherent in all research

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procedures—the best way to study most research topics is to combine methodological approaches.” The virtue of triangulation, in the face of complexity, is that it builds confidence that I am on the track of something relevant or useful for my analysis. “When the findings of different methods agree, we are more confident,” as Bruwer and Hunter (1989, p. 17) conclude. Cook (1985, p. 46) is more explicit:

...when results are demonstrably stable across populations, settings, and times, external validity is enhanced...when results are stable across multiple potential threats to causal inference, internal validity is enhanced. And when interpretation of the meaning of relationships in theoretical and value terms is common across a wide variety of perspectives, objectivity-defined as intersubjective verifiability-is enhanced.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 508), “The foundation for interpretation rests on triangulated empirical materials that are trustworthy.” Trustworthiness consists of four components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (these are the constructionist equivalents of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I deployed different methods such as interviews, exploration of census and other data, group interviews, and document checking to validate the findings of the study.

The sources and techniques I used are as delineated below:

- Documents: Primary and secondary sources include archival records, census and statistical data, curriculum guides, government gazettes, academic journals, annual ministerial reports and NGO reports and discursive documents: books, international journals, the internet, and all possible relevant sources of information accessible.
- Two different interview protocols were used, fifty-five minutes each for senior education officers and one and a half-hour each for the focus groups. All interviews were tape-recorded. All interviewees signed and dated the consent letters. The purpose of the interviews was to establish in detail the reasons and magnitude of the inequalities, what forms the inequalities take and whether there is awareness and action from all the parties involved, i.e.,

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the state, the government through the education officers, and the identified marginalized groups.

- Analytic field notes of emotions, gestures, temperament and other verbal and non-verbal detail not captured on tape recorder or visible to the ordinary eye during interviews.

Interviews

In total 20 high-ranking education officers from the two Ministries of education, 13 in Windhoek with different portfolios, responsibilities and roles, and 7 regional directors of education, were interviewed. At the time the interviews were conducted during the first six months of 1999, educational dispensation in Namibia was divided and shared between these two Ministries; the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology. I selected the twenty officials from both ministries of education to have a broader perspective of responses and avoid bias from any of the ministries. Each interview with education officers was face to face and lasted for fifty-five minutes to an hour, and has been recorded on a cassette tape recorder. Interviewees consisted of chief education officers, educational planners, regional education directors, and inspectors. Authorization was sought from and given by the permanent secretaries of both ministries with the approval of the respective ministers.

Due partly to the limited time of six months and limited funds available for data collection, I restricted my interviews to the twenty senior education officers who basically represented the state or government. Because of their being articulate and educated members of the Namibian community/ministries, all interviews with the education officers were conducted in English. After the authorization to interview by the Ministries, further selection through personal contacts, suggestions from colleagues, other

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education officers, local and international NGO's and district officials took place, in order to have as many broad based, experienced, and knowledgeable participants who met the criteria as possible. According to Strauss, (1987, p. 39), "Selective sampling refers to the calculated decision to sample a specific locale or type of interviewee according to pre-conceived but reasonable initial set of dimensions (such as time, space, identity) which are worked out in advance for a study." Thus, participants were chosen because they were not only knowledgeable about issues of educational inequalities but also because they were informative on socioeconomic class, regional and ethnic stratification. From the approximately forty names identified, I selected those whose names were mentioned more than twice. I also tried to employ selection criteria that were inclusive, i.e., more or less incorporating officials from all regions, ethnic groups and gender as employed by the Ministries. Other informants were twenty members, ten each, from the two identified marginalized community groups the Hai/ /Om of Oshikoto region at Oshivelo and Ovankhumbi of Kunene region near Ruacana.

My interviews were both structured and semi-structured in that I asked a number of standard questions and several follow-up questions. In parts of the interviews, I allowed the respondents to speak freely about their experiences, perceptions, and views about inequalities, regionalism, ethnicity, and education, with my follow-up questions sometimes depending on the nature and direction of their comments and clarifications.

The questions included in the structured interview were designed to get at the particular information that, based on my reading of the literature and on the specific purposes of this study, I felt I would need properly to address my research questions. Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p. 96) confirm that "the interview is used to gather descriptive

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data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world." The interviews involved asking questions, listening, expressing interest, cooperation, feelings, and recording what was said. A variety of probes were utilized to expand each participant's responses to the questions in the interview protocol.

Other policy researchers like Forest (1998, p. 330) have similarly used this type of "hybrid technique" in combining semi-structured and fully structured questions within the same interview. I found that this was the best way in the Namibian case to gain insight on the intricacies of the educational policy process and the perceived complexities in their educational work life.

Semi-structured interviews are particularly appropriate for research into micro-level organizational behavior because they provide the opportunity to draw upon the very detailed knowledge and expertise which interviewees typically possess about the policy environment in which they operate and about the policy issues under scrutiny. It is important to establish the interview agenda (themes, topics) for the unstructured segment of the interview. But then one needs to be prepared to seize the opportunity to learn more about a given topic if it is being discussed in detail, even if that topic was not on one's interview agenda but is nonetheless relevant to key issues under investigation. Clearly, this requires maximum flexibility and ad hoc reactions on the part of the interviewer that are not required in the more formally structured segment of the interview, but that can be immensely profitable from the information acquisition point of view.

It was indeed this combination of topic-specific flexibility with the ability to redirect the interview back to the planned agenda when necessary that shaped my

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approach to the unstructured portion of the interview in this study. At the same time, however, the standardized questions enabled me to learn a great deal about generalized patterns of inequalities and problems that emerged repeatedly across regional and ethnic boundaries. Those questions focused on principal ongoing problems, the extent of educational marginalization, and the way the officers and/or government assesses and handles that situation. Overall, I enjoyed remarkable access to the various senior education officers I targeted for interviews.

Group Interviews

Other informants of the study participated in two group interviews I conducted among people from what I claim to be among the two most marginalized communities of Namibia, the Hai/ /Om (Bushmen) in Oshikoto region and the Ovankhumbi in Kunene region. These communities were contacted through their leaders and their representatives in their own regions. Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 364) appropriately observed that “the use of the group interview is not meant to replace individual interviewing, but it is an option that deserves consideration because it can provide another level of data gathering or a perspective on the research problem not available through individual interviews.” In this case, group interviews were appropriate because only the marginalized themselves could eloquently speak from their deprived experiences.

The marginalized groups were identified through documents that revealed their educational marginalization, and my experience and knowledge of the groups. Before I started the doctoral program I worked for the Namibia Red Cross Society and UNICEF-Namibia. With both of these NGO's, I worked with rural communities, and I experienced the socio-economic and educational deprivation of these groups. One

interview consisted of ten Hai/ /om people from the Oshikoto region specifically at Oshivelo, and the other group interview consisted of ten Ovankhumbi people from the Kunene region around Epalela area. (During the time of the interviews, there were national debates as to whether the area around Epalela is part of Kunene region or should be regarded as part of Omusati region.) The group interviews lasted for an hour and a half each and were also recorded on a cassette tape recorder. For the group interviews, contact with their local leaders (like chiefs, headmen, King, and community leaders) was necessary before permission was granted to interview them. One of the many characteristics is that both groups are educationally marginalized and consisted of a mixture of gender, teachers, parents, and a few school-age children. The group interviews were both conducted in English, with translations in Afrikaans and their respective languages, that is, Hai/ /Om and Oshinkhumbi. For the Hai/ /Om, a community leader translated and for the Ovankhumbi a school principal, who is also a community leader, translated.

Knodel (1993, p. 34) indicates that “the group interview is a tool that social researchers should consider utilizing, particularly as a strategy to obtain phenomenological data in natural settings.” Even when group sessions are held with different subsets of the population, as is the case with the two groups interviewed in Namibia, it is often important to ensure that the groups all share common characteristics. Some major characteristics which, the two groups focused on share, for example, is educational marginalization. These two groups are both predominantly found in particular rural regions, the Oshikoto and Kunene regions respectively, in the country. Both these groups are minority ethnic groups in terms of numbers. A group is a selection

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of people who are invited to respond to researchers' questions, findings from earlier studies, policy documents, hypotheses, concerns and the like. They may comprise people who are a cross-section of the population, or as is the case for this study, different homogeneous groups, comprising two ethnic groups from various regions in Namibia.

Ovankhumbi is one of Namibia's diverse and pluralistic communities. Because of the small number in Namibia, this group was at the verge of incorporation into other regional groups during the colonial era. However, the few Ovankhumbi who are in Namibia and identify with their culture speak Oshinkhumbi language, and the majority identify themselves as part of the greater Ovankhumbi Kingdom along the Kunene river in southern Angola. Besides few in urban areas this group is predominantly in Kunene and Omusati regions northwestern Namibia. I agree with Barth (1969, p. 300), who insists that "much of the controversy over regional/ethnic boundaries is cast in terms of a debate about history and politics." The Ovankhumbi group, just like the Hai/ /Om, complained about their educational and other socioeconomic deprivation. Both groups were also vocal about their lack of land and poor facilities where they currently find themselves.

Hai/ /Om are usually classified as the San or "Bushman." The terms Bushman and San, which have developed into ethnonyms over the centuries, have been subject to considerable debate. The pre-independence term 'Bushman' continues to be used in many contexts. De la Gorgendiere, King and Vaughan (1996, p. 150) point out that "The post-apartheid SWAPO government, very likely informed by North American literature on 'Bushman,' uses the term San as a seemingly non-discriminatory term in some official documents and communications." Being lumped together under one label did not benefit

these different 'Bushman' groups. However, these groups may out of political consideration adopt this overarching label. There are more than six, known various San groups in southern Africa.

From the perspective of overseas donors and development agencies the San often appear to be the prototypical indigenous minority group of Namibia. Gordon (1992, p. 25) documents that, "the Hai/ /Om, !Kung and other groups who were categorized as 'Bushman' were prosecuted during the German colonial period and dispossessed of their land during the apartheid era." Being recognized today as forming the San, a single group, seems to have advantages in attracting development aid. However, it also contains the danger of perpetuating a marginal status without any long-term benefits for the groups mentioned. The changing ecological and climatic conditions compel these groups to demand equitable access to an education that will enable them to cope with the new conditions and ever changing circumstances.

It was necessary to interview these two Ovankhumbi and Hai/ /Om groups to gain in-depth understanding of how the marginalized perceive themselves and/or seen by other groups. It was also important to know what their perceptions are about conventional education and what they are doing as groups or individuals within those groups to improve their equitable educational access and attainment. Generally, there are similarities in these two groups educational limitations, and therefore, great consensus in most of their responses. Both groups, for example, expressed understanding the importance of education, and thus value to their children of receiving a good education. But the lack of equal educational opportunity and inequitable allocation of resources prevents their dreams from being realized.

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Some of the necessary and important decisions I had to take to carry out the group interviews included who should be in the groups, the total number of groups, their size and diversity in terms of gender and age and experiences, as well as their location.

Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 75) found that

When the group is a naturally occurring social group, then things can be discovered by talking with all members together that could not be gleaned through one-to-one interviews. The researcher may observe the process of consensus formation and of the rules by which disagreements are played out.

Group interviews can and do show something of the dynamics of social relationships amongst group members, for example, who gets to speak and who does not, what forms of speech characterize different members in the group setting, and whose ideas are listened to. Other advantages of group interviews are that the story that emerges may be more complete as interviewees fill in each other's gaps and memory lapses. The information obtained may be more trust-worthy as bias in one account may counterbalance that in the other. For instance, I gained insights into the interactions and nature of power relationships between group members through observation of verbal and non-verbal modes of communication. It was possible to witness how various group members support, negotiate and influence each other, as well as manage disagreement and areas of tension.

Observation by Shadowing Two Leaders

I shadowed one from each group, a principal and a community leader separately, each for two days, mainly in order to understand the dynamics of disparities in their local schools in the Oshikoto and Kunene regions. This included brief classroom observations, in-depth questions, and discussions as we walked around and they showed me the

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premises and responded to queries. Research in the form of shadowing and observation by visiting sites is an important tool in the research methodology of triangulation and of education policy analysts. Neuman (1997, p. 361) rightfully advises that “a great deal of what researchers do in the field is to pay attention, watch, and listen carefully. They use all the senses, noticing what is seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched. The observer becomes an instrument that absorbs all sources of information.” Observing in field research is often detailed and tedious work. Consequently, Silverman (1993, p. 30) noted,

Good field researchers are intrigued about details that reveal ‘what is going on here’ through careful listening and watching. Field researchers believe that the core of social life is communicated through the mundane, trivial, everyday minutia. This is what people often overlook, but field researchers need to learn how to notice.

I had to record such details because I figured significant information might be revealed, and it was. It is also better to err by including everything than to ignore potentially significant detail. These shadowing sessions enabled me to observe, understand, and question the meaning of some subtle actions and behaviors, which may not have surfaced from the interviews. I was able to understand verbal and non-verbal messages through their activities. From this exercise of shadowing and observing these community leaders, I learned that working for equitable social amenities happen behind classrooms, schools and national institutions. It is a continuous struggle to transform the community and environment to create support for education. In addition, working for equity and social justice must involve the participation of all the concerned stakeholders, entailing sharing of decisions and sharing of power with others who are also affected by the decisions taken.

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Other Relevant Sources of Data

I acquainted myself with most educational and other socio-economic activities in the country to gain broader perspectives and understanding of pertinent issues. This included attendance at official meetings of educational forums crucial for understanding the institutional dynamics, organizational culture, interpersonal relations, and political factors that defines the education perspective. This led me to travel to various regions to attend meetings involving educational deliberations on several occasions at different points during the data collection period. I also found it crucially valuable to personally attend and observe meetings of the Presidential Commission on Education at the headquarters of the Ministries of Education and some held at the University of Namibia (UNAM). While in the regions, I also attended educational meetings at regional headquarters and at schools. I found that these site visits, combined with the interview material and the documentary evidence, proved an indispensable methodology for uncovering the actual practices and behavior of the educational establishment in Namibia.

Informally I also had an opportunity to have beneficial and informative discussions with researchers and professors at the University of Namibia (UNAM), and I participated in their seminars, meetings and workshops. While in Windhoek, I worked closely with two professors at the University of Namibia (who served as mentors) and shared an office with one of them. Their insights, expertise, and experiences were invaluable for my understanding of the issues pertinent to educational inequalities as well as to ethnic, regional, and social stratification in Namibia.

The evident paradox in most of these deliberations is rapid school expansion, on regional and ethnic lines, at the expense of quality. In addition to poverty, which seems

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to be the main obstacle to equal educational opportunity, competing political and economic ideologies have been rekindled in post apartheid Namibia. Fuller and Caldwell (2000, p. 300) indicate that “where apartheid was practiced, we saw a dramatic case where mass expansion, with little concern for improving quality, was used as a tool with intent to reproduce stratification and inequality.” Apartheid regimes had aimed to cool out and or quell opposition and political resistance. In addition, apartheid imposed subservience and lack of quality on the majority population, which resulted in the obvious deficit of qualified human resources to effectively implement post apartheid policies and practices.

Bradshaw and Ndegwa observed that over the long term, the deeply ingrained racial, ethnic, and class divisions created during the decades of apartheid rule remain problematic and could engender more serious conflicts if economic development efforts falter dramatically (Bradshaw and Ndegwa 2000, p. 110).

Data Analysis

Qualitative research by nature and scope tends to produce large amounts of data. Since I use multiple methods, i.e., interviews, collection and analysis of various key documents, observation, and group interviews to gather the data, I ended up with a lot of information and evidence. This required sifting through to extract the most salient details that are relevant and meaningful to answer the research questions. Neuman (1997, p. 394) observed that “as a researcher organizes evidence, he or she uses theoretical insights to stimulate new ways to organize data and for new questions to ask of evidence.” The interaction of data and theory means that I went beyond a surface examination of the evidence to develop new concepts by critically evaluating the evidence based on theory.

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Both theories of state and theories of ethnicity that I used in this study are relevant because they help to explain the inequitable characteristics and behavior of the state and the regional/ethnic cleavages within it.

There are many different styles of qualitative research, and there are a variety of ways of handling and analyzing data. It was beneficial for me to reflect about what I found while in the field as part of the analysis, although strategically I left the more formal analysis until most of the data were in. Bogdan and Biklen suggest “some analysis must take place during data collection. Without it, the data collection has no direction.” Analysis involved working with data, organizing it, breaking it down into manageable units, synthesizing it, and searching for patterns of similarities and differences. The ultimate analytic task is interpreting and making sense out of the collected material. I therefore used analytic field notes and transcription and coding of the data, arranged and categorized for effective use. I used the Excel program to categorize and consolidate the various themes. It was very important and helpful to link the results to theory.

The first step in analyzing the interviews of the education officers was obtaining verbatim transcripts of each interview with the twenty education officers and the two identified, marginalized ethnic groups. I transcribed almost half of the interviews, and the remaining half was transcribed professionally. To ensure the complete accuracy of each interview that was professionally transcribed, I listened to the tapes of the entire interview again and edited the transcripts as necessary. Each speaker’s comments in each interview were numbered for easy reference. The next step in the process was to begin to organize the data to facilitate its analysis. I made a chart that outlined the background

information provided by each interviewee about education and resource allocation, access to education, regional and ethnic limitations, and/or advantages and future prospects for education in Namibia. I then pulled together into separate documents all the interviewees responses to each of the interview questions. Putting all interviewees' responses together in one document on a given question facilitated the process of looking for themes in the data and for similarities and differences across interviewees. I also considered how articulate the interviewees were in expressing their ideas, because some were much better than others at explaining themselves clearly and in more detail. I listed all their remarks that appeared relevant to the guiding research question of the study. I wrote my own brief commentaries on their remarks, noting important ideas, contradictions, and possible themes, and also raising questions for future thought and analysis. Throughout the process I wrote regular memos to myself about emerging issues and what I was learning on a continuous basis. These memos provided a time to reflect on issues raised in the setting and how they relate to larger theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues. As my research proceeded, these memos became more analytical in linking my findings to other situations and the data.

Finally, I tried to be as sensitive as possible to distinctions of region, race, sex, ethnic, religion, and age and to other major social divisions so as not to exclude certain perspectives. Ultimately, data analysis, according to Neuman, means "a search for patterns in data – recurrent behaviors, objects, or a body of knowledge" (Neuman 1994, p. 427). He also stresses that data analysis involves examining, sorting, categorizing, evaluating, comparing, synthesizing, and contemplating the coded data as well as reviewing the raw and recorded data.

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As the final step in my analysis of the interviews, I analyzed the responses for each question separately, looking for possible patterns or themes across all the interviews. In my analysis a pattern or theme became a category when I developed a working definition to distinguish which responses could be included. This final step in the analysis process involved reading and re-reading the interview responses because as new categories emerged from my analysis, I would revisit previously analyzed interviews to seek additional evidence to confirm or disconfirm the new category. Sometimes, in so doing, my definitions of the categories had to be revised. Because these were semi-structured interviews, obviously most of the categories were shaped by the questions that were asked.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study period is from colonial to post-colonial eras. Reasonable data are available for this period. However, data is available on only some of the regional and ethnic groups. The Khoi-San, for example, consists of several groups with different dialects. These were all lumped together as “Bushman” or “San” by colonial governments, a dilemma that unfortunately continues in the post-colonial practices. This factor may have caused some documentation problems, thus opening the research to inaccuracies and mismeasurement.

Educational development by itself cannot alleviate social and economic crises because education does not operate in a vacuum. The matrix of cultural, social, political, ideological, and economic forces in which it operates shapes education. This study alone can by no means resolve the deep issues of access, provision, equity, and educational opportunity for all in Namibia. The study, however, serves to analyze, evaluate, and

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document educational policies and practices and suggest ways of improvement (for the future), taking into account the existing social, cultural and economic setting, the demand for education and the new political contradictions.

Although this study focuses primarily on two marginalized ethnic groups based in the northern regions, there are many similarities with other regional groups throughout Namibia. A number of differences also exist not only in different parts of the country, but also within specific regions, yet it is possible to determine certain patterns that may hold true for all regions and to suggest policy options for all regions with a view to enhance the process of equitable and accessible education for all in the country.

Ballantine (1989, p. 296) maintains that

Inequality in the educational system reflects inequality in society. By controlling the type of education and knowledge available to various groups in society, the dominant group can maintain its position of power and perpetuate inequalities.

This limitation of the study, then, is also that its scope does not allow it to focus on all different regional and ethnic groups and the activities and interactions of all marginalized groups. There is generally less attention paid to ethnicity, compared to the more prominent focus on regional inequalities. Perhaps future research on groups and case studies will address these omission. It is vital that similar research be carried out in other regions, as well as in the rest of the country, in this relatively new area of research in Namibia.

Although the interviews did provide in-depth and richly textured responses to, and descriptions of, a complex process, the interview process was also limited. In the case of government educational officials, inspectors, and regional education directors, political difference in affiliation may sometimes have acted as a restrictive element. In some

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cases, the researcher, being an ex-ruling party member, may have affected the answers given to specific questions by the ruling party affiliated respondents. Many of these problems can be understood within the political climate that prevailed in the country at the time of research. The sensitivity of the topic may have led to the risk of stirring up antagonisms and conflicts of interests. Cornwell claims that “if the research topic is especially sensitive, or there is any likelihood of provoking friction, individuals may not be willing to disclose detailed, honest information to the interviewer and instead provide a more acceptable, ‘public’ response” (Cornwell 1984, p. 86). For group interviews, members may collude to withhold information from the interviewer. While I used subjects as a resource, it was important not to defer to them completely. They have a stake in seeing things in a particular way that might interfere with their abilities to help clarify and analyze. I also tried not to reveal how much I was learning to certain subjects because it could lead to their withdrawal. Bogdan and Biken (1982, p. 161) advise, that “Be selective in choosing helpers. While not everyone should be asked, and while not all you hear may be helpful, key informants, under the appropriate circumstances can help advance your analysis, especially to fill in the holes of description.” Regardless of careful selection for this study’s informants, most government employees in Namibia are either members of or closely affiliated with the ruling party (SWAPO). Most of them would thus naturally refrain from exposing the powers that be upon whom they depend.

Different methods have their own shortcomings. A whole spectrum of scholars raise questions like how internal validity, objectivity, and generalizability to other cases and settings can be enhanced. The method of triangulation also has its limitations. First, it can be time consuming and expensive. Denzin (1970, p. 312) cautions that

“restrictions of time and money make it impossible to employ multiple observers, multiple methods, and multiple data sources.” It took me over two years to analyze the data and write up the dissertation, as it required full immersion in the theory and its application. Second, successful triangulation is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for effective policy-making. The same holds for any analysis in the face of pervasive complexity and uncertainty. Another problem with triangulation is, ironically, bias. While triangulation helps correct for the bias in any one instrument, care has to be taken to ensure that the biases are not in the same direction (see Cook, 1985, for a detailed discussion of this issue). In spite of the limitations, the study, especially in terms of its broad frame of reference, fulfilled the major aims as outlined.

Ethical Concerns

The various pertinent yet formidable issues concerning ethical responsibility are of importance not only to note but also to acknowledge and explain how they are dealt with in the study. A qualitative study that involves interviewing will naturally have to deal with the consent of subjects, anonymity that protects them from harm, and the right to their withdrawal and privacy. Some issues and questions to do with ethical concerns, for example, how researchers avoid inadvertently manipulating subjects. How much control over writing the results that subjects can have is valid and important to ask regarding participants' right to informed consent.

Lofland and Lofland (1995, p. 26) state that “ethical problems, questions, and dilemmas are an integral part of the research experience as much as they are a part of the experience of everyday life.” It was important for me as a researcher to receive consent from subjects after I carefully and truthfully informed them about the research. I also

saw to it that subjects were protected from harm. I made sure to inform my subjects thoroughly well in advance about the study and about the procedure of the interviews and possible follow up interviews for clarifications in case it was necessary. Researchers need to be aware of all types of harm and minimize them at all times (Neuman 1997, p. 446). I also informed the participants that the interviews would be tape-recorded and that they had a right to refrain from answering any particular questions and to request that the tape recorder be turned off at any time. Consequently, I assured my subjects that all data and tape recordings would be kept confidential according to the Michigan State University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) regulations, and that their identity would not be disclosed in the final report. I emphasized their right to withdraw at any time, and or to decline participation without any repercussions or penalty.

Research that explores political, cultural, economic, ethnic, regional, and social factors, is a daunting exercise that requires ethical responsibility from the researcher throughout the process. Neuman (1997, p. 443) argues that “the researcher has a moral and professional obligation to be ethical, even when research subjects are unaware of or unconcerned about ethics.” Before, during, and after conducting a study, a researcher has opportunities to, and should, reflect on research actions and consult his or her conscience. I have honored, respected, and abided by maintaining this code of ethics throughout this study. Confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, and moral responsibility that protect subjects from harm are maintained throughout the process of this study as per UCRIHS specifications and recommendations.

A researcher who considers ethical concerns takes into account the consequences of research for the lives of those being studied. But there are no fixed answers to various questions. A researcher must evaluate each case, weigh potential harm against potential benefits, and bear the responsibility for the decision. Research subjects may face various types of harm and experiences. For example an interview may create anxiety and discomfort among subjects who are asked to recall unpleasant events. The researcher must be sensitive to any harm to subjects, consider possible precautions, and weigh potential harm against potential benefits. Another risk of harm to subjects is that of a negative effect on their careers or incomes. For example, a researcher conducts a survey of employees and concludes that the supervisor's performance is poor. As a consequence, the supervisor loses her job. According to Neuman, a fundamental principal of social research is "never coerce anyone into participating; participation must be voluntary. It is not enough to get permission from subjects; they need to know what they are being asked to participate in so that they can make an informed decision" (Neuman, 1997, p. 450).

Finally, I believe that the ethically sensitive, thoughtful, and knowledgeable investigator is the best judge of whether his/her research is justified. It is wise and necessary to acquaint oneself with the problems, debates, and dilemmas associated with the particular research carried out. Punch (1994, p. 89) stresses that "in essence, most concern evolves around issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality of data." At minimum, the researcher must desirably be familiar with the code of ethics of the discipline in which research is conducted.

I counter checked to ascertain that my interviewees and prospective participants were consulted and debriefed about the study in advance. I informed them about the length of the interviews and the likely follow up sessions that would reflect on their educational experiences. I asked them to critically think about how they think about educational inequalities, and how they have addressed crucial issues of regionalism, ethnicity-racism, class, gender, and social stratification in their practices as educational officers and/or as members of marginalized groups in the past and the current context, and how they visualize it for the future.

The participants were also informed that the interviews would be tape-recorded and that they had the right not to respond to any particular questions and to request that the recorder be turned off at any time during the process. Furthermore, I assured them that all data and recording would be kept confidential and that their identity would not be disclosed in the final product. Their right to withdraw and to not participate at any time without penalty or other consequences was guaranteed.

In the next three chapters I present the findings of this study as a set of nine themes, accompanied by supporting evidence, which I identified in the course of my overall analysis.

Chapter IV

GOVERNMENT POLICY IN RELATION TO POVERTY, UNEQUAL EDUCATION RESOURCES, AND PROFESSIONAL IMPACT

Theme: Poverty and unemployment prevail, and the government is committed to alleviating these problems.

This theme addresses some of the most sensitive yet also most overlooked concepts of poverty and unemployment in Namibian society. This section, overall, is about the existence of poverty in Namibia, and the government's efforts to alleviate it. There have been no in depth studies in Namibia specifically designed comprehensively to measure poverty, deprivation, unemployment, income distribution, and standard of living in the general population. Yet these factors seem to be among the crucial determining factors of not only educational inequalities but also inequalities in income, health, and knowledge. The Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU) (1997, p. 16) discussion paper put the situation in Namibia quite succinctly by stating that

While poverty in Namibia is typical of many African countries, with poor households concentrated in rural areas and large income differentials between rural and urban areas and between male and female headed households, a striking difference lies in the extreme disparity of income between ethnic and language groups in Namibia.

The measurement of poverty is first designed to bridge first and third worlds and to afford a basis for cross-national measurement. The UN (1995, p. 57) defines absolute poverty as "...a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services." Consequently, according to the UN, overall poverty takes on various forms, including

...lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social and cultural life. It occurs in all countries: as mass poverty in many developing countries, pockets of poverty amid wealth in developed countries, loss of livelihoods as a result of economic recession, sudden poverty as a result of disaster or conflict, the poverty of low-wage workers, and the utter destitution of people who fall outside family support systems, social institutions and safety nets.

The limited information available about these factors in Namibia comes from sources such as the UNDP (1998, p. 11), which defines the eradication of poverty as follows:

The underlying assumption in constructing the Human Poverty Index is that poverty would have been eradicated in a society where: every newborn child is assured of an adequate diet during the first five years; every youngster is trained to read and write; every citizen has access to safe drinking water and to health care and survives to the age of forty years.

The Namibian government is expected to prepare a national poverty eradication plan to alleviate the plight of the majority who are in dire need. Measurement of the problem of poverty, and of the effects of specific policies on trends in poverty, is neither as reliable nor as exact as it should be. There are technical or scientific problems, but also political problems, that demand to be solved. Both measurement and analysis are being politicized to an extent that is becoming unacceptable. As this respondent an education officer in the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture insisted,

As I indicated earlier, we came to realize that the magnitude of the problem of specifically marginalized groups is so much. Now when we talk about marginalized groups, we are really talking about the poor of the poorest. In this connection we are not considering all the other say, African ethnic groups that were because of apartheid given a budget that was not sufficient. We are talking about those who were used as semi-slaves on farms etc. {Respondent # 6}

When, for example, there are competing measures of poverty, with political interests mobilized behind each of them, there is a temptation to leave the meaning of poverty ambiguous, or so arbitrarily and crudely defined as to be less than useful. Again, if poverty is not monitored exactly, and changes in specific policies are not related to trends in poverty, it becomes difficult to establish which changes are, and are not, successful in reducing poverty. Ideologically preferred policies, some of which need to be eliminated, are not placed under sufficient scrutiny.

In Namibia the differences between the rich and the poor are becoming more extreme everywhere, at the same time as goods and certain services are becoming available cross-regionally. There has to be rigorously collected comparative evidence to decide matters of poverty and unemployment; after all, there are endless problems of 'degree' even if the basic contention is accepted.

Poverty alleviation is one of the four main aims of government (National Planning Commission, 1995); the other three are to reduce inequalities, to create employment, and to promote economic growth. Indeed, these four objectives are intertwined, and the second two are pre-conditions for achieving the first two. While reducing income inequality does not seem to be a sufficient condition for economic growth, the effects of equality on growth have been found to be statistically significant (Alestina & Rodrik, 1994; Clarke, 1995; Persson & Tabellini, 1994). Two factors identified in early poverty research as important in the alleviation of poverty and economic growth are still valid today - the distribution of productive assets, and the rapid accumulation of human capital through improvements in education and health (Chenery et al., 1974; Lipton & Ravallion, 1995).

To achieve its objectives of poverty alleviation and employment creation, the Namibian government has devoted a large amount of resources to sectors such as education and health, and to policies promoting industrialization. Although government policies are generally oriented towards poverty alleviation, there could be some improvements in the targeting and efficiency of the expenditure. It is hard to keep up with the flow of published reports about poverty and unemployment at a global level. In the 1990s investigations of the persistence and even growth of poverty proliferated. One major illustration is the mounting stream of World Bank reports. By 1999 the Bank had published more than 400 technical papers, more than 400 discussion papers, nearly 150 Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) working papers, probably more than 200 country studies, and many other reports and papers on macro-economic, environmental, urban management, education, and sustainable development issues – many addressing poverty in different forms (Pandazis & Gordon, 2000, p. 213).

According to the UNDP (1998, p. 16), “In most regions of Namibia the most effective way of reducing poverty as measured by the Human Poverty Index (HPI), is the improvement in access to health services.” The large number of people who have to walk long unacceptable distances to get health care or education constitutes a problem that overshadows all the other dimensions of poverty in most of Namibia, except in the Khomas, Okavango, and Omusati regions. In Khomas, which has by far the best and the most accessible health services, the largest poverty burden is represented by a very high proportion of underweight children, perhaps a result of a large influx of migrants to the peri-urban squatter settlements. Only Hardap has a similar problem with malnourished children. In Okavango and Omusati, the health problems are overshadowed by the

poorly developed water supply systems, which also hold a grip on poverty in Okavango and Caprivi (UNDP 1998, p. 16). One of the respondents, a regional education director, said the following:

Children in the rural areas have to walk on foot even during the cold season, during the rainy season, the streams and the Oshanas (swampy areas) are full of water. These kids have to walk, some of them even ten kilometers on foot, that means to go and to come back from school. And then another thing is also that the parents there, they are also quite in poverty, because some of the settlements don't have lighting, electricity or solar power or whatever, so when the children come back from school, there is no way out. {Respondent # 16}

Complementary to any economic development policy for regions, there must be comprehensive social initiatives and policies policy which deal with and attack the causes of poverty and underdevelopment, especially in the historically deprived rural areas which are referred to by the above respondent. Totemeyer (1992, p. 47) appropriately argues that "any regional planning in Namibia has to address the reduction of existing interregional disparities and thus to contribute to a more equitable distribution of wealth, opportunities and development. Inequality and poverty should be eradicated." Development aimed at eradicating poverty would reflect a process of progressive change plus growth from which a whole society could benefit equally.

Therefore, both the respondents and the broad literature believe considerable efforts could be made to contribute towards more social equality and general improvement of the socio economic framework. A study conducted for the 1993/94 first review of Swedish/Namibian co-operation concluded that "the success of all efforts to fight poverty and to address the vexed issues of unemployment in the final analysis will hinge on the political will of the Namibian government to pursue some difficult courses of action" (Oden et al, 1994, p. 117).

The following respondent, an education officer from the Ministry of Higher Education Vocational Training Science and Technology, reckons that “the large majority of Namibians do not have an adequate income to provide their children with adequate food, shelter, security, medical care, clothing, and all you need to live a decent life.” He quotes figures and depicts farm workers’ children to be out of the economic function. To him these differences perpetuate ethnicity as the inherited legacy of apartheid manifested in many ways:

The parents earning between three hundred and six hundred Namibian dollars, some of them less, up to two hundred dollars cannot afford good schools. I am not even talking about the children of farm workers, they are out from the beginning. But if you talk about, let us say the average kid from a parent earning less than a thousand Namibian dollars, there is no way that, that child will get into school A or school B because the parents naturally won’t afford. For the new rich in government, it’s nothing to pay for their children, their salaries allows that. For somebody earning three hundred dollars, while even at state schools you have to pay three hundred dollars or more per trimester, that is a month’s salary for some people, let alone the unemployed it is difficult. If you are a high income earner, say for instance you earn ten thousand Namibian dollars a month, before tax, I mean if you have to pay ten thousand Namibian dollars just for school fees, most people will be totally angry. But it’s the same effect on that person earning the lowest salary. So there is no way, and then you have to pay for a taxi. It costs a few hundred dollars for transport for each child. I mean that is just out. So that is a subtle way of keeping I will say ethnicism and inequity, because of this insidious policy that was followed by apartheid South Africa. You know people are still to a last degree separated. I think the new towns, the new communal areas, some areas are more open, but I don’t know how long this legacy will still last. Also, the people who move to the improved affordable locations are among those who earn money to be able to afford these new houses.
{Respondent # 14}

Ultimately the problems that causes the deep-rooted inequalities to continue are multiple and varied.

In most regions, poverty is manifest in terms of inadequate access to material wealth, measured as lack of surplus income beyond what is needed to feed the family.

However, poverty is less prominent as a crisis than one might expect in most regions.

The reason is that poverty is overshadowed by many other factors and dimensions. One respondent, a regional education director, contended that the rich of the society assist the government in funding projects for the schools attended by their children. The poor of society cannot participate in supplementing school budgets because they cannot afford to.

Their meager income and savings would rather be spent on basic aspects of survival:

The inequality is still there because the parents of those who had they still have. The parents still have, they are still rich, they are still well to do. The children of the parents who were poor, I think they are still struggling, so, then the schools where these rich children go, apart from the their portion which the government, the ministry contributes to the budget the rich parents also have the means to support and supplement the shortages that can be observed in the school. But the schools which were disadvantaged right, they still struggle, why? Though the distribution from the government is equal, this part which the parents are supposed to be supplement, that is still lacking there, because the parents are still poor. So that inequality is still there, and is likely to take long to get rid of it, though the policy say equal, but the reality on the ground is quite different because of the factors that I refer to, and also the legacy of apartheid of course. {Respondent # 8}

The respondent did not beat about the bush but rather said it as he sees and experiences it. He was elaborate on how poverty, and thus inequalities, are bound to continue for a long time.

The following theme demonstrates how, despite the government's efforts of educational and other policy commitments, the inequitable human and natural resources, infrastructure, capital, and technology lead to persisting unequal educational access and outcomes.

Theme: Good quality education is restricted by facilities, infrastructure, capital, resources, and technological limitations.

This theme addresses related issues of the government's commitment and efforts for educational equity, versus lack of sufficient infrastructure, technological limitations, and the low quality of most schools; thus, the inability to provide education for all the children on an equal basis. This theme also identifies non-proportional budget allocations and lack of financial resources and facilities to be determining factors in the provision of access to education, or lack of it, to the majority of the population.

The debate on school physical facilities, home background, and resources available to individuals is prevalent in most countries of the world. Since the equality of educational opportunity report by Coleman et al. (1966) and its application to developing countries by Heinemann (1975), school effects researchers have sought to establish the relative significance of the school as compared to student characteristics (mainly social background) in accounting for achievement variation among students. Though not without critiques, extant research shows that the relative explanatory power of school characteristics depends on the research context (Marope, 1996, p. 157). Research findings from developed countries have confirmed those of Coleman that social background and related variables account for a higher proportion of the variance in achievement than between-school differences in resource inputs (Comber & Keeves, 1973; Bryk et al. 1989; Heinemann & Loxley, 1983). But in developing countries, country-level and comparative studies have consistently confirmed the superiority of school resource inputs in accounting for achievement variation among students (Fuller, 1986; Saha, 1983; Schiefelbein and Simmons, 1981; Theisen et al.).

Evidence from country-level studies provides details of the specific school characteristics that affect achievement. These will be explored with evidence from respondents in this study. In Namibia and Botswana, studies have shown that children in primary schools with sufficient physical facilities such as classroom space, desks, library, school hall, and other resources (namely reading materials, qualified and experienced teachers) significantly outperformed those in less endowed schools (Campbell & Abbot 1976; Kann, 1978; Mwamwenda & Mwawmenda, 1987). The conclusion that achievement levels are higher in schools with better physical facilities was also true for Zambian and Malawian schools (Heinemann, 1980).

There is overwhelming general agreement among respondents about the post-independence expansion of education. Most respondents confirmed that during the independence period, access to education has improved all over the country. It is the quality of the expanded education that is problematic and which seems to be limited by the factors mentioned above and possibly others. Some of the impeding factors are insufficient infrastructure, technological limitations, and inefficiency; respondents also repeatedly pointed out that the huge bureaucratic structure, the lack of financial resources, and the destruction of property through vandalism seem to stifle and constrain developmental progress.

The way in which plans for greater access, quality, and equity should be conceptualized is open to question, particularly in the light of the constraining economic conditions which impact negatively on the amount of funding available for educational reconstruction. In this light, therefore, placing all children into school and providing equitable distribution become major challenges, especially when the issue of the quality

of such schooling comes under dispute. With more money allocated to the quantitative expansion of formerly deprived Black schooling, less money was available for privileged White schooling. Well-resourced White schools with parent communities that could afford to pay school fees were thus enabled by state policy to preserve a privileged schooling system.

Educational inequalities are pervasive and far-reaching, and it would be disingenuous to suppose that they can be eradicated easily. Respondents had various responses to the issue of access, equity and the quality of schools. There is general consensus among respondents about the acute lack of infrastructure and lack of funds and facilities to be among the main causes that restrict good quality education to most of the population. The impact is felt more in the hitherto deprived schools, both in urban and rural areas, where schools make do with meager resources and infrastructure.

This particular respondent from the MBEC acknowledged that access to schooling is to a great extent achieved. Namibia does have more school going age children in school than her SADEC regional counterparts. Consequently, he emphasized how differentiated that access can be between the range of privileged schools, the deprived schools, and those at the margin. He also pointed out that the phenomenal expansion of schooling that led to the high accessibility lacks the desired quality. He posed several questions about the types of quality in the different schools:

There are problems but we have over 90% of children in schools – I don't know really how truthful that statement is. Access - doing very well, better than most of the African countries. Enrolled more kids than any other country in the SADEC region.

But now access to what quality is another question. Access to the same quality? Access to rural quality? Access to middle level quality? Access to high quality? That's one different thing.

Access to quality, determined by what resources? How much of resources do exist in those access plus schools?

How different is the quality of schools accessed by Black children to those accessed by White children? We should not blindly talk about access.

Access is good we have too many kids in schools, but what quality have we accessed them to? {Respondent # 5}

The respondent's questions certainly have far reaching implications about the quality of education that is offered in the post-colonial expansion of education in Namibia. Our knowledge of the extent and changing nature of the educational inequalities in Namibia is very patchy, and the understanding of the causes of these inequalities, apart from the known fact of the apartheid legacy, is even much more so. In a similar vein, the following regional director's questions and response are threefold. He inquired about the quality 90% learners in schools have access to and about whether access has been broadened and deepened throughout the grade levels, and he declared that there is no equitable access to education:

Well, there has been an effort in terms of increasing the number of Namibian's access to education. They have had more access to education, obviously we have had now I am made to understand that our enrollment rates are about 90%. That being the case, obviously I might have my own views about these things. 90% what? How is the system different from the previous system in terms of inaccessibility that you are referring to and inequality. Now if you look at the access, it may have broaden but whether it has deepened I think it's another issue. We have had a broadening of maybe access at lower levels. Whether that goes through, that's what I mean by whether it has deepened. Whether it goes through up to higher education I doubt that because if you look at the university it takes about maybe a thousand between the university and polytechnic one is looking at about two, three, four thousand. OK, basically two thousand new trainees every year. So what you are saying is the true situation is like, and we have graduates of about, I mean in junior secondary school. You are looking at about twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand. That in itself shows that there is no deepening in the system. What one can say is that there is no equitable access to education. I would also like to

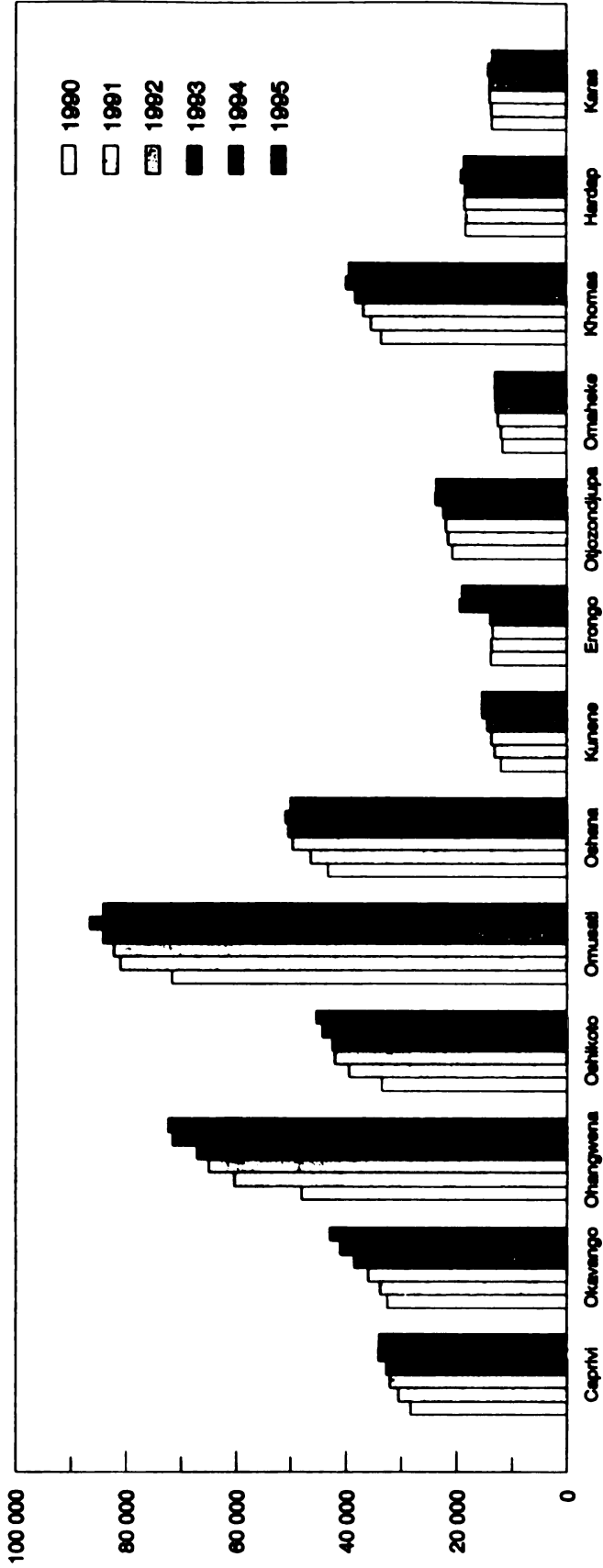
maybe add that or even use my God-feeling and say that what we have there, is a situation where people who have always had access to education are actually continuing to have access to education. {Respondent # 9}

Similar to many other developing countries, education in independent Namibia expanded quantitatively. It is the qualitative application and provision that has been a problem because the available resources cannot cope with the high demand of the expanded education. According to Bradshaw and Ndegwa, “Both the SWAPO (South West Africa Peoples Organization) and international agencies have committed substantial resources to expansion of mass schooling and improving quality, especially within the impoverished northern region. In 1991 approximately 1,234 schools were registered in Namibia; by 1997 that number has risen to 1,457, an increase of 18 percent” (Bradshaw & Ndegwa 2000, p. 312). The respondent below, a MHEVST high-ranking officer, tried to give a clear picture according to his views of the current situation pertaining to quality in the expanded schools:

The government has been trying to push for quality in the highly accessed schools, although it might not have been serious enough to do it that good. The government has been building quite a number of schools, especially primary schools in the northern regions, and quite a large number of children in those regions are in schools now. But the quality of schooling that they receive is another issue altogether. But a number of schools have been built, especially in the northern regions and especially on the primary phase. But what I am really saying is that, it is very difficult for the government to equate regions economically as the policy may indicate. It is very difficult, and I don't know why, I do not have the solution to that or a real answer to that problem. What I really know is that the quality in the majority schools is very poor or nonexistent. There is this enormous inequity in resource allocation to various regions and schools, which, has a detrimental effect on the quality experienced in those schools and regions. Those poor regions will remain poor, poor schools will deteriorate and better schools will become even better schools because their quality in terms of resources, teachers, infrastructure and equipment remain superior. {Respondent # 11}

Expanded provision of schooling did not translate into quality schooling. In fact, recent studies, for example Melber (1997), Brock-Utne (2000), and others focusing on unequal distribution and literacy, argue that despite the expansion depicted above, no improvement in the quality of schooling had occurred. According to these studies, regional inequalities are very striking. 70% of all Black children are schooled in the former Homelands and rural areas. This forms the most disadvantaged schooling sector; 25% plus of Blacks' schooling takes place in massively under-resourced rural schools. Regional disparities are a very important dimension of expanding access to schooling. It is those underprivileged regions, which include former Homelands and commercial farm areas, which will have to be prioritized in the provision of schooling. It is thus apparent that Black schooling faces severe quantitative and qualitative problems. See Table 3 showing disparities in education for various regions.

Table 3



(Source: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996.)

There have been problems related to educational policies and policy-making, which have had negative influence on the country's policy implementation and achievement. The policy declared that education was to become a human right, and within that framework, sought, among other things, to make primary education compulsory and free and thus to remove the financial constraints which kept the majority of children out of school prior to independence. This MBEC officer put it this way:

Things are still in the pipeline, they are trying but then there is these blockages some of the management teams who are not willing to try to phase out these problems. Like for some of the schools there are different things. Schools in towns it seems to be that they are not government schools. Because the town schools the learners are forced to pay school fees or school fund whatever name. Then it is so strict. If you don't pay it you are not allowed to attend any class, while the government policy is "school is free from grade one up to seven or from the age of one to sixteen. Then when it comes to the rural areas, those people are not strict when it comes to paying school fees. That's why you will find some of the schools they are not functioning whilst these schools in towns with these funds they will be able to have some extra classes, even to buy some books, or to offer computer classes while the others are suffering from here. Because it seems now they are the ones who are trying to obey the government by not asking/forcing these people to pay. {Respondent # 7}

The respondent's concern explains the dilemma and contradiction of policy formulation versus policy implementation. For many, policy was supposed to orient the education system to national goals and enhance social justice and equality of educational opportunity for all in all regions. Education should fight illiteracy, innumeracy, hunger, and disease, which characterized the lot of the majority population in colonial Namibia. However, as this respondent, a regional education director, pointed out, the divisions and expenses for some schools are unaffordable for the majority of the population, which explains the contradiction between policy and practice:

These people the people who are in positions of government, of power as well as a lot of other people who have gained economic power during these

eight years, have joined the five percent, and that is why I am saying it's approximately ten percent now. And these are people, simply because of the fact that they do have the resources, can afford to send their children to schools where fees are much higher than in government schools. They can even afford to send their children to private schools, but the declared statement of government is really not to perpetuate this it's like you said almost with, but really to ensure that government schools which is schools for under the auspices of the ministry of education staff will not charge extravagant fees. So in order to ensure that there will be better access of children to schools, you will even find that the government has stipulated time and time and again that it is no longer a prerequisite for enrollment in schools for children to pay school fees. If they cannot pay school fees, they can approach the necessary authorities, and they can be assisted, and they can even be exempt from school fees. Anybody who does this by telling people or pupils that you cannot be enrolled in this particular school, simply because of the fact that we don't have money to pay for school fees, are really not doing this in the spirit of the education ministry's declared statement of access and fairness for all. {Respondent # 13}

The contradiction between policy and practice plays out in the well stipulated and intentioned policies like exemption of those who cannot afford to pay, or government schools not to charge high fees, yet there is no school without fees and other associated costs. The declared statement of access and fairness seem to be on paper but is not being practically implemented. Along similar lines the respondent below, an education officer in the MBEC, also clearly expressed his dissatisfaction about the disparities between different schools. He shows that schools are in different categories i.e., very rich and good schools versus very poor and bad schools. The ethnic category for enrollment and acceptance is currently overshadowed by the effective demand or ability to pay, a privilege enjoyed only by the elite's of society. He also emphasized that Blacks in good or former White schools are from wealthy families:

During the colonial time those who were well off were mostly whites. Now after independence the elite's are cognizant of the fact that whites were well off, these parents can afford their children to go to good schools after independence, despite the fact that at independence you see, school don't admit people on the basis of color or ethnicity. But what school does now,

or what many schools do now, is whether you have the money to afford you see. Now, that's why you see that as is happening now, many white learners still continue to enjoy the privilege of being in a good quality school. Now, that again, again a second scenario is that, when you look at black learners, you see who are today in former White schools, either from below business class, or from petit bourgeois or compradors or so on. You see, therefore that in itself have substituted that particular phenomena has substituted the issue of ethnicity. However, ethnicity also, but that to me is still prevalent, but to me, I feel it is more a geographical accident. {Respondent # 2}

The respondent indicated how the privileged continue to be advantaged together with the new elite, who consider themselves a different class from the majority population. In contrast to the previous respondents, this respondent, from the MHEVST, seemed to be optimistic and seemed to believe that the inequalities can be addressed even though it may take a long time:

Slowly but sure, the distribution is going to be equal in a sense, but before you can bring all the schools in Namibia as far as this material and what is concerned, on the same footing, it will take a lot of years to come. Because partly of the past, that past inequalities that were so much entrenched. {Respondent # 19}

The problem of out of school children and poorly resourced schools is not limited to former homelands but also in many rural areas outside the homelands. After independence the former Homelands were referred to as communal lands and that is where the infrastructure is lacking, and also in deprived areas of towns and cities (ghettoes, slums or squatter camps), which are predominantly inhabited by the Black population of Namibia. Even towns in Namibia are not totally developed areas. Townships with predominantly Black inhabitants are grossly underdeveloped. Windhoek, with its townships Katutura and Khomasdal, is a particular example (Tottemeyer, 1992, p. 43). Poverty and high unemployment are the two main factors

that stifle the whole major social adaptation and transformation which is needed to develop the willingness and capacity to change and grow.

The following respondent, an educational planner with the MBEC, also expressed optimism about the gradual changes taking place, although he also acknowledged the continuing disparities according to various regions:

You see, we are in the process. We are in the process, hence we find that the distribution of the resources in the whole country especially in the disadvantaged regions are not say equal. But we are in the process of addressing matters, but currently that isn't done, but you will find the areas, northern areas they don't have enough schools. They don't have enough textbooks. They don't have enough furniture. They don't have enough qualified teachers. That's because of the past, and also the current resources disposal to the government. {Respondent # 3}

The effects of the inequalities on children's life chances mean, in turn, that the road towards equity based on equality of opportunity is bound to be blocked until these systematic differences are substantially reduced. It is a general consensus that the government's policies, and their new programs, well intentioned as they may be, will do little to reduce inequalities and may well exacerbate them. The rampant inequitable distribution of vital resources (for the improvements of conditions) enhances unequal social and economic conditions that affect educational access and outcomes.

The following respondent, an officer from the MBEC, supported the position of the government especially toward educationally marginalized groups, although he also acknowledged that the quality of education offered is questionable. Providing access alone to schooling cannot be enough. Kallaway et al. (1997, p. 82), for example, argue that "access without quality improvement in basic general education is a recipe for disappointment." This respondent, a director in the MBEC, believes that they, as a government, are doing much by availing education to various areas of the country.

However, Kallaway et al. argue for the promotion of well-prepared teachers, efficiency and sustainability, and democratic governance. This is contrary to accessibility, which the respondent seemed to think is sufficient for the marginalized communities:

The fact that we are taking education to the people, the fact that we are establishing these types of schools, in areas, in inequitable areas where these people live. The fact that we sacrifice the living standards of our teachers in following these parents and communities wherever they go. I think this is one indication that we as the government is contributing trying to contribute towards the inclusion of all school age children in the system. It does not matter, as I said before the quality of education that is available at that specific school is another issue to talk about. But we are talking about the accessibility of those schooling facilities to those hunting children who live with their hunting mothers and fathers. The fact that they could afford to spent an hour or two under the supervision of a qualified teacher and to be taught, that to me is what I can also term narrowing the gap or opening up the accessibility of schools to the marginalized. {Respondent # 1}

The respondent was optimistic about inclusion of all learners into the system and the accessibility of the marginalized to schools and the provision of qualified teachers. Nevertheless, Bradshaw and Ndegwa (2000, p. 312) point out that

If the Ministry of Education is successful in its plan to raise the qualifications of all teachers by the year 2006, the education sector will consume approximately 46% of the national budget. Such are the fiscal effects of a suddenly modern state that must gain legitimacy by appearing to deliver mass opportunity while struggling to exhibit more equal quality levels.

Several officers pointed out how large an amount education receives out of the total national budget, but that this huge education budget allocation is not sufficient to benefit the learners as expected. In response to the question about how educational resources are allocated to marginalized ethnic and regional groups to assure equitable distribution, an educational officer with the MHEVST contended that the high budgetary allocation to education does not go far in alleviating difficulties, especially the

marginalized learner's access to education, or to improve the skewed imbalances within the system:

That's a difficult one, I think that is the crux of the matter in the Namibian education system. I think education have been receiving about between 25 - 28% of the national budget. You are talking about a budget of about five billion so you are talking about a billion actually going to education more or less and the extent to which that money is utilized for education and to redress these issues, the inequalities and actually try to access some people who never had access to education and bring them as it were, mainstream them. I think I have difficulties with that, I do not know whether there have been serious efforts to making or rectifying the situation.
{Respondent # 8}

Another officer from the MBEC also demonstrated that misappropriation of the high education budget, lack of facilities, infrastructure, and the huge bureaucracy cripples the provision of good quality education. He also expressed concern about the two ministries of education and the high salaries paid to bureaucrats that could be better used for resources in schools:

This is what is happening, we are committing suicide. There is another aspect that is very worrying, we are talking about most of the government budget goes to education. Or education receives most of the national or the biggest portion of the budget. But then, there are all these disparities as you talked about them or as we notice them, especially in the regions at the periphery. There is a growing concern among people asking about, I have been reading in the papers asking as to whether we need both ministries of education. Because otherwise there is a lot of money also being paid to a lot of bureaucrats who are sitting in these offices as a result the budget ends up in salaries rather than maybe improving some things in certain schools for them to have laboratories, libraries etc. {Respondent # 6}

The same respondent also shared other concern about the misappropriated budget. He also saw too much money going to teachers' salaries:

The salary budget of this Ministry is killing us. We are spending 84% more or less of our budget purely on salaries. Our teachers are the highest paid in Africa more or less. It consumes so much resources on personnel cost alone, that we have very little left for books, materials, and ultimately

the child. That is one of our basic and serious problems that affect all development. {Respondent # 6}

These various officers' responses reflect a shared concern about the continuing inequalities based on the budget allocation, which they claimed is not dealt with in an appropriate and balanced manner.

The crisis in the Namibian education sector is partly due to the larger economic crisis in Africa. Mounting fiscal austerity, explosive population growth, and tenuous political and administrative institutions with growing class and regional divisions are symptomatic and explanatory of the crisis. There seems to be misguided faith in education, for example, the belief that education will solve all the problems, which does not happen.

This respondent, a director in the MHEVST, touched on the crisis continent wide:

The whole of Africa believes that, educate enough and you will get development. You go today throughout southern African region or to East Africa, West Africa, this still proves not to be true. We invest so much in education and other services like health and housing and we leave little resources or none for the infrastructure. {Respondent # 15}

There was agreement about the unavailability of technical facilities in most schools in the country to enable the teachers, learners, or the community to improve their living conditions. Respondents also talked of different schools having different resources and facilities, which means that the children of those who can afford it go to the best schools, and children of those who cannot afford, who are the majority in the country, receive whatever is available.

Education aimed and institutionalized towards the creation of a single system based on quality, equality, and equity has to contend with a fundamentally distorted legacy. The new dispensation has inherited a highly differentiated educational system. The eleven subsystems catered differently to the various ethnic and race groups. Great

disparities existed amongst these subsystems. The remarks of the following respondent, an officer of the MHEVST, showed signs of dissatisfaction and anger:

The fact that the few new elite are allowed to join the former beneficiaries, just make the urgency of the people to bring about some fundamental changes, and what we have been fighting for in the liberation for this country. That fundamental change is not coming about. {Respondent # 10}

The above quote shows the frustration among those dealing with issues of education and also their helplessness, because there seems to be nothing they can do about it. The long expected benefits of independence seem to be enjoyed by few and not realized by the majority. The respondent below, a regional director with the MBEC, preferred to state it in terms of a different allocation to schools, both in the urban areas and in rural regions. The main reason the well off of society take their children to good schools is that those schools offer better opportunities for the learners:

Those schools the formerly advantaged and still privileged remain well endowed in terms of resources, they remain well off. You cannot compare them to any other schools. So obviously that, being the situation, why should the white kids want to go to Katutura? (Katutura is the formerly and still the Black township in Windhoek). In fact, tell you what, Blacks have also been going to, and I mean Blacks as opposed to coloreds, have even been going to colored schools. Because they are better off as compared to schools in Katutura, or even in the deep rural areas. {Respondent # 17}

The evident contradiction is that while on the one hand the government policy enunciated free compulsory education for all, on the other hand the better the school, the more expensive they are. The impoverished majority population attends schools with lack of infrastructure, facilities, and resources.

Another way that respondents agreed is that each one of them talked of the endemic disparities in the education system. This respondent from the MHEVST

reckoned that the various disparities in schools and regions are responsible for preventing desired development:

Accommodation and other incentives for teachers are key problems and not to mention proper classrooms or even sufficient schools. These are the factors hindering the development of education in the region, and those are some of the factors, which caused partly the regions to be far behind in terms of educational development, resources distribution, etc. If we want to equalize education to similar areas, then we first need to provide these resources to address the people in the region. That's the only time when the national development in terms of education will take place. {Respondent # 18}

This respondent commented on scarcity of resources and the unequal distribution of it to various ethnic and regional schools. He emphasized that “if we want to have competitive schools everywhere in the country, then we need to facilitate their quality for learning.” Currently a dual system of schooling is being perpetuated: a privileged schooling sector that serves a minority, and a poor quality schooling sector that serves the majority of children. The large number of Namibian children not in school is a major variation. Massive public spending needs to be prioritized to rebuild the apartheid divided Namibia.

All these are crucial factors that explain the inequities that affect virtually all aspects of the function of the state, which lead to statements like the following by one of the education regional directors:

Government policy is very much clear that there shouldn't be any discrimination in equal access to any school, and we are trying to do this part, because of economic imbalances got this, the restraining factor. In clear terms, white man can send his child to one of our prestigious schools here in Windhoek, let's say Windhoek high school, paying a school fees of \$200 per cover. Whereas any other poor man cannot afford to send his child, the child would be accepted but he do not have money to pay for that. He would not have money to pay for the uniform. He would not have money for transportation. He would not have money for any

additional requirement. Economic imbalances still remain a distinguished fact. Those are open, but the monetary status. {Respondent # 9}

The privileged or elite of the society continues to enjoy the best facilities while the socially stratified plunge deeper into inaccessibility and neglect. A good example is how information provided by government can mislead the public relates to the state's funding of education. When the annual budget is presented, education takes the lion's share. However, the public does not seem to know that most of that money goes to meet teachers' salaries and administration costs. A very small fraction of it goes to the learner. The general public is left with the impression that huge sums of money are invested directly in the classroom and in the improvement of the quality of education itself. The state, through government, is also very good at using language that is subtle and has important influence on political thought when discussing policy issues. This respondent, an officer in the MHEVST, acknowledged the psychological impact but at the same time expounded on how the policy of free education is not practiced:

You are psychologically being worked in a way that at least you feel even, you don't belong to such a community. It is a privilege those in the position who can afford really to take their kids to such schools and sometimes you try even if you have a principal who is not understanding and understandable, then you can also be send home to go and collect money. For our people, the mentality of taking those schools as might be not theirs. We do our level best even to see to it that it is better to pay such than even the schools, which are in need in the rural areas.
{Respondent # 20}

Similarly, the following respondent, a regional director with the MBEC, addressed the crucial issues of limiting ethnic, regional, and residential divide, and the enduring yet problematic hostel (boarding school) factor. Those who cannot afford seem not to have a chance for good education:

It means you continue on the basis of residential area those groups who are there predominantly primary as well as junior secondary school because school now go up to grade nine because of facilities. They continue to be dominated by one or two other cultural groups. If you take Aminuis now you have the Tswanas you have the Ovaherero there they can go to any school, there's no prevention like in the past but if now if you expect an Omuwambo to go there if they do not live in Aminuis, it is very difficult. For a secondary school where the medium is English there is no option, the government as I said created the opportunity for grade eleven to be accommodated at the in towns whatever. It is opening up that one, and the hostel is also a problem, it is one of the limiting factors. Because if you do not have a place where you can live you suffer. Many of the kids you have are day scholars they do not live in the hostel, and if you don't have parents in that area, or if your parents have no money, even to live on your own in a way, then it's problematic. {Respondent # 16}

Namibia faces some serious challenges in overcoming poverty, inequity, extreme income distribution, and unemployment. While there are many structural constraints, there are "positive" government initiatives in all these aspects. Nevertheless, the respondent below, an officer with the MHEVST, had more questions than answers:

To what extent are the non indigenous from those particular regions not benefiting from education? Because obviously what you have is a situation where people are actually working for others. Now if you have people working for others, how do you ensure that the people are working for others actually do send their kids to school? How do you ensure that all these kids of parents who are working on the farms are going to school? How do you control that? How do you demand of me to send my workers kids to school while you are doing nothing as a government? How do you do it? How will you ensure that, while we have incidents, I am not talking about outlying areas no, I am talking of Windhoek. How do you ensure that kids in Havana (Havana and Ombili + are some of the many post independence ghettos/squatter camps) these kids are they going to school? I drive now and then I go there, you find kids on the streets roaming about and not attending school. Not because they do not want to go to school but they cannot afford all expenses associated with school. {Respondent # 4}

While previous racial and ethnic boundaries, both in rural and in urban areas, continue to jeopardize policies and practices, they are transcended by the escalating stratification in class terms as a result of the emergence of the new elite. Tapscott (1991, pp. 3 – 4)

correctly assessed that “members of the pre-existing White elite are now being joined by a new class of senior Black administrators, politicians and business people, largely divorced from the majority of the urban and rural poor.” Reconciliation cannot become substantive and operative, credible and convincing, while wealth is more unequally shared and while all have unequal access to opportunities. Tottemeyer (1992, p. 29) hit the nail on the head; he argued that

A society which is still marked by vast discrepancies and imbalances in wealth and economic opportunities, and by other inequalities is not the most fertile ground for reconciliation and reconstruction. Existing gaps need to be narrowed and closed eventually. At the same time, it is realized that quick-fix populist economic policies will not produce the desired redistribution of wealth. Economic justice will not flow overnight and automatically from present political and socio-economic changes. It will take time.

The next respondent, a senior officer with the MHEVST, has a number of critical issues he reckoned are still problematic from inequality of allocation to servicing equipment and teachers to differential salaries and incentives for teachers:

What has happened is that we are still looking at the side of the school, and there is still inequality in terms of how much money is paid on those schools. On the financial base, we still are not aware of this, to me when I look at it, there is still that problem. Because if we are to service equipment, if we are to service the teachers that are in that school for example, if the school in Kavango in the bush there has got ten teachers, the highest educated person is a diploma. Even salary wise, the money you pay to that school is not as much as one school that is in Kavango also, but in Rundu urban town. And the lowest qualified person is a diploma, but the highest is a master's or honors or what ever. The money that you are likely to give to that school in terms of the salaries, there is a difference already, completely, and Rundu might get a school that uses a lot of computers, it uses a lot of gadgets and so on. Supplying that school might require a lot of money. {Respondent # 10}

If the inputs are clearly that varied, it can be difficult for outputs to be expected to be the same across regions or, in some instances, as the education officer above gave as

an example, in the same region, in this case, the Kavango region. The following theme explores and explains the impact of teacher qualifications and insufficient incentives on educational quality and outcomes.

Respondents in this study gave interesting albeit contradictory views on these issues, which is indicative of the continuous debate in Namibia. According to one respondent, a regional education director, the majority schools seem still to be suffering from the shortages of essential resources for them to produce competent learners:

What has been happening in terms of resources and good performance? Now we realize for example like em, several white schools still continues to have better resources. For example you hardly hear shortage of teachers in former white schools. You hardly hear lack of necessary equipment in those schools, for example, when you look at passing grades in schools, throughout since our independence, only former white schools continue to report good passing results. {Respondent # 13}

If the former White schools continue to have good achievement results, while the rest of the schools in the country are still low in outcomes, then indeed the differences in the resources they receive must be examined as a possible explanation for the continuation of inequalities among the different schools. The same respondent, in answering the question of what the new government has done to eliminate apartheid and unequal and inaccessible education, and a follow up question about how the inequalities manifest themselves, claimed,

A lot of things show the manifestations of inequalities. I think, we first mentioned facilities, books, qualified teachers and other resources. I think the basics obviously show in a classroom situation, we tend to observe that. Secondly, questions of passing rates, exam-passing rates. That obviously, the mere fact that until now mostly only former white schools that used to do well. Thirdly obviously also, there are also issues of for example, when you look at this absenteeism when you look at truancy. All these factors contribute to the inequitable situation. {Respondent # 13}

To this respondent it is clear that inequalities in outcomes are due to unequal resources allocation, and that the schools that were privileged continue to outperform the rest of the schools in the country due to a conglomerate of factors. He reckoned that truancy and absenteeism to be among the factors to be considered in addition to resources input and other factors.

The next theme introduces teacher disparities and to a considerable extent deals with the specific impact of teacher qualifications. There are a conglomerate of factors associated with teachers, from their performance in classrooms to their incentives in order to work willingly anywhere, to transportation and ethical issues that affect the outcomes of learners in various ways. The general view by most respondents is that a society that needs good quality education must invest in the training, incentives, well being, and staff development of teachers.

Theme: Unqualified and under-qualified teachers with varying learner-teacher ratios, lack of incentives for qualified teachers, transportation, ethics, and un-discipline affect the quality of education.

This theme mainly deals with issues to do with teachers. Some of the matters that surround expectations from and performance of teachers are their qualifications or lack of them, and limited incentives and resources that determine willingness or reluctance to serve in certain schools or areas. Other factors are retraining to suit post-independence policies and practices, work ethics and discipline or lack of it, which enhances inefficiency and hence suspicion, as well as the huge difference between the number of learners assigned to a teacher in various schools and regions. Teacher housing has been a discouraging problem for most teachers because many schools prior to independence, particularly in the rural areas, were constructed without this and other facilities. The

successive colonial governments also restricted teacher training to limited knowledge in accordance with upholding White supremacy and domination and the reduction of Blacks to servants of colonialists.

Systematic segregation and racist notions relegated the education of Blacks to training as, according to Ellis (1984, p. 19), “hewers of wood and drawers of water.” This policy led to startling inequalities and disparities in the quality of education services rendered to the various ethnic groups. Both the German and the South African colonial regimes in Namibia excluded the indigenous peoples from political decision-making in order to secure the interests of the European settlers, taking full control of the political and socioeconomic development of the country. Education played a major role in entrenching the privileges of the White minority. Both these regimes strove to keep the Black majority subjugated by imposing a very restricted curriculum and limited teacher preparation in order to confine the position of Blacks to the lowest grade.

This conception of what type of education was suitable for Black people inevitably had an impact on teacher training. Bantu education introduced under the South African colonial rule confined Blacks to the lowest grades and their ambitions to the tribal context. Teaching was one of a limited number of options for work available to Blacks with some schooling. Swarts appropriately documented that the qualifications of Black teachers, as a result of their restricted education, were lower than those of the Whites and Coloreds (mixed race), as were their salaries. Since the training of teachers at the secondary level was inadequate, too few of the teacher trainees had the necessary preparation for teacher training (Swarts, 1998, p. 9). All the different groups referred to had their separate colleges of education, which offered programs exclusively for teachers

belonging to their designated groups and prepared them for teaching in the schools under their specific ethnic authorities, which controlled them.

Therefore, teachers from different ethnic groups were not exposed to each other or to the beliefs and values held by other groups. Hargreaves describes this kind of teacher culture as “balkanized” (1994, p. 10). In the Namibian context, the various subgroups were Black, Colored, and White, and “deep-seated distinctions of status and priority” existed among them (Hargreaves & Fullan 1992). While White teachers were overqualified in pre-independence Namibia, training for Black teachers was designed for disqualification. Some of the programs, for example, the Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) and National Education Certificate (NEC), under-qualified teachers for the work they had to do. Since these programs relied on the resources that the ethnic authorities could provide, they were, according to Swarts (1998, p. 40), “very different in terms of scope, structure, content, sequence, duration, philosophy, approaches, entry requirements and exit competencies.” This brief background is necessary to understand the extreme experiences that shaped teachers in Namibia.

The theme also addresses issues of inaccessibility of some remote areas especially during rainy seasons, which inhibits supply of materials and resources or visits by education officers. Some learners are indirectly confined to specific areas and have to travel long distances to the nearest school. These are some of the realities which unfortunately continued in the post-independent dispensation and which are detrimental to the learners as well as to the teachers who work under unpredictable conditions. The concerted efforts by the government to transform teacher education and the entire education system in order to influence and contribute to societal reform aimed at

equalizing the society are prevalent. Nevertheless, some of the above factors and evidence from respondents reveal the inherited, and thus endemic, inequalities manifested in various ways in the post-colonial dispensation. The respondent below, a rural regional director, talked of multiple problems in spite of government efforts. He reckoned expansion of education is not accompanied by quality and attributed it to unqualified and under-qualified teachers:

Well I think there is a multitude of problems, our government may have strive to open schools for all, and to get as many children as possible to attend the classroom. Maybe to address the issue of education for all, but as in most African states, access is being given to learners or children. But the quality aspect still needs to be addressed, because to get them only in the classroom is not enough, but get them taught, and receive the best, that's education. That is still a problem, because of higher rates of untrained and under-qualified teachers, we cannot expect any quality aspect from these classrooms. We can only expect them to be in the classroom and maybe come out empty, as they entered the classroom. I think this is the problem at the moment. {Respondent # 12}

This respondent emphasized the need for quality teachers to accompany the expansion if education for all is to succeed. The respondent below, an official with the MBEC, was also concerned about teacher qualification and quality. He talked of disparities because of the level of education and thus different salary scales and unattractive infrastructure to professional teachers in some regions:

It is only that I am looking at first, teachers, if their salary is different then there is a disparity, because most of the teachers in the rural school are not educated, and again the infrastructure is not attractive to professional teachers. Look at the teacher housing, and those teachers who are teaching in the rural school, because most of them are not educated, they may not even look at very posh type of thing. So they go for stick houses, and definitely even the money the government is spending on that type of a thing. That is already a disparity because they are disadvantaged in all these aspects. {Respondent # 7}

The respondent's concern about people having to teach because they are from the area and thus comfortable with what is available, regardless of quality, is alarming.

Similar to the point of the respondent above, this respondent, a regional director, explained the same phenomenon:

If in Okongo there is no electricity and the teacher won't be encouraged to go there, the pupils will end up with an unqualified whatever teachers. That is the reality today. If you should go away from Enhana to the primary bush school out there, you can't even bring another teacher from Oshakati there. You know, I don't talk of locals as well. Because that one would say where do I live? What tends to happen in the real primary rural areas is that they tend to take a local who has been trained there as a teacher. Sort of in breeding process, because that one has accommodation with the family etc. So that is a big factor in getting equitable teacher distribution. So is housing and living conditions for them in the rural areas. The government has not done much for teacher incentives in those areas. { Respondent # 8).

If that is the system followed then the really remote areas must be really suffering from qualified teaching personnel. The following respondent, another regional director, raised critical issues about incentives for teachers and provision of facilities to schools and regions to attract qualified teachers. He believes that inadequate conditions results in teachers reluctance to serve:

If the government would really come up with a set of incentives in deprived areas. First and foremost, look at the regions, take a hard look at the regions, provides facilities of education in the rural areas. Adequate housing just to mention it, and yes, give them extra allowances for that, I do believe government will attract more qualified teachers who can really make contributions to the region, absolutely, absolutely, otherwise I don't see any reason why I should leave Windhoek. To subject my family and my children to the rural area where I will live in a thatched house, rain pouring everyday, without electricity, without anything, my children getting sick, and where a clinic is 250 kilometers away, and even do not have a vehicle that I could just make a call, because the clinic here, I don't see why I should do it to my family without any incentive. As for the incentive, I will just maybe comfort myself. That is a situation that really to be quite honest with you bring such a suffering upon ourselves. That is the situation we have got.

The government needs to provide incentives to address this situation. There is no any other way how they can do it. {Respondent # 13}

Clearly the core message here is the lack of incentives and the general conditions in some areas that restrict qualified teachers to work there. In view of the postcolonial education system for Namibia, Cohen (1994:3) contends that

Inequities of the colonial education system and its concomitant effects on the country's supply of human resources meant that, once a representative majority government finally came to power in Namibia, many changes would have to be introduced to redress past imbalances.

Because education is an integral part of the dynamic forces and processes of any society, the emerging post independent Namibian values, attitudes, structures, and social dynamics have contributed to the development of education, including teacher education, the distribution of teachers, and the benefits that go with their appointments and placements. The following respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, offered suggestions of what should be concentrated on to rectify the current situation and warned of eternal inequalities if not checked:

Broadly speaking, to come to the very vital issues, there are questions of trained teachers, availability of facilities, training of teachers, so that they can meet the standards. And then also availability of facilities where particularly schools were neglected by the apartheid system, would be given the opportunity to be upgraded to that level where they will be eager to carry the whole demands in the spirit of the equal democratic system. Failing to look at and rectify the imbalances of the past will force the nation into a state of perpetual inequalities. {Respondent # 14}

Not only did he admit that there are disparities between schools and regions, he also offered suggestions for remedy. A respondent from a remote area an education director was more specific about the situation of teachers, pointing out a circuit where most teachers are unqualified. He attributed lack of facilities and incentives for teachers to affect the quality of education received:

I think I am having some statistics here, especially in Congo circuit. It is the last part of Ohangwena, where you can hardly see a qualified teacher. All teachers mainly in the schools there they are either grade ten certificate holders or grade twelve certificate holders. I am having it here on my table. And now telling a qualified person to go there. First they will ask you if there is official accommodation, if there is water, there is electricity, and all those things are not there. And it is true, but I think if there is no accommodation, a person cannot I think be able to go there, but I think those people will be accommodated by the community around there, those schools around. Hence now we are having just now 70% to 80% of the teachers teaching in the Congo circuit are unqualified teachers. Yeah. We are not talking about unqualified teachers with degrees either in other fields or diplomas in agriculture, we are talking about unqualified teachers among who the highest qualification is grade twelve. That's all. A person who is not exposed to any teacher training and that person is not having solid academic background. He doesn't even understand the subject content, not to talk about methodology. That is the person entrusted with the future of the children. Hence, now, the quality of education have been affected in every sense. {Respondent # 9}

Like the former respondent, the concern is clear that unqualified teachers will effectively contribute to the *unequal and inequitable* provision of education services and resources. Similarly, this respondent, an officer with the MBEC, talked of differentiated teacher qualifications that lead to difference in delivery. He also added an interesting dimension that the teachers who qualified at formerly Black institutions, which were not equal to others, interpret material differently. He recognized that the government is trying to address the disparities, but that they are too deep rooted; hence, it will take a long time before it can be looked at as the same in most aspects:

The qualification you see, the qualification of the teachers within the police zone is very high. Due to what? Because all those teachers there will have graduated from the college. Most of them they completed their degrees or what at the university in South Africa. But those teachers in the rural areas, most of them they completed their teacher qualification in those rural areas, or even here in Windhoek or somewhere. All those who have studied at the university in South Africa, the so-called Bantu universities, which were not equal to the other universities. Now that is difficult. You can give those people the same material, but the interpretation of the subject matter is not going to be the same. That teacher there, his understanding of the subject

matter is lower while another teacher here within the police zone is going to approach those things effectively. But the government as such, they are trying to eliminate the discrimination, but they are set in the realities, and it will take some more years to come before we are going to talk that all the schools they are the same. The syllabus are the same, but I haven't enough teachers if I talk about teachers, enough highly qualified teachers who can understand exactly those subjects matter, it is not like that. The schools within the police zone, they are still advanced. So that leads to the unequal distribution of both resources and the quality of teachers. {Respondent # 17}

As a result of the transformation of the education system, the role of the teacher within the new paradigm has to be examined because it is required to adopt new visions and new behaviors. The statement is emphatic on how one aspect, for example, resource allocation alone, is not enough. Transformation of a system to meet the needs of a society requires commitment of both human and material resources as well as improved infrastructure. These shortcomings definitely contribute to the reluctance of qualified teachers to work in remote areas or schools without facilities under deprived conditions.

The following respondent, an education officer in the MHEVST, was elaborate in contributing to the topic under discussion. He alluded to the new way of life that people graduating from colleges and universities expect to lead, which ultimately affects schools in remote areas:

Developments in the rural regions are very poor and slow, now, so much so that the new generation, the new people who are now leaving school, who are graduating from universities, from colleges, they have sort of adopted a new way of life right. They want to be near the centers where they can enjoy a good life that is offered by the facilities and the infrastructures that are to be found in the urban areas. Now you mentioned the housing. The housing is quite a problem because no body wants to go after graduating from university, no body wants to go to school where he is not accommodated in a good shelter. No body wants to go there where there is no TV, and there is no electricity and water and sanitation. All these things are very poor in deprived schools in the country. And those are the things that are really discouraging the new well graduated students to go to those rural areas. {Respondent # 4}

The respondent felt that those essential things like housing, better living conditions, health facilities, and other resources are necessary to encourage qualified teachers to take up employment in these remote areas. Without belaboring the point but just being emphatic for elaboration and clarity, the next respondent, a regional director, referred to it as 'shortage of everything' that is problematic for teacher performance. For him that is the determining factor for the differentiated quality of teaching throughout the country:

Shortages of everything place quite a lot of strain on the teacher. Which would of course affect his or her effectiveness and the type of teaching that they give would depend on their social environment where they live. That will really impact largely on the type of training that they will give to their learners. That is why I am saying that the quality of teaching that these kids in formerly disadvantaged schools, more so the schools in various outlying regions receive, would be very much different from the quality of teaching that children receive in a normal or well resourced school circumstance. {Respondent # 12}

The bottom line according to this respondent therefore, is that facilities and infrastructure are important; thus, they have to be improved for teachers to deliver their duties to the maximum, and also for learners to compete nationally.

Whereas all respondents may talk about the same issue, there are interesting twists and differences to each response according to the respondents' knowledge, personality, experiences, ideological stance, and political affiliation. The following respondent, a director of education, had several important points he dealt with in this theme, from discipline among teachers to unexpected output, from planned inputs and ethics to redistribution of teachers. Some teachers resist outright serving in certain areas, which results in learners from deprived areas to serve as teachers, sometimes while in the

process of studying themselves. He showed that the government's effort to build teacher houses to attract qualified teachers to these areas is less successful:

When it comes to within the police zone and the school, then you are going to find discipline within the teachers is good. But if you go to the rural areas, the discipline within the teachers is not there. That is also the thing that is affecting the outcome of the government. Input into education is the same, but outcome is not the same due to the in-discipline and lack of commitment. Yes, some of the teachers there in the rural areas, they would have come to school roundabout eleven o'clock, and come to school under influence of something like alcohol, very unethical. In the police zone, which is the area that was occupied by white population during the colonial time it rarely happens. Now that we are independent, I would expect that we would redistribute our teachers to even (equate) the rural areas according to our new educational regions, so that ethnic groups in regions also benefit from this high quality teaching. {Respondent # 9}

According to the same respondent, the Ministry of Education tried to lure qualified teachers to rural schools, but because of the acute shortage of essential incentives, they refuse to be posted to these remote areas. The result of that discrepancy is the continuous lack of qualified teachers for the rural majority:

The Ministry of Basic Education and Culture has tried to do that, but you know, some of these teachers they resisted, they cannot go to rural areas. Consequently, some of them even they decided to go to private schools here, within the so-called the police zone. Let me separate now, we have at school in the Kavango area, deep in the bush, Tam - Tam, where children are going to sit underneath a tree. Now to take a good teacher here let me say a good White teacher to go there It's impossible. It's impossible. Now they are going to use a teacher from that high, in their own area. Because these people, to go and sleep in the hut is not a problem, but now since last year, they have started to build at least two houses two three houses at the schools in the rural areas. To make it a little easier for people to be transferred there. But still, some of the teachers they are saying no, I got used to a city life or a town life where I have to buy this and this and this. That house is not going to help me. I cannot go there. That's one of the problems. {Respondent # 9}

The high expectations that independence was supposed to bring for all ethnic groups to benefit according to the newly established regions are thwarted by the deep

inequalities that are persistent in the post apartheid dispensation. The following respondent, a senior officer in the MBEC who emphasized management and discipline issues, also alluded to similar issues the respondent above talked about. He gave reasons for poor performance of some schools even if they are in the same region with others, and the many excuses given for lack of delivery:

If you go to Sambyu you go three kilos, there is a, from the mission school, there is a state school, better buildings for example. All children come from that environment, in the mission school, in that school. They speak the same home languages. What's the difference? The difference is in the school. The difference is in school management. In work ethics, in time and resource utilization, in preparation of the teachers, in discipline, in demand of the learners e.g. today you will have this finished, not manyana, (tomorrow) possibly next week. It's starting on time, in utilizing every hour, every period to learn something. You walk into one of these mission schools you see the disciplined environment, you see discipline, no one of the teachers, no teacher is late. They are there, they are prepared, they do their job. You go to the other school, all sorts of excuses, they tell you the teacher is not there. You want to see the principal, sorry the principal is gone to town, or to the regional office. Teacher comes late, that one is ill today. Children, they are wandering aimlessly around. There is a class going on here and there, but I tell you these factors are equally contributing to the deterioration of quality just like resource scarcity or qualified teachers.
{Respondent # 7}

Although he did not explicitly mention miss-management, corruption and inefficiency in the preceding passage, I believe that is what he was making reference to because his comparison of schools in the same region and the different periods, colonial and independence insinuated effective management. In offering solutions, the following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, had some suggestions to alleviate the crisis:

This is very important the curriculum must be relevant and we must have also developed programs to upgrade what we call under-qualified teachers. You know we have many of those teachers who so far over the years have grade ten and plus two years certificate or the grade twelve plus two years certificate and now the challenge is a bit different it's not like in the past

under Bantu education. These people must be updated and also create an opportunity for them to further their studies, either part time in work or giving them bursaries to go for one or two years at even the local university or polytechnic or whatever. Then the learners themselves they need a sort of a new vision. A new understanding of education, because you remember we were coming from the culture of destruction, destroying everything because you know during the time of the struggle these buildings and facilities were regarded as colonial government property and therefore, it was not our property. Teachers were seen as upholding apartheid ideology. Now we have to change our culture, and even if you renovate in some cases say you build a hostel or whatever but in a year when you come there it's as if the hostel was build say five year ago, already destroyed. This is why the government has to create new sort of culture of care within the learners and teachers' minds so that at least they start respecting what they get and what is available. {Respondent # 18}

The conglomeration of factors that lead to the inequitable education for various groups in the different regions were well articulated and expounded by the respondents. Some of the explanations, reasons, and suggestions respondents gave, for example, the creation of new culture through changing of attitudes or upgrading of teachers, are valid, but these are concepts that indeed take long to materialize. The next respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, was analytic and succinct, and he also suggested a possible remedy:

Unless we develop our human resources, especially in terms of upgrading the under-qualified and unqualified teachers, mainly in the rural areas, learners in the deprived areas will continue to receive an education, which is not equal to those in towns. The two extremes of inferior and superior education thus, represent the perpetual inequalities. {Respondent # 5}

As one of the respondents argued earlier in this theme, 'upgrading' qualifications is not close to a solution because the qualified teachers for example, go for the better or best conditions. The following respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, shared the same line of argument although his example was about incentives of building schools, with complementary provision of teachers' houses:

Because there is just no money to build more schools, and also it's not just a question of building schools, if you build the schools, you must provide houses for teachers. If you want professional teachers to go to the village, you are not going to ask them to sleep in the bush or village huts, as is the case now. You need extremely dedicated people and that is not the case in Namibia at the moment. {Respondent # 14}

Because there are so many factors that contribute to the unequal resource allocation, teacher distribution, and unequal infrastructure, the idea of incentives for those who agree to work in 'inconvenient' conditions is a good idea. However, as the following respondent, a regional director with MBEC, explained, the program was abused, and therefore cancelled:

There was something called a privation package that people would serve in remote and disadvantaged areas received more money. Alright, and it was calculated on if there are hospitals, is there electricity, is there tap water you know, distance from this, this and that, and so that, the remotest places you will get a higher salary than what you will get in Windhoek for doing the same job. But it was not applicable only to teachers, but to all government employees. Where you worked for agriculture in the remote area or for health or for education at the time of Wascom, that was scrapped. So, it is not there any more. I know that the unions are campaigning to bring it back. The reason why they scrapped it was that it was really abused, and not applied with common sense. For instance somebody who worked in Okahandja also got a privation package, because it's not Windhoek. So, there were many problems. At the moment, there are no such incentives. We are increasingly in our programs, in our negotiations with donors we get money to construct rural schools and classrooms. We are building now teachers houses as an essential component in more or less all these programs. {Respondent # 3}

Again, this respondent did not specifically mention corruption or mismanagement of funds but his argument was somewhat convincing about such a valuable program that would benefit especially the rural people to get expertise even if it is for shorter periods. The abolished incentives program was also commented on by another respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, whose emphasis was on accommodation for teachers in the rural areas or else continuous inequality:

In the past you remember in the past there used to be what they called (a special incentive for teachers) if a person go teach or work in the rural areas they received special amount of money for encouraging you to be there. It was to make up for the uncomfortable life conditions you are going to work under and experience. That incentive has now been abolished and everybody is taken as if you are somewhere, and you don't have housing scheme, you cannot even build a house where you are not permanently going to be. It is impossible, that means as you said the accommodation problem in the rural areas is going to have a negative influence in the long run for teachers to be willing to go and do their job in the rural areas. As a result, educational inequalities continue.
{Respondent # 19}

The difference in the living standards of individuals and the level of development and availability of modern facilities in rural areas compared to their counterparts in the urban areas seem to play an important and influential role in the teacher willingness to work in the remote regions. According to the following respondent, a senior education officer with the MBEC, experiences seem to be traumatic. Teachers are compelled to share traditional facilities with no electricity with most facilities either very basic or non-existent. She posed several questions relevant to the topic and declared that the inequalities are deep:

If you consider a problem for example teachers in Katima, they do not have teacher's houses. In some cases teachers are compelled to live in the traditional huts sharing with villagers. When it rains, that person is forced to just be standing, getting wet the whole night while you are expected to teach the next day. How can or will I go? How can I survive? You have no electricity but you are required to plan your work, you take your daily bath by throwing water over your body from a small basin, with your B ed? (Laughter). The inequalities are deep, from qualified teachers to housing that also affect access and quality. {Respondent # 2}

The evidence seems to suggest that incentives for teachers, distribution of resources, and improving the infrastructure are among the fundamental issues that deter equal access to educational opportunity.

Another aspect that respondents explicitly discussed during the interviews is the differentiated learner teacher ratio in various schools. According to some respondents,

the overcrowded schools, which are in the dilemma of unqualified and underqualified teachers, seem to be the most affected by this additional burden, which adds to difficulties and inequities. Although the next respondent, an officer in the MHEVST, attributed the peculiarity to the colonial legacy, he confirmed that the emerging Black elite became part of the privileged few and that the majority of learners are still subjected to overcrowded conditions:

We have a peculiar situation in Namibia, which is obviously because of the colonial legacy. The top schools in the country in terms of resources, qualified teachers, buildings, and teacher student ratio are the former White schools. To a great extent they are still enjoying those privileges, except that now the black elite joined that privileged class. Even within towns schools are, maybe not officially but the best schools have lower student teacher ratio while the disadvantaged schools have higher learners per teacher. That trend goes on even worse in remote areas where you find the majority of the population. Therefore, most students in the country are taught in overcrowded classes. {Respondent # 11}

In terms of educational attainment and access to good quality education, the picture of extreme deprivation, especially in the rural areas, is prevalent. The next respondent, a director in the MBEC, talked of unqualified teachers in overcrowded schools with lack of resources still prevalent in many schools, particularly in rural regions:

You will find that many of these northern region schools are overcrowded. The schools are overcrowded, teachers are less qualified or unqualified in some cases and learners have very few materials to make use of, which you cannot find in the south where schools are well equipped and have less learners per teacher. {Respondent # 1}

Driving the same point home about overcrowded schools in the rural areas, unqualified teachers and the general lack of resources and facilities, the following respondent, a regional education director, gave figures according to statistical evidence he had at his disposal:

Our situation is critical in some cases, you find that our classrooms are overcrowded, overcrowded with learners. But I think here I am having statistics whereby you find that a school or a class as you can see can be large. Let me just show you something interesting. I think sometimes you will find out that maybe one class with 47 learners, 55 learners. That one is northwest. But I can show you which is west. Learners who are maybe either 70, we are only having 50. So, we will get back to that Yeah, I think now, in a nutshell you will find out I think our classrooms are overcrowded. How will you expect a teacher to teach 70 learners per class. Is that one teaching really, or simply gather the learners to come together and then keep them busy for the time being, while their parents are preparing their lunch for them. The situation is even worse with 70 learners to a teacher who is not qualified. {Respondent # 13}

Given the position of this respondent, who talked about and showed the differences of class size even within the deprived areas, and, as an officer, is frustrated by continuous appeals for his region with 'shoddy responses if at all,' he posed a couple of questions and added another dimension of teachers' shortcomings to cater for special needs learners. He also compared the ratios between his region and the capital city, Windhoek:

How can you find out a learner who has difficulties in learning? How can you find him out among 70 learners per teacher? And the teachers are not even I think taught how to deal with learners with difficulties in learning. So all those factors heavily contribute to the schools being ineffective. The school, the quality of admission being affected, everything will be affected. Then, the issue of equity you go to Windhoek, and you cannot find a school with 50 learners per class, never ever. There they will be thirty, twenty, that's all. {Respondent # 13}

Based on the preceding excerpt and on other comments that he made about various figures and ratios for schools in different areas, it was obvious that he was more than just aware of the inequities; he actually suggested possible causes of the ineffectiveness of the disadvantaged schools. The following respondent, an education regional director, indicated even a higher learner teacher ratio, but he seemed to be more optimistic about the efforts being made to alleviate the gross imbalances. He revealed the

ongoing negotiations between the government and the teachers union. He also indicated the limit of appointing teachers in the south in order to balance the ratios in all regions. His complaint, however, was the high salaries spent on personnel to the detriment of other resources:

There are problems of teacher pupil ratio in some regions, where you will have almost even up to 80 pupils per one teacher. It does happen here and there. Let me just say, we have been negotiating with these teachers union NANTU now for over two years on accepting new teaching learner teacher norms, that can replace teacher learner. They have been deadlocked in negotiations between the union and the government now for a year on these teaching norms. What we've done in the meantime we have put breaks and ceilings on appointments in the southern regions, the previously more advantaged regions. They are not to appoint new teachers etc. Except replace a Maths teacher that dies or goes away or whatever. The teacher learner ratio was very low in the south but after negotiations and arrangements, gradually the teacher learner ratio has gone up where it was say 22 learners per teacher, in the south, it now stands at 29. We are moving towards primary one teacher for 35 and secondary one teacher for 30 learners. We are moving that way. And we advised all regional directors etc. those are the targets to work towards, but the salary budget of our Ministry is killing us. It consumes so much resources on personnel cost alone, that we have very little left for books, materials and for the child. That is one of our basic problems in this country. {Respondent # 8}

The contradiction between policy and practice is evident here; the efforts to recruit more teachers for the northern regions is devastated by the unavailability of facilities. The quality of teaching, especially in rural schools, is a matter of great concern. Teacher learner ratios are high and the general socio-economic conditions of the areas are low. In some schools, basic facilities such as proper classrooms, appropriate instructional materials, and other equipment are lacking. Some of the government efforts are like what the next respondent, an officer with the MBEC, referred to as integrating learners from the north into schools in the south. The transportation and accommodation that is involved was not specified as to who foots the bill. He was confident about

eradicating regional inequalities and claimed that they “have not problem in putting it together,” practically however, the putting it together is challenged by the various reasons that other respondents clearly explained:

We don't want regional inequities in the schools anymore. What we are doing is, I won't say it's a problem in our country. But what the government was doing in the past was that they tried to integrate learners from the north into the south because of the overcrowded schools in the north. So what they did come up with is a transport system by busses they arrange with the two directors to sent those learners to the south where you find obviously most schools in the south are relatively empty. Because in the south you will find a learner teacher ratio of 25 to one while it is just the opposite in the north where you find a learner teacher ratio of 40 and more, to one. So to ease that burden on the northern region they decided to arrange transport, busses to bring these learners down to the south and put them into hostels or dormitories. Then they were admitted to schools in the south, so if you go to Gibeon for example, now you will find Oshiwambo speaking learners there. You go everywhere now in the regions you will find Oshiwambo speaking guys also in these Nama schools. So we have not a problem of putting it together then. In Windhoek for example, if you to Ella Du Plessis which is a formerly Colored school, the majority of the learners there are Otjiherero speaking.
{Respondent # 3}

The interesting part is when two officials from the same ministry have different opinions about the same issue. While the above respondent and his colleague below agreed on differential teacher learner ratios, the former was optimistic about eradicating the regional inequities. The latter, a regional education director, was, however, rather pessimistic about the different quality in schools, the socio-economic conditions of various regions, and the acute lack of employment opportunities in the northern regions. He also touched on another sensitive issue, “distance,” faced by learners in the historically deprived areas in the country. This issue conveniently leads us into the emphasis of the last part of this theme:

The government still has to grapple with the problem of ensuring that there is more equitable distribution of resources towards the historically neglected

areas. But if you look also at the break down of the facilities in Namibia, you will find that in the central and in the southern part of our country, the school pupil teacher ratios as well as the number of schools in terms of numbers and quality are better, and that the situation is more conducive for learning and for quality type of education in the areas that I have just mentioned. Then the northern regions, where the majority of the population lives, you will find that the distance between schools and home is so vast, our intention should also be to bring schools closer to the pupil, to the population where s/he lives. However, the distance each has to walk is still significant in terms of mileage. They have to walk approximately one mile or so, within two miles to the nearest school. Looking at the socio economic conditions of our society, it will also be very difficult because you will find that there are not a lot of job opportunities in those traditional rural areas. Therefore, qualified teachers tend to leave these areas to seek better opportunities in urban schools and settings. {Respondent # 13}

The information from the different respondents reveals huge disparities between various schools and teacher quality in various regions.

The quality of teaching, especially in the previously deprived areas and schools, continues to be a matter of great concern, as people are 'still separated.' Education is an expensive entity, which requires constant societal investigation, change, and evaluation. Namibia inherited a state education system from the apartheid era that was not only divisive and discriminatory, but also ineffective and inefficient, with a particular level of morale among the teachers in the system and a poor standard management performance. That can be devastating if left to continue in a country striving to build national cohesion and unity.

The next respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, talked of non-availability of teachers, equipment, transport for inspectors to carry out their duties and minimal efforts by the government. He also mentioned that the affirmative action to be taken should indicate the right direction, and he expressed concern about government policies on paper that are not implemented:

As far as equipment is concerned I cannot testify how far they provided the necessary say equipment for offices. Because according to the inspectors, The research questionnaire I am dealing with right now, they are talking of the non availability of teachers, lack of equipment like computers even for inspectors typing their work and so on. The non-availability of transport even for them to go out regularly to assist, updates and supports the newly appointed teachers. Which means our effort in that regard, as a Ministry is still a big question. Now we have to look into this again and say how or what kind of affirmative actions can be taken in order to bring it to a certain level. Not a final or satisfactory level but at least to realize that we are moving in that direction. I do not know what they are trying with the NDP 2 now but our aims are always just on paper but the implementation is always very poor. {Respondent # 19}

The contrast between the optimist and the pessimist is obvious as some officers tried to paint a good picture of the government, while others tried to give a reflection according to how they see and experience the situation. Although the number of qualified teachers is slowly increasing, resources continue to be concentrated in those regions that have received higher allocations in the past, and many schools are still without basic infrastructure such as teachers' housing, water, and equipment. Out of school rates for particular communities are extremely high, which leaves many learners of school-going-age from various ethnic and regional communities out of school.

Any employment strategy must desirably take into account the skills, and professional shortages in Namibia and plan a complementary educational strategy. Preparedness for employment can be fostered by upgrading teacher quality and investing in primary and secondary education (Fishlow, 1996, p. 20). A continued expansion of literacy, adult education, and appropriate vocational training could be used to reach the neglected adult population in rural areas. The returns from education take generations, and the upgrading of teachers' qualifications and schools is a long-term process. All

these should be accompanied by accountability at all levels to ensure the function of the system.

The next respondent, a regional education director, asked relevant questions about teacher quality and the quality of education as a whole. He encouraged further training for teachers, which he claimed has benefits:

You have to ask yourself the question whether you should keep an unqualified teacher simply because it would mean less and less expenditure from government. Or you would like to enhance quality education through out the whole of Namibia by promoting and in fact let teachers to go and qualify themselves, and then it means also a rise in recurrent expenditure. So these are the questions that you need to address through a concerted effort of planning, long term strategy planning to ensure that we think of these issues before hand, and try to address them in the appropriate manner. I don't know what the appropriate manner at this point in time is. I don't think any body will tell you, because like the Americans will say, it's a catch 22 situation at this point in time. But we are grappling with those problems. {Respondent # 12}.

He emphasized that long term planning and strategy yield beneficial results, but he admitted that he may not know the appropriate solution to these problems although it is better to keep trying.

The outcome from analysis of the various responses and information from the wider literature indicates that when governments lack capacity, they fall short of providing the necessary education, health, and other services to the entire population. For intended innovative reforms for quality and accessible education for the majority to take root in Namibia, teachers, teacher educators and administrators are required to shake off the exclusive and divisive apartheid mentality. Mungazi and Walker found that an important outcome of educational reform is the need to improve manpower to sustain the strength of the economy. Once educational reform has been established, an effort must be made to attract more students to become teachers. This can be done by improving

conditions of service, including salaries and benefits (Mungazi and Walker, 1997, p. 169). It is in the best interest of the nation to remain sensitive to the need to promote the educational interests of the individual so that society benefit. Economic self-sufficiency, manpower development, a decent standard of living, and political participation are kind of the insurance policy that creates a happy and progressive society. However, evidence indicates to the contrary, that despite political awareness and thus willingness of teachers and other educators to serve, the powers-that-be do not seem to facilitate rural and urban deprived schools and other institutions to attract recruits, newly qualified and experienced teachers. The process, then, remains the vicious cycle of not only differentiated teachers for various schools, but also an increase in private yet costly schools where only a selected few of the society can afford to educate their children. This results in a constant brain drain of qualified personnel in education to other institutions and the reluctance of teachers to serve in less facilitated schools. Brock-Utne (2000, p. 59) insists that

To improve the quality of education, especially primary education, in African countries, the most important thing to do is to restore the dignity and quality of the teacher. The measures to do this will have to be exactly the opposite of what the World Bank Group – WBG suggested in the Education Policy for Sub-Sahara Africa EPSSA.

The World Bank in the EPSSA pushes the opinion that a revitalization of education in Africa cannot take place without major structural adjustments in the way education has been financed in most African countries. These adjustments represent major breaks with the policies of most African countries. These countries look at education as a right for all people and a social service and have wanted to use education to eliminate ethnic, regional and class differences and other social stratification instead of creating such differences.

Some of the Bank and other donor agencies advocate policies that create a dual school-system in which the elites have their children in private schools where teachers have good salaries and enough instructional materials, while the government-financed schools continue to be poorly financed and offer inferior education for the majority.

The next theme addresses the dilemma faced by the government attempting to equalize resources but still experiencing stark inequalities and stratification in education. There are various multiple factors that prevent equality of educational opportunity that also deserve attention if educational inequalities are to be realistically addressed. The theme elaborates the notion that equalizing resources alone is not enough. There are many other intervening variables that prevent equality of educational opportunity.

Chapter V

SOCIOECONOMIC EQUALIZATION IN AN UNEQUAL MULTI-ETHNIC AND MULTI-LINGUAL NAMIBIAN SOCIETY

Theme: Equalizing input of resources is not enough; this still results in unequal educational outcomes. Overcoming educational inequalities requires effective management and political commitment and accountability.

The first theme in this chapter is one of the crucial and revealing themes for this dissertation as it addresses the various characteristics for outcomes variation among students of different ethnic and regional orientations as determined by the resources allocated to them. The theme explores the education system in Namibia in terms of the policy interventions that lend credence to the argument that equalizing school resource inputs can actually lead to less equitable distribution of educational resources and outcomes across schools. The focus here is on the factors that determine sufficient physical facilities and access to schooling, teacher quality, and even library resources in the different educational regions of the country based on the resources that are available to them.

The government may have good intentions and strive to equalize resources to various socioeconomic or regional groups. However, equalizing the allocation of resources alone is not enough; there are numerous managerial, political commitment, external involvement and pressures, and other intervening factors that play out and affect the entire system. One respondent, an education director with the MBEC, asserted that there are efforts to equalize resources, but they may not be enough to equalize outcomes:

If you refer to equal outcomes, that's very much more difficult to determine or to predict. It's like playing a Soccer match. If you say before the time, you will all have boots. You will all have jerseys. I ensure that you will all have this equipment and you all have training. So I predetermine that the

inputs are equal, but now you are going to a match situation. I cannot predict that the score will be a draw. There are other factors inherent in the human, in the home support, in the input, in work being done that has influences in the outcome of teaching. The ministry is trying to equalize input across the regions, right. What we have done for instance this year in the budget you will find, if you analyze our budget that on materials and supplies, textbooks etc. we have calculated the number of primary learners per region whether it's Ondangwa, or in the south, and we have allocated an equal amount. It may not be enough because we can't get enough of federal revenue but equal amounts for materials and supplies in all regions. All right, that we do. We further try to post increasingly trained teachers to the previously disadvantaged schools, but there are obstructing factors to this. {Respondent # 1}

This respondent acknowledged that although resources may be allocated on an equal basis, there are other intervening factors like home background and support, the exact input of specific schools, and the work done in individual schools that affects the outcome of teaching.

There are many positive efforts by the government trying to overcome the disparities of the past, but the neglect for some of the schools and areas was so huge that some of the equalizing efforts do not make a difference. The schools with an overstock of resources, for example, do not lose their standard, nor can the schools currently focused on raise their level to the privileged schools' standards. This is reflected in the opinions of other educational officers. One regional education director, from one of the neglected northern regions, felt that there is still much in favor of schools in the urban areas while schools in the north are insufficiently catered to:

You can budget, I want so much money to address the problems. When you ask for money, in actual fact money is going to be allocated to you, but only a little which do not allow you to address any development activities. Therefore, the issue also of the attitude of people who are manning the key positions in the Ministries come into fore. In the beginning of this year, I think you were here, Windhoek was having a crisis of learners' strike in Windhoek. And the ministry was accused of sort of things, but now, in the meantime the ministry headquarter happened to get money to address the

Windhoek learner crisis, it is only one month but we have lived with this crisis since 1995, and we are still going to live with it. People are fully aware in the headquarters that we are facing a learner teacher crisis. They know but they can't respond. Why do or should they respond to the crisis in Windhoek only within one month while ours is endemic but seems not to be attended to? {Respondent # 12}

Most officers acknowledged the disproportionate allocation of resources, which may continue for a long while because equalizing the resources to various regions, communities and schools is not enough. In terms of equalizing the allocation of resources, the following officer, from the MHEVST, argued that the government's policy is committed to equity. However, he also acknowledged that due to lack of finances there are not sufficient resources to go around to all the school or regions as necessary. Despite this, they are trying gradually to shift resources from the advantaged schools to the historically disadvantaged schools:

When it comes to equity, we have no problem with equity, because we work very hard so that everybody get a fair share, every learner every teacher will get a fair share out of the education system. So what we are providing here in Windhoek is also provided in the regions. If we have textbooks for Windhoek then we have to send textbooks to the other six regions. So equity in terms of management, in terms of material development, in terms of apparatus, we are trying very hard to bring a balance into the system. OK because of lack of money constraints we have limited resources we cannot provide all the schools with financial, material, textbooks and whatever. But what we did was that, the previous advantaged schools we had over stock of those things, what we are trying to do is leave them for a while and to focus our attention more on the other schools which has actually not been brought up to standard. {Respondent # 4}

He elaborated on how the government is trying to right the imbalances without unduly withdrawing support from the advantaged schools:

What the government is actually doing is that we focus more on our disadvantaged groups now, like in the north, our target is actually mostly in the north. What I am talking about is actually Ondangwa East Ondangwa west, Khorixas, Rundu, and the other one is Katima Mulilo. What we are doing is that textbooks, equipment and all those things we will easily

dispatch those things to those schools in the north in order to equip those schools to come in par with other advantaged schools mostly in the central areas in the South. So our funds and our resources are mostly focusing on our disadvantaged schools, but in the meantime for argument sake that must also happen in other schools. {Respondent #4}

The following respondent, an officer with the MBEC, suggested a possible way to budget in Namibia's situation, disproportionately in favor of the disadvantaged. He strongly voiced how the status quo may not change by allocating the same resources to various schools and regions:

Like if you are saying that Keetmanshoop is already having 100% permanent buildings, all these classrooms and then in Rundu we are still far away from that to my view it our task to say that for this year now we are going to budget it in this way. The Keetmanshoop is having everything already, so Rundu is supposed to have a bigger portion so they are far away from the Keetmanshoop one. But what we are doing is we are just continuing by allocating the same budget to the different regions and by doing that we'll never, we will never be equal when it comes to resources allocation. {Respondent # 2}

This respondent seemed to be confident that allocating resources equally to all regions will not solve the disparities that exist.

The concept of redistribution of resources, by heavily concentrating on the formerly neglected schools and regions, was more explicitly expressed by another officer of the MBEC:

What I mean is if you want to distribute the resources, the ratio should be in favor, heavier in favor of the former disadvantaged schools, so they could catch up with those, which already are advantaged. I think that's the only way how we can. Say for instance, if you are to distribute say ten percent of a thing to the school, or say ten units to schools, the disadvantaged school get say eighty percent the former disadvantaged schools get 80% of the units right, whereas the advantaged schools will get 20%. Then the former disadvantaged schools can catch up with former advantaged schools. I think that's the only way. The same with the human resources that the well qualified teachers that are coming out of school should be visibly sent to the disadvantaged schools. {Respondent # 6}

Other officers also expressed concern about the policy of giving the same allocation to the regions and schools, while some regions and or schools are worse off than others and thus may need additional allocations to address their needs. An education officer with the MHEVST had this to say:

In the rural areas some schools are still taught under trees. Something that you cannot find here in towns. It is worsened by the limited financial resources. Although they say the two Ministries of education are the ones who get the biggest slice of the government budget, but still the budget is not enough to redress all the discrepancies of the apartheid system. If the government decide to spend a lot of money building schools for the rural areas, so that it brings them up to be equal with the schools in urban areas. You know the country is poor, the people living in towns will complain about reverse discrimination. Whites will complain about the government benefiting Blacks, it is a problem. But if you distribute money equally to schools, it won't be equal because some schools were well endowed while others are marginalized. {Respondent # 20}

For this education officer, unequal resources still prevail and he finds it problematic to have equal budgetary allocations to regions with different populations and facilities. Instead he believes that more budget allocation should be channeled to the hitherto marginalized regions:

You cannot expect the government to give fifty million to Khomas region and fifty million to Kunene region no you cannot expect that. Kunene region, even if it is a little bit sparsely populated than Windhoek, the needs over there are greater than in Khomas region when it comes to education. So of course government has got to have a discriminatory mechanism when it comes to the allocation of resources to the different political regions in the decentralized system. So that is one way that the government could really try to help all these other deprived areas to come up in development. That is one way, I am sure there could be so many other things that the government could do but when it comes to the budget, the government has to discriminate as to how much who should get. {Respondent # 20}

This interviewee talked about schools that were built during the colonial era and thus were well supported in structure, equipment and necessary education resources. The

schools which were built for disadvantaged people lack all these type of facilities, so he reckoned educational inequalities continue. Thus, he offered more specific suggestions for how continuing inequalities could be overcome. There has to be a system that would distribute resources in a disproportional way. This disproportional representation should take into account many factors. Factors that are economic, factors that are social, and the general social backlog, that is one of the most important factors that have to be taken into serious consideration.

These respondents clearly see that the distribution needs to be disproportionate in favor of the formerly disadvantaged. However, the next respondent, an officer with the MBEC, seemed to be saying that things are working perfectly well:

The resources at the moment they are just distributed on equal basis to the disadvantaged as well as the former advantaged schools right. But to ensure that the resources that are distributed are allocated on a fair and equal, there are mechanisms in place. The regional offices, they must see to it that the resources and the equipment and items that's now books, stationery, laboratory equipment, library facilities and all this, that all these are transported to the schools on an equal basis. It is really sort of still limited equipment, the units that are sent to school. But the distribution is made in such a way that all the schools get the shares they deserve. {Respondent # 6}

This respondent reckoned that all schools get what they deserve. The next respondent, an officer with the MBEC, however, noted other factors that lead to continued inequalities, e.g., the policy for the marginalized and the age limits and restrictions that are conflicting:

There is no equity when it comes to the distribution of resources. To be truly speaking nothing is yet equalized, yes the government is still trying but then the outcomes I really don't know. Because what happens is that you put a policy for the marginalized kids and then at the same time you put age restriction like for instance in grade one. We are supposed to have a kid who is five years old and s/he is supposed to be six on the 31st of January. If that kid is supposed to be six on the first of February or the second, you are not

supposed to go to school. Then at the other side, you are also saying if the kid is nine or ten years old, they are not supposed to be enrolled/admitted in grade one. Then the question will be where is that learner supposed to go? And how will you know that this learner was marginalized or not. Because the definition for marginalized is so wide. {Respondent # 2}

Despite the government's efforts to equalize the inputs in education to match desired outcomes, further characteristics of the system lead to the questions like the above, where does the learner go?

Vulliamy's (1987) work in Papua New Guinea suggests that school effects are not confined to material inputs. He found that "school process variables such as style of administration and non-material characteristics such as teacher morale have a significant impact on achievement." The respondent below initially wanted to shy away from the resource allocation issue; however, he came up with interesting information that is supportive of Vulliamy's findings. This respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, disclosed that resources are allocated on a proportional basis, but the important factor to realize is that good outcomes are dependent on the effective management of available resources:

The aim here is to see to it so that every child in Namibia at least has some kind of education that is equal to the one received in Windhoek, or more or less quality wise, as good as possible. What I can say on this is that these resources are allocated on proportional basis, which means that if that region has got fifty schools, they will get more. And if another region has twenty, accordingly they will get resources to match that. If another region has got five, accordingly, that is along those lines. But the important factor is however, effective management of the resources. You will agree with me, even if that region has got more resources, if they don't realize and manage it effectively, they will not get the output they are supposed to have, and that is the whole notion, that is the whole issue. I do believe that the resources are not effectively being utilized. I cannot at this point in time blame those people who are not utilizing these resources effectively, simply they do not have what you call skills and management of the resources. That's why at least the disparities will continue, because the resources are not being focused. {Respondent # 15}

The respondent claimed that without proper skills and management capabilities to utilize these resources effectively, whatever resources a school or region gets may not be beneficial since they may not be utilized to the maximum. A high level of understanding and skill is necessary for managing the human and financial resources of education systems in order to establish and sustain cost-effective procedures in meeting educational objectives (Cohen, (1994, p. 22).

The next respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, also addressed the importance of actions taken in the realm of management:

In the process we also build quality, because quality is going out now from Windhoek which was actually disadvantaged in the past, going into the remote areas, in terms of material development because you find quality also in management style. You see, so what is happening is that, because of this transfer or flow of material to our remote areas this gives, this can also come unto par with the most advantaged schools. In terms of management style, were our people were actually neglected by conducting courses and all those things it was also only applied to the former White schools which come up with courses. We come up with workshops and seminars to help our people, principals and inspectors to build their capacity, and also to come up to par with other former advantaged groups. So if you go to these schools now you will see that these people or principals are also trained to be good managers. Because eventually if you have good managers, you will have children of that particular schools eventually getting good results. {Respondent # 4}

Managers are required to be skilled in various aspects of management functions to effectively carry out the smooth operation of a system.

Another officer from the MBEC, however, gave a different opinion from those who feel that resources are distributed in such a way that everyone gets their deserved share; i.e. that management problems supercede continuing inequalities in resource allocations – for him, by contrast, local leaders do know how to budget for what they need, but do not get all that they require:

But now, I think that is very difficult you know. The reason why I say it is difficult is that I think the regions or the regional directors of specific regions, they know their needs. They say they are budgeting according to their needs and then when they budgeting according to their needs, they are having expectations to receive more financial resources to address the needs of their disadvantaged communities. But now their expectations will ever be frustrated by the available resources given to them and the limited budget allocated, which will never address their needs. Ours is only to send/ask for few books, few furniture, and then I think they are being taught under a tree, or hiding in that particular shed. Now, you can see that they are receiving only minimal resources. {Respondent # 7}

Uncertainty about inequity and doubtful outcomes are an indication of contradicting policies and practices. Another officer of the MBEC expressed concern about a related aspect of management, the effective utilization of the allocated resources. He indicated that the majority of Namibia's civil servants are misplaced, which then affects their ability to use available resources effectively and thus their performance:

The final and most important point is whether resources are being utilized effectively in order to achieve the output that is needed. The point that I am just raising now of how effective if the resources are there, how effective are they utilized to contribute towards the best output of the products, the students? I just want to elaborate, Let me just be really frank, that when you are talking about civil servants, 98% of civil servants in Namibia are misplaced. Therefore, I mean the right qualified people are not in the right professions, or positions as a result, the performances are not what it should be. {Respondent # 14}

In support of the points above, the respondent below from the MBEC also expressed concern about the management problems. He finds it a serious problem to have qualified personnel who cannot perform because of lack of knowledge and skills and exposure. He also attributed the dilemma to previous confinement to their areas, that is, lack of communication:

Despite facilities in some places, you still find some other things like management of the institution. You find the principal, the rest of the management really incapable, and it is because they have never been exposed. There was no travelling or intercommunication because all were

confined to their own areas, and never learned any other ways of doing things. Therefore, there are quite a number of manifestations, and for Namibia, I have said many times that this is very serious, because in reality many countries even ones you have people at too many different levels. Learners may have the same certificate but they do not have the main knowledge, the same knowledge and skills. That's very serious, that a person having the same certificate with another, or even a higher one, when it comes to real performance, perform lower than the other, and that is mainly because of exposure, the environment is not conducive and this is because of this isolation. {Respondent # 5}

In many of the interviews, officers expressed their displeasure with some of the factors that lead to endemic inequalities. The respondent below, from the MBEC, was visibly angry as he explained why some policies fail. He attributed the failures to the reconciliation policy that was not embraced by all, i.e., lack of commitment:

To my point of view, the government is trying. But the main problem just to be realistic, the main problem is the reconciliation issue. Because when we got our independence it was said that we are going to get our independence and nothing will be changed by this I mean the people who used to occupy the different posts in the Ministry's top management etc. Which means whether the government is trying to do all these kind of things, there are some of us who are resisting, and by them because they are having top positions, they won't function properly. They would like to fail the system!!! But it is not down to earth. Let me site some examples out of this: Some of our people are against the whole reconciliation. Now if you are having these top positions, you having a circular or a policy, which is supposed to be implemented, it will fail. Because the top management, those who are having the high positions like from the minister to directors, they are against the whole thing. So somewhere there we are having a problem. {Respondent # 2}

The respondent obviously did not want to mention specific names and he was reluctant to mention specific positions. He resorted to give a range of the ones he referred to in high positions. The next respondent, an officer from the MBEC, viewed the whole issue to revolve around political commitment to effect meaningful change:

It is not happening, up to now when you are sitting here. It is not happening resources are still unequally received and felt by regions and schools in different categories. Other wise to change all these things, it

needs political power to change this. No political power, nothing is going to happen. Political power and will. You can keep on talking and talking, but in the absence of any political will, any political courage, there is nothing. {Respondent # 7}

The political commitment that the respondent referred to may be realized, if the government commits to some of the plans it assigned itself to implement. But according to the next respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, there is a lack in specific government programs that deal with issues of inequality:

Now, but normally what the government did is that you see government has got regional ambitions. But what is happening is that there is no specific program of government, not a specific program that I am aware of, a specific program of government that exclusively deals with questions and issues of inequality. There is none that exclusively tries to arrest inequality. You see, there is no specific program as such. You see all the existing programs that government has are supposed to be this broad goals of equity and democracy you see, let me say are supposed to take cognizance, you see and also are supposed to be very sensitive to issues of equity, and inequality, but these are all integrated programs. And that's why not much has been done in terms of tackling issues of inequality, because there is no specific program whose attention is only focused at arresting these problems. There is no such a program. {Respondent # 16}

This respondent felt that the current government programs, although well intended, are too broad to tackle issues of inequality and equity.

The following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, believes that the findings and directives of the Presidential Commission on Education would reduce the disparities and improve education in the country:

If we can take the recommendations of the presidential Commission on Education seriously, because I believe the government is spending a lot of money in this commission. If we take the recommendations seriously, and try to address it, I think we can only improve our education system in the country. {Respondent # 11}

The presidential Commission on Education has been commissioned to fact find and carefully look into the existing educational problems in the country aimed at taking care of past abuses and disparities.

The growth of the school population, increase in spending for education, and planning for the future are all aspects of the system of investigation and administration of education that must be taken into account to ensure the suggested transformation.

Mungazi and Walker (1997, p. 186) contented that nations of southern Africa must endeavor to reform education:

In terms of the learning outcomes and the efficiency with which they use resources. To establish this objective, professional efficiency is needed in managing the course of reform to realize the relationship that must exist among investment, planning, and educational outcomes.

These important directives are essential to enhance an education that would cater to the nation in the desirable equitable distribution of resources and educational development. However, if the elected and or appointed leaders lack commitment, are reluctant, perhaps ignorant or, as the respondent below, an officer with the MHEVST, complained not interested to carry out these tasks, but pursuing their own interests, then unfortunately the nation remains in jeopardy:

The government has decided to establish what we call regional education forums. This is where all the councilors, politically elected councilors and business people, and parent representatives are supposed to serve in this body, and they are supposed to advise the ministry and the government as to what they are expecting education is going to perform. But like in this region now, the people who are supposed to be in the forefront, these politically elected councilors, they are not interested. They do not come to meetings sometimes, they do not come together, and this is hampering the development of education in this area and in the country. I am also having a problem with representations, because you elected to represent you, that person will only favor his people or her interest and not representing or talking what the other people want to see. They are not really going back

to the grassroots and find out what the people think or want to do. Another problem is that the people elected are the middle class, because they are articulate but in the end they favor their own interests.
{Respondent # 11}

When representatives of the people are only interested in their own affairs or those of their next of kin, clan, or ethnic group, suspicion mounts and education remain inefficient.

Overall, the respondents showed how equalizing efforts are ineffective because the dilemma is not merely due to financial constraints. Other factors like management, administration and political commitment need to be taken care of for the expected reforms to succeed. Cohen (1994, p. 13) reveals that “the few serving administrators are not all professionally equipped to face the challenges brought about by the need for innovations, while the number of trained and experienced professionals among former exiled Namibians is too small to close the skills gap.” The findings reveal an acute shortage of trained educational professionals within the country.

The next theme denotes and reveals some of the discrepancies or controversies that prevail between the government policies of incorporation or inclusion and the harsh realities that inhibit implementation of such policies and practices. According to Brock-Utne (2000:6) “By far the most contentious issue at the Jomtien conference was related to the trade-off between the debt burden and the search to extend education to all.” The question, therefore, remains who the “all” are who were supposed to benefit from the policy of education for all. The theme demonstrates how, despite the policy of reconciliation, education for all and efforts to equalize inputs, socio-economic, ethnic and

regional divisions stand in the way of quality and equitable education, both access and outcomes.

Theme: Regardless of the government's policies of education for all, reconciliation, and Namibia as one nation, nevertheless socioeconomic status, regional, ethnic and residential divisions inhibit access to quality education and equality of educational opportunity for all.

Policies, education for all, or rhetoric, who are the all? This theme discusses the determinants that inhibit access to educational opportunity and quality education for the majority of the population. These factors are no doubt remnants of the notorious colonial regime and apartheid policies. Nevertheless, ten years after the democratic constitution of Namibia introduced safeguards and protections of fundamental human rights, the nation still faces unprecedented physical and technical inequalities. These inequalities are based on social, economic, regional, and residential divisions that were seen as detrimental to national unity and development, and thus were targeted for eradication. In this theme, the socioeconomic status of various individuals or groups is identified as the great determinant of the type of education a child receives. Regional and residential divisions did not change much after independence and have their share of contribution to the disparities in education policies and practices. According to one respondent, "Only few élites managed to benefit from the post independence integration in terms of schools and residences." The majority of the population lives in the hitherto designated areas or regions, where not only educational services are insufficient and the only available resources are inferior, but also the socioeconomic conditions of these areas are systematically neglected.

The respondent below, a senior officer with the MBEC, believes that persisting inequalities in education are mainly due to the socioeconomic status of the parents, and

that it is a world trend. He gave an example of opportunities for people in a different economic scale in France. He also states that in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) economic discrimination coincides with racial and ethnic discrimination:

What we increasingly see and this is factual, not only in Namibia, it's even true for France, is that if chances are unequal in education, it will be mostly unequal due to social economic situation of the parents, and this is world wide case. In France, I once read that the dockworker of Marseilles compared to a professional person in Paris, a doctor or an engineer or what his parents. The chances of that dock worker's child going to university one day, versus that professional from Paris's child going to university one day is 14 to 1. It is economic discrimination. Unfortunately in this part of the world, the economic discrimination also coincided with the racial, and ethnic discrimination. {Respondent # 17}

This respondent obviously considered the costs involved in educating a child. Besides school fees, uniforms are a necessity; books cost a lot of money; if a school is a boarding school the hostel facilities have to be paid for; and there are always extra costs for either extra curricula activities or contributions for specific projects. All these factors make the situation very critical, especially for the under-employed or unemployed of society.

The next respondent, an officer with the MBEC, was explicit about the beneficiaries in the post-colonial educational dispensation. As an education officer, a government employee, he included himself and his kind as the people who benefit. He also pointed out that everything these days depends on connections, and he appropriately asked a question about those who may not have connections in the top hierarchy to gain places in good schools. The élites control the system, they subsidize schools where they sent their children, and he claimed that he is not aware of an integrative policy that would treat all schools as same:

I feel that it's only us, well off, the elite group, civil servants who, would afford to send our kids to some of these schools from our expenses. Again these things nowadays have to do with connections. Now how about my granny in the rural area, about my aunt in the rural area, who does not have anyone and still, have to send their kids to school? But I am not aware of any clear policy that clear issues in regard to access to schools, integration of schools to try and redress the situation and integrate the pupils (peoples). That has not been an effort on the part of this government. There may be good talk about equity, quality democracy and so forth. Those are the so-called pillars but whether they are words worth their while I do not know but I haven't seen that happening. {Respondent # 3}

This definitely is a very cynical and pessimistic respondent, because there are indeed policies aimed at rectifying the colonial apartheid disparities. His argument, however, is perhaps made valid by the fact that policies are pronounced and articulated, but there is less implementation, monitoring, or evaluation. Thus, there is disillusionment even from the employees of government, who under normal circumstances would defend the status quo, regardless of the flaws.

The socioeconomic differences between individuals, or between groups, and regions, are so prevalent that most interviewees gave their views about it. The following respondent, an officer with the MBEC, was vocal about inaccessibility of some schools by certain groups of the population due specifically to high fees, which he complained were raised after independence. He also raised concern about the increasing of or mushrooming of private schools and the exorbitant tuition and other fees that they charge to the extent of excluding disadvantaged members of the society:

When the schools were desegregated, we thought that all schools would be open and accessible by all learners or racial groups. But as you know a number of schools have since independence raised or hiked up their school fees such that people from some different racial groups cannot afford to pay for those school fees OK. Which would mean that that's specific school would be a school only for that grouping in this case it could be a White children school or the White parents. Or indeed a specific

economic class for example the upcoming elite in Namibia would also afford to for example pay for their children to such schools. Now when it comes to the creation of private schools of course the constitution does allow for the establishment of private schools. The constitution does not provide for the regulation of any fees that any private schools should require parents to pay for their kids. There is no law that the ceiling that private schools ask for fees is this no. That's a free market system, that's how we found ourselves in that situation where private schools are established, they hike up their prices as such and students from other Black tribes cannot afford then of course it will be a White private school. You cannot do anything about it, it's provided for within the constitution which is one of the loopholes of our democracy, you know it's part of democracy. {Respondent # 1}

This respondent certainly touched on some sensitive issues according to his knowledge, understanding, and exposure as an official in one of the Ministries of Education. Some of the contradictions I referred to throughout the study are apparent here.

The following respondent, a regional education director, painted a different picture about school fees and those pardoning or accepting of those who cannot afford to pay. He agreed with the former on the socioeconomic differences in terms of ability to send children to school or not. However, he disclosed that it is government regulation that those who cannot afford to pay school fees should be exempted. The dilemma is that while policy stipulates compulsory and free education, private schools are multiplying and they charge very high fees. He declared that those who send learners away because they cannot afford to pay school fees are contra the Ministry's directive:

Those people, the people who are in positions of government, of power as well as a lot of other people who have gained economic power, during these nine years, simply because of the fact that they do have the resources, can afford to send their children to schools where fees are much higher than in government schools. They can even afford to send their children to private schools. But the declared statement of government is really not to perpetuate this but really to ensure that government schools which is schools for under the auspices of the ministry of education staff will not charge

extravagant fees. So in order to ensure that there will be better access of children to schools, you will even find that the government has stipulated time and time and again that it is no longer a prerequisite for enrollment in schools for children to pay school fees. If they cannot afford to pay school fees, they can approach the necessary authorities, and they can be assisted, and they can even be exempt from school fees. Any body who does this by telling people or pupils that you cannot be enrolled in this particular school, simply because of the fact that we don't have money to pay for school fees, are really not doing this in the letter and spirit of the education ministry's declared statement of access and fairness. {Respondent # 13}

Meanwhile, government schools are also paid for and some families simply cannot afford to educate their children. He continued to say “that there is no real compulsory payment for school fees within the whole educational system under the auspices of government.” Yet he contradicted himself immediately in saying that “school fees are set and agreed upon by the school authorities and that’s why it differs between schools.”

The next respondent quoted some figures for certain schools, and commented on the psychological effects on learners, thus again contradicting some of the previous respondents who claimed that no children should be sent away from school because they cannot afford to pay fees. This respondent actually admitted that the government is weak in that there is no clear-cut policy on school fees. Some of the justification for the different fees, according to this respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, is that schools are at different levels in terms of facilities; thus, they charge differentiated fees:

Even if the school fee is say fifty dollars per annum, it is problematic for these people to collect even school fees from the parents. But if you take a school, for example you take a former White school, like say Windhoek high, there you can get, you can pay as high as far as N\$ 350, 00 per term, which means you can go up to N\$ 900,00 a year school fees or N\$ 1000,00 per year school fees. If you do not pay, you are psychologically being worked and demoralized in a way that at least you feel that you

don't belong to such a community. Even in the rural areas school fees are discriminative and the government in this position is also weak in a way that at least there is no clear-cut or uniform policy how (much) far the school fees can be paid. Because such schools also are categorized as far as hostel facilities are concerned. They are also categorized a bit higher it means according to the equipment they have there, you'll have to pay a bit more and in other schools which are less equipped or in the rural areas it means the standard of a hostel is also down according to the level. There are level one, level two, level three and so on. Those who are in such schools better, well off, those not then it means they can struggle to get through. It's a struggle I mean it's not even having concrete policies. {Respondent # 18}

Responding to a follow up question on whether it is the principal or the management who decide the different fees, this respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, had this to say:

Sometimes it's the management and sometimes the principals themselves, because some of the schools are having these school board system. So they will decide with the school board and then call a parent teacher meeting then announce this so that they can discuss this. But some of the schools either they will just give good prices and they will just increase the fees. Each year they are just increasing the school fees, and you will find some of the government schools paying three hundred per semester while others are paying just one hundred and twenty, even fifty for that matter. Which is a big difference between the schools for that matter the government schools. {Respondent # 2}

The differences in fees warrant a scenario of socioeconomic class where those who can afford will naturally send their children to better schools, while those at the periphery of society have no choice but to accept what they can afford. This way the perennial inequities loom and continue to challenge educational policies and practices of post independence provision.

The same respondent complained about the age restriction, especially in government schools, while private schools accept different ages to start schooling. She also stated that private schools are increasing as they are profitable establishments, and to

her surprise, government employees maintain the status quo in government schools while they sent their children to the private schools. To her that is another way of continuing inequalities. On the specific age issue, she reckoned that during colonialism it was not that restrictive:

Another thing is the age thing. If you are saying that when you are six then you are supposed to be at school, six. If you are turning six in February (school year starts in January in Namibia) then you are not allowed. But all these other privileged people would have private schools, and the private schools accept even five or six. A person knows that they work for the government, the government will only take from seven while they will take their children to the private school. That is the problem. If we do not have restriction for private schools, meanwhile private schools are increasing, they are being established more often thus, the number of private schools is growing. Because it now more a money making venture, an industry. You therefore, find that even those who work for the government who know the restriction in government schools maintain the status quo while they send their children to private schools. That is another way of continuing inequalities. During the colonial system children used to be accepted to schools even if their birthday is around April or July. But now it's strictly 31st of January. This is very sad because in that way, children are forced to wait until the next year to start school. Our children do not have facilities at home to have a kind of head start. For them to start that late cause their performing weak during the preliminary years. They claim that they found out that when a child is seven or more is when they function better at school, which is not true. {Respondent # 2}

Another contradiction, therefore, is that while compulsory and free education for all is preached, there are all these restrictions and the government does not invest in pre-schools or head start, which makes it even harder for children from lower socioeconomic positions. Ultimately, as is evident from the interviewees' inputs, controversies, and views, inequalities in the system over the years closely reflected the social and economic inequalities in the wider society. It is thus possible to argue that unequal schools will inevitably produce unequal results despite major inputs into other aspects of the provision. These and other factors, such as disparities in the curriculum offered by the

schools combined with social and economic status factors, operate to create profound inequalities in schooling and education as it is experienced by the students, resulting in unacceptable variation in the quality of the schools and in their productivity.

This theme also addresses issues of regional and residential divide as well as rural and urban differences, which also coincide with resource allocation, to be among the main stumbling blocks in Namibian schools. The next respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, emphasized how the urban and former White schools are well endowed with resources; thus they cannot be compared to other schools. As a result those in urban settings would not go to inferior schools in remote regions; similarly, Whites who all along had good schools, or Coloreds whose schools were better, cannot go to schools in the same region that are lacking basic necessities. He gave an example about his daughter, who is attending a formerly Colored school because it is what he can afford:

Those urban and formerly White schools remain well endowed in terms of resources, they remain well off, you cannot compare them to any other schools. So obviously that being the situation, why should the white kids want to go to Katutura? (Katutura is the formerly and still the Black township in Windhoek). In fact, tell you what, Blacks have also been going to, and I mean Blacks as opposed to coloreds, have even been going to colored schools. Because they are better off as compared to schools in Katutura, or even in the deep rural areas. So it is true what you say that there has been a trend of Black kids fighting for the Formerly White schools and fighting for Colored schools, yes that happens a lot, they have been doing that but you will not find vice-versa. Because why should you go to a school where there are not enough resources anyway? I got my own daughter attending one of these formerly colored schools, and in fact when you go to that school now, it's maybe 95% Black. We go to that school because it is cheaper. If I wanted to I could sent my kid to St. Paul (St. Paul is a formerly White school. English medium subsidized by the government). I cannot afford it. {Respondent # 3}

The determining factors that prevent learners from moving to other schools are resources, facilities and the fact that some people find it difficult to travel to other areas

or regions. Thus, they are compelled to go to the nearest school, which, in most cases, is ethnic based. Other determining factors are whether they can afford and also because of familiarity, or as the following respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, put it, being part of the structures. He believes that people have strong sentiments or attachment about the region they originate from, although he acknowledged that the policy is clear for people to settle wherever they want:

Mind you, though the policy of the government is to sort of Namibianize every body to have a feeling that s/he is a citizen, and s/he is a Namibian citizen like any other person. You see, people stay in those areas where they have put up permanent structures, and you become part of the structures. They have also grown some sentiments to those areas where they stay. There is no way which is going to be easy to take a person from another region to another region without him really losing his settlement, the relatives, some other language structures for which he has been accustomed to, yeah, even the language thing. But the language is not really a problem. I think the problem is the call it the material facets or the material possessions. If you were born in a certain region, where your parents probably also grew up. These people they have put up some structures and you became part of the structures. So it is going to be very difficult to change. So you find that even some of us who were born in some other regions though we are working here, and we are considered to be permanently here, I still have that sentiment the attachment of belonging to that region where my parents came from, or where I came from. And you will also find it that if I die here, if I haven't stated otherwise, people are likely to take me, or my body or my corpse back to where I was born. It is just sort of a nature or something, but the policy is quite clear. If you decide to live, that is to go away from this region, and go and settle in the other region, there are no prohibitions. You are allowed to set up a structure there, be part of that region. {Respondent # 6}

The areas the respondent referred to that people grew sentiments or attachments to are the Bantustans, reserves or homelands. These were designated by colonialism and apartheid, whose legacy is entrenched to the extent that people identify deeply with the imposed "places of origin." Other respondents disclosed that in some regions, unqualified

teachers from specific areas are preferred by residents due to the same reasons: familiarity, attachment or sense of belonging.

The next respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, was more specific about the regional and residential issues in terms of ethnicity. He believes that ethnicity cannot be eliminated and that the education system is disadvantaging its people on multi-cultural development. The respondent sees the education problem as intractable because of the above reasons, which add to the list of contradictions between policy and practice:

I admit that ethnicity based on region is very prominent; I do not know how it can be eliminated. Whether we claim that we have eliminated it, to me it will not be. We have not and we probably cannot eliminate it. Because it is still a disadvantage, the child may not cross the boarder. S/he will have to be confined in those pockets. If you put our education in that way, or at that level, I feel our education to a certain extent is really supporting ethnicity and as a result, it is disadvantaging its own people to have this cross cultural type of a thing. But I think the best thing that happened is that the government has tried to cushion it. Now how do we go out of it, to say kids can cross from as early as grade one to any direction. Because the policy is, the child must be able to go across the board, but at the same time, a language policy which says they must be able to learn from grade one to grade three in their own languages.
{Respondent # 10}

The dichotomy between policy and practice is clearly explicated by various respondents who addressed it in their own way according to their involvement, knowledge, and experiences. The following respondent, a regional education director, elaborated on “education for all” in the Namibian context and mentioned “the four characteristics” aimed at being pillars of education. The director talked of policies remaining statements of intent without implementation. He also complained that the inequitable distribution of resources results in low quality education. He gave some examples of the inequities that he referred to:

In the Namibian context when we talk of education for all, we look at four different characteristics of education. First is to ensure access, equity, quality, and democracy. So, that was the policy statement, but as you know, in many terms, especially in African terms, policy issues can remain statements of intent, and not being implemented at all. So the policy statement is there. The implementation up till now was really very difficult, and you will hear that there are still cries today about the same four characteristics that I just mentioned. People are still complaining and rightfully so, that there are no equal distribution of resources in terms of equity. You will find that some schools in the rural areas don't have necessary resources for them to cherish the idea of having qualitative type of education. Some suffer because of the fact that they still have meager resources, like they don't have adequate facilities in terms of school buildings and halls. They don't have teaching materials that can enhance

their learning, they don't have qualified teachers. You will find that there is a tendency of them having a lot of unqualified teachers in the rural areas, which will definitely be detrimental for quality of education in the rural areas. {Respondent # 13}

The regional, especially the rural-urban divide, is emphasized to be among the primary cause of the disparities in the education system. Although the socioeconomic aspect is not explicitly expressed by many respondents, it is implied in statements like the one by the next respondent, who believes that the legacy of apartheid is still maintained. The gap between the minority beneficiaries and élites, and the impoverished majority is high; Namibia leads the world in the unequal distribution of wealth. Namibia has one of the worst income distributions in the world, with a Gini-coefficient of 0.701, the highest reported for any country in the world. The implications of this, at worst, could be to hold back growth, and to foster the interests of a minority political elite. To understand redistribution, it is important to look at where government revenue is raised and where it is spent (NEPRU (1997, p.23). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (1998, p. 21) the Gini-coefficient is a measure of income inequality. A Gini-coefficient of zero indicates perfect equality while a coefficient of one indicates total inequality. Namibia leads the world in the unequal distribution of wealth. Refer to table showing Namibia's highest 0.701 coefficient.

Table 4

Selected Gini Coefficients

Country	Gini	Country	Gini
Namibia	0.701	Zambia	0.462
Brazil	0.634	Thailand	0.462
South Africa	0.584	Indonesia	0.317
Zimbabwe	0.568	Bangladesh	0.283
Malaysia	0.484		

(Source: World Development Report, 1997.)

The respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, insisted that inequitable distribution will continue to result in inferior education for the poor and the marginalized:

I think it is, we still have some very sophisticated mechanism, where the old system of apartheid, where disequilibrium is still maintained. So the former beneficiaries are still continuing to benefit, and most likely, the new elite have joined the former beneficiaries. As a result the poor and marginalized continue to receive an inferior education. {Respondent #14}

My analysis of this statement is that independence did not transform education to the benefit of “all.” The government of Namibia proclaimed its belief in “education as a desired end of society” and in the “right of all individuals to education and training opportunities in order to develop their innate creative and intellectual capabilities” (Ministry of Education and Culture 1993). It formally and decisively acknowledged ‘the vital role of education as a tool for social change and stability.’”

Under such circumstances, it can be argued that socio-economic class and regional and residential background account for a higher proportion of the variance in achievement in different schools. At the heart of the human development paradigm are the concepts of equality of opportunity and empowerment of all people to participate in, and benefit from, the development process. The following respondent, an officer with the MBEC, offered an explanation that hinges on socio-economic class.

One cause of inequity or inequality is that it comes from poverty. We know very well that we have something that is now coming up nowadays in Namibia the emerging middle class. People who have actually pre access to the best schools in the country. You see, we have those employed in government, employed in the private sector the white-collar workers and so forth. It is easier for them to take their children to best schools, whereas the rest of the population might not have that free access to take their children to the best schools in the country. So that can also create inequality in the system in any society. This is also something that is coming or developing in Namibia. {Respondent # 5}

This entails that rural and urban people should have, among other things, equal access to basic social services, equal opportunities for decision-making, and equal reward for work. Discrimination based on class, region, or ethnic affiliation should be eliminated.

The next sub-theme addresses educational policy issues as they pertain to larger patterns of socio-economic status and educational opportunities in Namibia.

Theme: How educational policy has reinforced socio-economic status barriers to education.

The social, educational, ethnic and regional inequalities of the system, which formally existed in Namibia until March 21, 1990, may well be evident for many years to come. The intention of this section is to delineate the key players in education policy making in order to provide an understanding of the possibilities and constraints of current education policy, and thereby to locate developments in Namibia within the wider international community of education decision-making. The fundamental question to be answered is whether education policy in Namibia is congruent with current developments in other developing countries and, indeed, with countries in the rest of the world. Foster and other researchers in comparative education have called attention to the stability and persistence of patterns of educational inequality in former colonial territories. Foster (1971, p. 20) concluded that “the origins of these patterns could be traced back to the period of the earliest establishment of the schools.” His observations are largely true to Namibia, where the roots of educational inequality, of inequalities in access, equity, quality, or productivity, lie deeply buried in the colonial past, and where the maintenance and persistence of these characteristics constitute a major theme in the country’s educational history.

Prior to 1990, the concern was to analyze and contrast the emergent policy discourses of the apartheid state and the democratic alliance centered around the nationalist party SWANU and the liberation movement SWAPO. Since the inception of the new government under SWAPO, focus has shifted to a critical evaluation of the emergent education policies and practices of the new state, as it attempts to reconstruct the legacy of apartheid to meet the demands of the present. Many authors identify a central tension between the objectives of growth and equity within social and educational policy in Namibia in the contexts of major shifts in the global economic and educational order. Kallaway et al. (1997, p. 86) outlines two streams of contesting political and policy visions from the past to the present:

There is on the one hand a commitment to a 'social democratic' project of transformation, the legacy of the democratic movement, which highlights issues of equality, social justice and redress. On the other hand there is the politics of the "free market," the legacy of the reforming apartheid state, with the added weight of global economic pressures and institutions such as the World Bank and IMF.

These two ideological streams converge in the policies of the new government in Namibia. Two main thrusts of current government policy are the integration of education and training, and access for all to schooling of equal quality. The following respondent, an officer with the MBEC, had to elaborate a little on the colonial confinement of people to specific areas. He also talked about the sometimes-difficult yet attractive drift to towns and the lack of or less effort to produce regional or ethnic based statistics:

People who, if we go back to our history and look at people who have never had to be moved from their traditional homes, more of the northern regions of Namibia, that will be Kaoko, Ovambo, Rundu and Caprivi. In those regions you will have people who would be more, those regions will be more like you know ethnic based and therefore if one is to talk maybe of those regions, there will be differences. If one is to talk of the other southern regions or the other central, central and southern regions they

differ. That are more, these people who find themselves in native reservations as they were created then by the colonial regimes and I think they remained with the exception of having changed titles, you know calling them now communal lands. But that's where you have the differences and therefore the statistics in these other regions obviously would I mean if one is to take Windhoek, or the Khomas region as it were now, you will have a whole mix bag of people converging on Windhoek being the capital. But if you look at and again the same being in the south, if you talk of the Karas region or Hardap region the same would apply. Although you may have some element of concentration of the people from the original peoples from those regions. But those people are more concentrated on the native reserves. They are not necessarily out of these native reserves. The statistics that you may find in the regions specifically for the regions may not be a true reflection of the situation. Therefore I don't think that, there is also an effort to produce regional based or ethnic based statistics. I think there hasn't been any, to say it in a nutshell.
{ Respondent # 3 }

Part of the dilemma and perhaps one of the core reasons for the inequities is the divisive infrastructure that is the inherited colonial legacy. People seem to have been made to accept that they exclusively belong to specific areas that continue to be served minimally from their original emphasis of divide and rule. Therefore, inequalities in access to schools, in the distribution of resources among schools, and in the quality of the experiences provided inevitably lead to different outcomes for groups of students according to where they are placed in an unequal system, and to disparities in productivity.

The Ministry of Education and Culture (1993, p. 32) assigned the highest priority over the next decade to four major goals and to those activities essential to reaching them: *access, equity, quality, and democracy*. These are important goals many individuals, communities, and even nations aspire to. Nonetheless, the nuts and bolts of implementing these expected alleviators of disparities require accountability and constant checks and balances. Hallak (1991) maintains that "for many parents the notion of

quality encompasses more than simply a better school environment, more qualified teachers, and an adequate supply of textbooks. Quality also means relevance to local needs and adaptability to local cultural and economic conditions.” Quality together with the other three broad goals of the government should desirably be accompanied, for example, systematic investment in education and commitment to implementation and evaluation of educational programs as well as by policies and practices to ultimately be meaningful to the nation.

This leads to the final section of the theme, which, although it touches on various issues regarding the persistence of inequalities, mainly focuses on educational policy and practices within the system that have reinforced the existing socio-economic stratification system. This section addresses the general question concerning the national, global, and international nature of changes in education policy in Namibia in light of interview accounts of the background to recent educational developments. Secondly, I examine the key players in education policymaking, and from that outline the possibilities and constraints for education policy as seen by these and other players.

The unequal patterns of apartheid schooling are well documented, and need not be fully elaborated here. Suffice it to say that under apartheid the majority of learners were in the least adequately funded schools, with the lowest teacher qualifications, poorest facilities, and the highest-class sizes. Indeed, “transforming the legacy of the past” is one of the major concerns of the new government. This respondent, an officer with the MBEC, gave a brief background of the hitherto divisive policies and the current configuration:

What we did at independence was that we came up with a policy of education for all. We immediately started restructuring the education

system. As you know in the past you found eleven ethnic educational authorities and administrations. Each one of them did run their own education system. Each one of them came up with their own curriculum, their own management style and their own teaching procedures and methods. So the new government with its inception in 1990 started to call all these guys together and started with one education system. We have one education system right now which is coordinated and monitored from the head office in Windhoek, and then you will also find the educational regions, in the seven education regions we have seven education regional officers. Each one headed by a director. {Respondent # 3 }

In March 1990 Namibia's eleven education administrations became a unitary authority, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Windhoek. In all, seven educational regions were established as departments of education. The social, racial, and regional inequalities of the system, which formally existed until March 1990, may, however, be well evident for many years to come. The following respondent, an officer with the MBEC, was quite confident to confirm that inequalities persist and that it may take a long time to eradicate them despite the clear policy for equitable practices:

Inequalities are still there, and are likely to take long to get rid of it, though the policy say equal, but the reality on the ground is quite different because of the many factors that characterizes the whole education system. {Respondent # 6 }

It is one of the primary functions of the state to evolve policies that guide educational institutions in their day-to-day operations and enable social systems to operate in accordance with the expectations of society so that national goals are met. It is fair, I hope, to view these institutions, systems and goals as expressions of the type of state in existence at any particular time. A commitment to social equality and redress compels stakeholders to think creatively about ways to challenge hegemonic policy trends. Within a restrictive financial environment it is crucial to conceptualize universalizing access in a manner that will contribute to a better education system. The

following respondent, a regional education director, believes that unless the inaccessibility, inequities, and other imbalances of the past are addressed through responsible allocation of the budget, the system faces repetition of past policies and practices:

You have to address this problem from the point of the allocating the budget as a policy, because the budget have to be allocated in such a way that you look at how many teachers, how many learners are in a particular region. Then you say so this amount per capita you see. It's only the way you could address the inequality, the imbalances which, have been created in the past. Without addressing from the real point of the budget, you forget, because other wise, you will just repeat what has been done that the schools in the other parts of the country, they benefit because their classrooms are carpeted, they are well ventilated and they have everything. While the class in the south are well equipped the classrooms in the north are far, you cannot compare with them. But once you address the imbalances from the viewpoint of the budget, then you will try. But what we are seeing now in terms of the equity of the facilities, classrooms and such, there is quite a vast difference between the schools say in the south, in the north, quite a difference, quite huge differences. Ours, the condition is not so quite conducive in the learning and the teaching involvement, comparing the schools in the south. {Respondent # 12}

The rapidity of social change may not have taken into account availability of resources. The situation of uncertainty regarding political and economic policy, for example, has had a direct impact on the formulation of education policy at the present time. A respondent claimed that “policy formulation is also affected by political change, time factors, and operational decision making. As a nation emerging out of colonialism, the new Namibian state moved swiftly to address issues of social, economic and political inequalities which had characterized the colonial era.” By prescribing educational policies, which were mass oriented, policies were geared towards making education a basic human right, which it had not been prior to independence.

Most respondents gave the impression through their responses that the major problem with policy formulation strategy in Namibia is a lack of participation in the debate on policy proposals and the implementation of policy by members of the public. One respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, was particularly outspoken; he argued that

The general practice since independence is that policy is handed down from above for implementation. Some policy decisions made by politicians lack practicality and are made on the grounds of political expediency. The policy of free education, for example, was politically and morally justifiable and expedient in the light of the problems the majority of Blacks had experienced in education during colonial era. {Respondent # 10}

However, the practicality of implementing the policy was unreal because the state did not have adequate resources with which to fund it.

The next respondent, a regional education director, recognized the lack of resources and that the government is wrestling with various issues at the moment. He suggested that the prevalent social, economic, and political problems deserve to be solved:

The lack of resources is inhibiting implementation of policies. At this point in time, you must also be cognizant of the fact at the same time government is grappling with a number of other issues. Although education has been stated as a priority within the priorities of the government, there are also other social, economic and political problems that are prevalent in our society that equally deserves to be addressed at this point in time. But it is also true that we will like to ensure that there will be more equitable and fair distribution of the available resources. That is why I have been mentioning availability of resources at this point in time. {Respondent # 13}

The cost recovery measures introduced as part of the social and economic reform program is a clear recognition by government of the impracticality of providing free education for all. The impracticalities are linked to the highly speculative nature of the policies as affected by various factors. Hanekom (1987, p. 12) suggested the following factors that affect public policy:

Political support and political ideology; societal factors associated with implementation of policies; personal matters related to availability, training and organization; resource provision relating to funding, materials and equipment; constitutional dispensations relating to legitimatization; state of the economy as affected by national and international factors and technological perspectives.

Hanekom suggested further factors, such as:

Amount of money already spent on projects; decisions made on assumption and not known facts; assumptions that the future will be as projected for expediency. Natural disasters like the Namibia drought; international relations like the dictates of IMF and the World Bank; the national level of capability and development; and a general lack of policy pre-implementation education.

Government has had to be content with societal and establishment entrenched attitudes carefully orchestrated to derail ideological and policy directions. Economic Structural Adjustment policies (ESAP) are an example of the orchestrated international establishment arm-twisting that has resulted in the derailment of various public policies in Sub-Saharan African countries. This respondent, an officer with the MBEC, was critical of the government for withholding information on the effect of cost recovery in education:

Also, the government has tended to use de-emphasis or withholding of certain important information and facts in order to avoid public criticism of its policies. A clear example is the playing down by the state of the social dimension of the cost recovery measures introduced in education. Some of the facts include the reduction in school enrolment rate, growing attrition rates, lower rates of educational resources utilization and diminishing female enrolment. The lack of integrated information diminishes the public's ability to judge for itself whether a problem exists or not and whether it exists in the magnitude in which it is presented.
{ Respondent # 5 }

The public knows less, for example, about why and how much the government spends on the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where it has been sending and maintaining troops in support of the DRC government, at tax payers' expense. To

reiterate, high costs, which cannot be recovered, are incurred in implementing policies, which are dense with impracticalities that result from conflicting consequences between anticipated and unanticipated results, and other problems and future expectations because of political expediency. There are policies that at best are speculative. It can then be argued that the government's withholding of facts about policies has a boomerang effect in that government and policy makers in the end believe their misrepresentations.

The following respondent, a regional education director, suggested that inequalities can be alleviated by readjusting the budget and having well-formulated policies. He believes that whatever is to be done gets done through managing the money and not by talking:

What will alleviate the issue of inequality and so on is the budget. The readjustment of the budget will do it because by that you look at, how many regions are having more teachers, having more learners, better equipment and it is where you have the capital is where you have to allocate more resources. Where you have to allocate more money. You see, it's when you only could address the problem. With only well formulated policy, and then you debate/rebate the money to that region, is when you could address it, because whatever you want to do you only have to do it through the means of the money, not only by talking.
{Respondent # 12}

The quality of education in most rural schools is fast declining as a result of the dramatic limited funds available for operating these schools. Despite the high budget allocation to education, the resources for various activities, especially in rural and formerly deprived schools, are not sufficient. There are growing concerns from all social circles over the new direction in educational policy, since it now appears to have lost social conscience for the poor and the formerly deprived.

The next respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, attributed it all to apartheid policies and their long-term strategy to perpetuate the system. He remembered

when they were silenced and or suppressed by trying to democratize the structures prior to independence. He pointed out that the former beneficiaries now use the same structures to their benefit that were used against them during colonialism. His main complaint is why current policy makers seem not to see it, and that the same proponents of apartheid are the ones selected to school boards and executing major policy decisions for education. This officer expressed helplessness and frustration because despite their meaningful positions, they are kept out:

You have to look at the thousands of little matters that were systematically developed to perpetuate the system. What apartheid does now, you see and this is where we sometimes miss things. Now suddenly, and I remember we were shot with tear gas in the streets as young students, when we talked about democratizing the school structures. By having representative workers of parents in the school committee, of student organizations, of teachers, these three components together. Now what I think what many of the ideologues of apartheid have done very clearly, is that they have taken the same structure that we have used in the resistance struggle and they have started to turn it to their own benefit, very nicely done. I don't know why our policy makers don't see this. Now suddenly you find that even most important policy decisions are made by school committees. You suddenly find that some of the most ardent practitioners of apartheid and racial discrimination, who still do it today, are now suddenly the top members of these school committees and school boards. In other words, they sit there and block on a continuous basis how to keep us out. How to keep the poor out of their schools, how to make sure that the resources are shifted around, how to ensure that people are in the right positions, employed within the ministry to ensure that the resources still move like that. If something beneficial comes up it immediately disappear from the public eye. {Respondent # 14}

Over the past eleven years, there has been a developing academic debate around education policy in Namibia. The following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, believes skepticism reflects the reality of the situation in Namibia. Like the previous respondent, he believes that policy implementers may be indifferent about the policies:

Yes, you should really know that policy and implementation, that is, policy formulation and implementation and policy in itself as a policy are rhetorical. It is different from practical implementation of it. Government comes up with policy, preach it all over the country, but when it comes to the practical implementation of those policies, people that are implementing those policies you should know are people like us and the others who think very, very differently. {Respondent # 20}

Evidence from respondents shows that there is a definite need for dialogue between government and the people on the reform policies currently in place and those planned for education in the future. There are apparent distinctions between intended and unintended consequences of policy, whereby intended plans are not fully implemented and the unintended dilemmas seem to overwhelm the outcomes of circumstances.

The next theme deals with the controversial and widely debated issue of language, the languages used in the multilingual and multiethnic Namibian society, and how language policy impacts family mobility and student integration into schooling. Language is also very fundamental in the identification of specific regional and ethnic orientations and maintenance of identity. Namibia has ever been and remains a multilingual nation, if not in policy, at least in practice.

Theme: Language policy is a problem that contributes to unequal educational opportunity and exacerbates ethnic divisions.

Among the various education policies planned, formulated, tried, and implemented, the most contested is the language policy in Namibia. A contradictory language policy greatly and differentially impacts mobility of families' and learners' integration in schools, which in turn complicates the role of ethnicity in Namibian society.

This theme addresses the various agreements, tensions, and controversy that surround the establishment and implementation of the language policy of post-colonial Namibia. Following an account of the language situation in Namibia (and in Africa) in colonial times and after independence, I shall look at the socio-cultural, educational, and political issues involved. I tend to agree with Brock-Utne (2000, p. 141), who argues that "there is hardly another socio-cultural topic you can discuss with Africans that leads to such heated debates and stirs up so many emotions as the language of instruction in African schools."

The following illustrates the difficulties caused by the contradictory language policy. Article 3 (1) of *The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia* (1990) as set out by the Namibian government states "that the official language shall be English" (1990, p. 3), and it also permits the use of a language other than English for legislative, administrative, and judicial purposes in regions or areas where such other language or languages are spoken by a substantial component of the population" (The Constitution, 1990, p. 3). The use of English, spoken as a first language by approximately seven per cent of the White sector in Namibia, has never been predominant in the country's history, whereas now, after independence, it has obtained the symbolic function as the "language of liberation."

It has apparently also become a marker of a new anti-colonial identity. Thus, English functions as an instrument of liberation and a symbol of ideological neutrality and nation building.

SWAPO's choice of English as the official language was based on the UNIN document *Toward a Language Policy for Namibia* (1981), which suggested eight criteria that an official language should take into account. Briefly these criteria are unity, acceptability, familiarity, feasibility, science and technology, Pan Africanism, wider communication, and United Nations. The first major criticism of the criteria is the imbalance between giving separate treatment to three European languages (English, Afrikaans, German) and clustering together the African languages in one category, i.e., "indigenous languages" (Phillipson 1992, p. 291). Second, most of the criteria are functional in nature, serving at best the communicative and social needs of the educated elite. Third, all the criteria can be counteracted by focussing on other arguments such as ease of learning, Namibian cultural authenticity, empowering the underprivileged, and self-reliance (Phillipson 1992, p. 293). As mentioned earlier, another European language spoken by relatively more people than English, Portuguese, is overlooked and neglected.

Another controversial policy directive was teaching the home language, a local language, from grades one to three. Not all languages have readily available material for teaching. English is the medium of instruction from grades four to twelve and, moreover, it is a compulsory subject, starting from grade one, and continuing throughout the school system (Grades 1 – 12). Furthermore, all learners should study two languages as subjects from grade one onwards, one of which must be English. To be sure, educational language planning in Namibia and Africa in general must aim at bi- or multilingualism.

In the words of Phillipson, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Africa (1986), one should regard it as “axiomatic that over-use of the former colonial language and under-use of mother tongues as media of education reproduce inequality, favor the creation or perpetuation of élites, promote dependency on the “culture of wider communication” and prevent the attainment of high levels of bi- or multilingualism.” There are other factors to be considered, like unavailable or limited language teachers, and thus problems of implementation. Larson (1980, p. 3) reminds us that it is thoroughly unrealistic to set goals without considering one’s resources.

There has been a dispute as to the number of languages spoken in Namibia today, similar to debates elsewhere in Africa. Aside from the diversity of languages on the whole, the colonial presence created havoc when, at the Berlin conference of 1884, it carved up the African continent according to its own whims. Thus, languages like Oshinkhumbi and Otjiherero in Namibia were bifurcated when the Germans and Portuguese set up colonial borders between Namibia and Angola. The same applied to various African languages during colonialism that imposed and socialized Africans in different European languages. The South African apartheid administration in Namibia continued the same pattern and, in addition, imposed Afrikaans as the lingua franca and medium of instruction in schools. Roy-Campbell (1998) describes how missionaries’ “faulty transcriptions, some arising from inaccurate associations, occurred across the African continent, resulting in the creation of a multitude of dialects of the same language and different languages from what was one language.” The difficulty of putting a definite figure to the number of various African languages on the continent can be

attributed to this process, as contention has arisen over whether certain language forms are indeed languages or dialects.

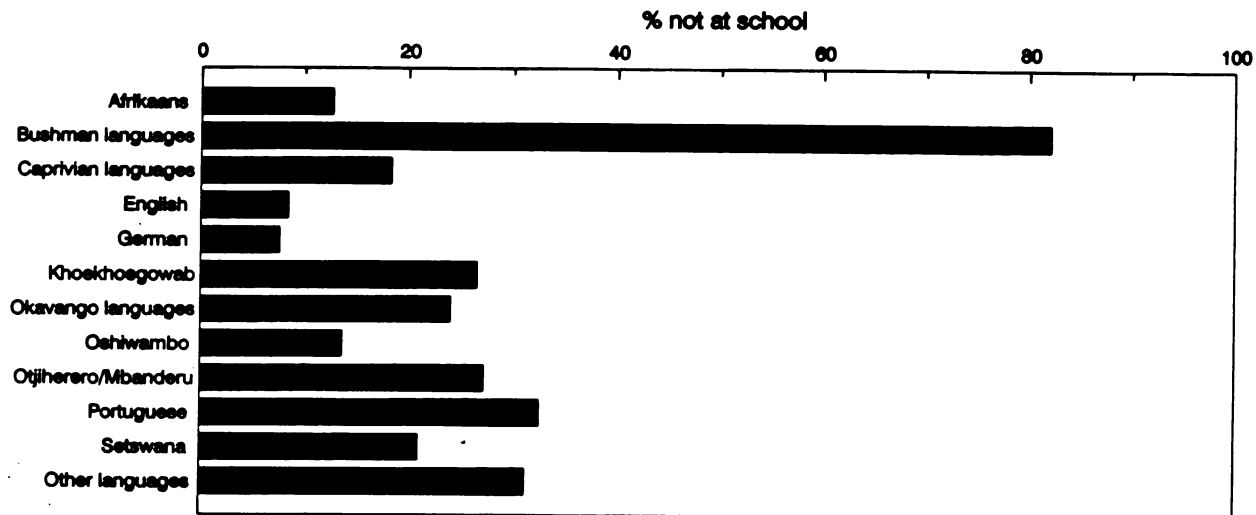
At independence in 1990, the Namibian government instituted thirteen languages as languages of instruction in the first three grades of schooling. Among these are three European languages (German, Afrikaans, and English), and ten African languages: Khoekhoegowab which is a home language for Nama-Damara, Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, Otjiherero, Ruciriku, Rukwangali, Setwana, Silozi, Thimbukushu, and Ju/'hoan. English became the official language and the language used in commerce and government institutions (Davids, 1997). These are all very controversial issues because the African languages are not limited to the chosen ten. Unlike German and Afrikaans, English is not connected to the colonial history of Namibia, and, according to the 1991 census, is spoken only by 0.8% as a mother tongue. It is evident that issues of status and power must be taken into account in reconceptualizing language diversity. Diaz (2001, p. 154) insists that

This means developing an awareness that privilege, ethnocentrism, and racism are at the core of policies and practices that limits the use of languages other than officially recognized high-status languages allowed in schools and in the society in general. When particular languages are prohibited or denigrated, the voices of those who speak them are silenced and rejected as well.

Another controversy is that one European language, Portuguese, which before independence was probably spoken by more people than English, was completely left out. See table showing six to eighteen year-olds of different language groups not at school.

Table 5

Six to Eighteen Year-Olds of Different Language Groups Not at School, 1991



These data were reported in the 1991 Population and Housing Census. Kavango languages include Ruciriku, Rusambyu, Rukwangali, and Thimbukushu. Oshiwambo includes Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, and other Oshiwambo languages. Caprivian languages include Silozi and other Caprivian languages.

(Source: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996.)

SWAPO selected English as the sole official language in independent Namibia while the African languages, as well as German and Afrikaans, were considered national languages and the media of education at the lower primary level. Thus, as is the case with many other sub-Saharan multilingual nations, the western model of language planning aimed at the replacement of many languages by one and projected a mono-model as the only way through which planned societies can operate (Pattanayak, 1986, quoted in Phillipson 1992). From a similar perspective, Harlec-Jones (1992, p. 7)

maintains that such practices are antithetical to democratic participation and equality of access to knowledge, resources, and power.

There seem to be valid reasons for the choice of English as the official language for independent Namibia. Nevertheless, it has detrimental effects on the development of other languages and the costs involved in re-training not only the teachers but also the entire society to be familiar with and use English comfortably. Critics, for example, argue that the SWAPO decision in favor of the official use of English in the secondary domains (government, administration, education, the media, health, agriculture, etc.) will not create national unity but will rather lead to social and political conflicts, i.e., a risk of bifurcation, with English for the educated and the local languages for the masses (e.g. Phillipson, 1992, p. 296). In fact, in recent times many scholars have started to look very critically at language policies molded on the outdated nineteenth century “one nation one language” approach (e. g. Dirven & Webb, 1993; Heine, 1992; Fardon & Furniss, 1994; Mansour, 1993; Mateene, 1985.).

Most post-colonial societies chose the former colonizers’ language, which is seemingly familiar, for the continuity of communication, instruction, and usage. However, most Namibians, or Africans for that matter, use their mother tongue or a community language for their daily activities, while only about three per cent of an African community go outside their state to represent their country or take part in international conferences (Heine, 1992, p. 22). The advocates of the “international communication” argument maintain that the world is shrinking because of worldwide communication and common access to a lingua franca such as English. Ansre (1979) calls this the “shrinking world” and rightly asks the question of “how many Africans are

really involved in international communication.” The author arrives at the following criticism with respect to educational issues (Ansre, 1979, p. 14):

We submit that while it is true that the international languages are being spoken by more and more people, the primary aim of first cycle education in any country is not to teach the children to become international personages. The purpose should be to equip the pupil with the means of contributing firstly to the national life of his or her country. Thus the educational objectives of a country should first aim at intra-national integration and not at inter-national relations. The child must first be taught to discover himself as a worthy member of a worthy society with a respectable language, which can be used with a sense of pride. Thereafter he may be taught about people and languages beyond the confines of his society.

If 75% of the people in the country use their own languages or dialects in everyday communication and use, indeed the choice of English would be for the élites and foreigners and not beneficial to the majority.

There are interesting contrasts, agreements, disputes, and comments from my respondents about the language policy for independent Namibia. The first contradiction is expressed by this respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, who reckoned that the language policy is based on a political decision, and that since English was not important yet in Namibia, it is an international language and so it may serve to unite Namibians:

You will find that in our language policy, we have stated that English will be the official language. This is, it was a political decision but all in all, everybody in Namibia is agreed that English has not been fully an important language here and being an international language, for us it is fitting nicely for us to unite us, and now we cannot say there were many English people who can claim that we have been kind of benefiting, from this decision. For everybody, the main groups in Namibia the word English was just a language, but many people were here really. Therefore we say, English is the official language. All other Namibian languages are equal, we mean, and we continue to say irrespective of the number of speakers. {Respondent # 10}

The minority Namibian English speakers obviously benefitted from the decision and it is debatable whether all languages are really equal, as the respondent and the policy claim. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that a language spoken by less than 1% of the Namibian population would create unity in the nation. The same respondent acknowledged the institution of English as the official language but recognized that there are difficulties because the nation is not quite familiar with the English language. For him, there is good reason for the government's language policy of instruction in a mother language from grades one to three:

The language also is one of the things that the government has done, to say English is the official language, although it was phased in. It could not be done just, you know at once, because some schools, some teachers were trained in Afrikaans, some were trained in English, so if you say English, those teachers who were trained in Afrikaans had to move gradually into this. The students also were taught in Afrikaans, they had to go gradually into this. Mind you, Afrikaans, we recognize Afrikaans as one of our indigenous languages. So there is no way we can say do away with Afrikaans or what. That is why the policy was put in place, language policy which said from grade one to grade three, there should be a mother tongue, really whether it is Afrikaans or Lozi or Oshikwanyama or Damaranama and so on, and from then on, the kids will pick up with English to go to higher levels of teaching and learning. {Respondent # 10}

The Ministry of Education and Culture (1993b, p. 65) states that "all national languages are equal regardless of the numbers of speakers or the level of development of a particular language. All language policies must be sensitive to this principle." The ministry also clearly stipulates that "for pedagogical reasons it is ideal for children to study through their own language during the early years of schooling when basic skills of reading, writing and concept formation are developed." These are ideally important and good policies. However, the next respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, felt

that the deep-rooted divisions and inequalities affect these policies and many aspects of development decisions:

The inequalities are deep, from qualified teachers to housing that also affect access and quality. The other problem from the government side is that like in the regions from grade one up to four or one up to three I am not quite sure, as government policy, learners are supposed to study in their mother or home languages. Something I do not agree with. But the problem is now that's why we are saying that we are still in the old Bantu stans. If a child is in the north and she's in grade one or maybe in grade two and the parents happen to move to Windhoek. Which school will that child go to because some of the schools in Windhoek do not apply (teach) Oshiwambo which means that kid is going to be lost. Which means this is a separation also. Because we have talked earlier about people to live wherever they want to. So if a parent move from Katima to live in Keetmanshoop the child will automatically be disadvantaged. They cannot go to the school because they won't speak the local language. So the policy is detrimental to learners. {Respondent #2}

The contradiction of language policy emphasizing mother language from grades one to three with people's reluctance to have their children to learn languages other than theirs is crucial. This problem becomes clear when a person is, for example, transferred to a specific region where they speak a different language other than theirs. According to this respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, some parents refuse to take up positions in different regions because of their children's language needs:

I have a situation whereby these parents have bluntly refused to accept such a transfer because if they are really to take the educational needs of their children at heart. Personally to me, that will be a very hard decision for me. I will not first and foremost be willing to I don't see any need for my child to be taught the language I am not using, we are not using it, we are not using. It is not our lingua franca. There is no practical use after learning it. Yeah, those are a consideration, and for the child to start learning a language, he or she does not have any future are not being helped to practice should be a very difficult task. That will also hamper the education of a child, because it is a total foreign language, very much foreign. I don't know how the government came up with this policy, but what I can guess is that they thought maybe more about majority benefit than some individual cases. For that matter some of the people who are transferring leave their families behind. {Respondent # 15}

The same respondent told a short story of his friend related to the contradiction of the language policy and the hard-to-implement practices:

I have got a friend I met at the university. He is now working as a professional training instructor, but his family (as you said) is still in Rehoboth. But himself, he is working in the north. I asked him how long he can sustain this relationship, whereby he is separated from his family. Because of that he has realized that he made a big mistake taking the job. He didn't really anticipate himself and his family would be separated. But he left them behind because he wanted his children to continue learning in his language and grow up in their locality. It would be a trauma for me. But this is one of the things as we have said early, hampering educational development. That guy should come back to Rehoboth again, because he cannot live with his family in the north he told me felt like he was living in a foreign country. {Respondent #15}

This respondent basically pointed out the contradiction between the government policy of mother language for the first lower grades while people are reluctant to get their children to learn what they consider languages “foreign “ to them which they may not need in the future. Another respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, felt that whenever a person moves to another area, the school should change and start with English from the beginning. He reasoned that this will uphold the government policy of education for all. I find this to be yet another crucial contradiction because in most cases of change to English for schools, teachers, and regions that use a specific language, the transition can be not only costly but perhaps unrealistic as well. This is, nevertheless, his view about the language of instruction in changed circumstances:

What they must immediately do is that they must change the mother tongue and then introduce the school into English. As soon as there is a visitor in that school they must change and not proceed with their mother tongue. They must also cater for that new guy, because the guy will sit there and listen to those people speaking into their mother tongue and how is he going to know? So the best way of solving this problem is to introduce English for this particular school. That is what we are doing here in this area we introduce English in your junior primary grades so

you cater for everybody. I would say that whenever someone or a family comes in a surrounding the school has to change the medium of learning to English because it will, you said you know the policy is education for all, so how can you have education for only those other groups and the guy must be sitting here, is he also going to get an education? So you are not giving justice to the policy of education for all. But you are not even attending to the needs of the constitution, the constitution says everybody must get an education up to sixteen years or grade ten whichever comes first. {Respondent # 4}

The respondent further emphasized the contradiction of the language policy. He was very supportive of schools to change to English in the case of a mixture of ethnic identities:

So those people can easily take you to court, saying my child is a Nama speaking guy s/he can only speak Nama and Afrikaans and this is actually the case. Going into the north those guys mostly those guys can only speak their mother tongue, some of them cannot even speak Afrikaans, so what will you do now? You are not giving attention of, you are sitting there with the child, s/he is totally isolated, excluded from the system. How will you educate that guy? The parents can take you to court and they will win the case. Because our government policy say education for all. So the school must change their method of teaching and introduce another language and the only best neutral language is English. {Respondent # 4}

This respondent may have considered, as he claimed, “education for all,” but the reality is that some regions are mono-ethnic and they do not have sufficient material, personnel, and drive to use English. This may, therefore, be detrimental to the majority inhabitants of the region because new learners may move there with their parents. This scenario may be a better option for urban areas, where different ethnic groups are found in the same vicinity. During the apartheid era, however, even within urban areas ethnic groups were divided into specific residential areas and different schools and locations, which to a great extent continues to be the case in postcolonial Namibia. The urban situation, therefore, has its unique set of complexities.

The following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, explained how particular regions are monolingual and also the fact that even in urban areas most people still live according to the previous apartheid divisions:

It's not all the schools but mostly in the central areas, where you find an influx of people in the central areas. As you go to the South for example or in the north, you find that the majority of their learners are either Nama, or Oshiwambo speaking respectively, so it is easy for them to introduce mother tongue. But if you are sitting with that problem like here in this area, what will you do? Will you teach them in English? According to some sources it's that because English is the official language, they just start with English in that particular circumstance. But even here in the central part sections in Katutura are divided according to various ethnic groups, so parents will naturally sent their children where their language is taught. {Respondent # 4)

According to SWAPO, which was more interested and instrumental in the replacement of Afrikaans with English and which is the de facto ruling party of the Namibian government,

....mother language will be used as a medium of instruction at the lower primary school level. The concern here is not with so-called group identity or ethnic consciousness and exclusivity, as has been the case with the apartheid colonial regime, but with the fulfillment of cognitive and communicative functions. Since it is through the mother languages that infants first acquire social habits, manners, feelings, tastes, skills, and other cultural norms, it is important that their formal schooling starts with those languages of everyday life at home (SWAPO, 1989, p. 6).

While the intentions that led to the current language policy in Namibia are important and seemingly in the interest of all, the practical realities and outcomes are rather different. This is partly due to the legacy of apartheid; the educational system based on Bantu education provisions kept the ethnic languages on a low educational level (Ohly 1987a, p. 24) and deliberately promoted ethnolinguistic fragmentation as an important means of enforcing the laws of apartheid. This was partly due to the emerging

elite who pushed their agenda, thus enhancing social stratification along ethnic, regional, and class lines. The following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, touched on some of these delicate issues:

Yes! On paper the policy is clear, it's clear that no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin and even as far as education is concerned. But sometimes you have to face the reality, from history, where we have areas where these various ethnic groups or racial groups reside by themselves. Say if you take an areas like Windhoek, take an area in the town, in the city, there you have now, or is regarded as a multicultural society, with different social class categories. There you have now the way to open up the schools to each and every person and they do, but sometimes it is going to be limited by the medium say particularly in the lower primary. It will also be limited by affordability. Secondary school is open, you can go where you want to. The limitation of language you have is basically for the primary, there is no question about it. Even if it is a small number of people say living in Otjombinde and then the dominant group there is Otjiherero speaking that means that the language which is being taught in schools is Otjiherero which means some kids can attend but they are going to be taught in Otjiherero. That is now all over, it applies to other regions. {Respondent #18}

The dilemma of the well-intended educational policies versus the practical realities plays out differently. An outsider from other regions, or even in towns from a different school which teaches a specific ethnic language, will find it hard to integrate. When it comes to the choice of language of instruction in Namibian schools, socio-cultural politics, sociolinguistics, and economic factors are so closely interrelated that it is difficult to sort out the correct argument or pattern for language use in independent Namibia. It is also important to remember that no single person or group, no matter how prescient or powerful, can control and regulate all interactions and effects which characterize the endless inter-relating of human society (Arendt, 1953, p. 190). She rightly points out that "since action acts upon beings who are capable of their own

actions, reaction, apart from being a response, is always a new action that strikes out on its own and affects others.”

Indeed the legacy of apartheid with its divisive tendencies contributes to the dilemma, but the cultural and linguistic aspect plays a major role as well from the community or parental point of view. Putz (1995, p. 195) declares that “the education system seems to be overcharged, partly as a result of expansion and expectations.” Most parents are comfortable with their own languages taught to their children during the first few years of schooling. Perhaps this is one of the explanations why most people prefer to continue living in the historically designated areas. The following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, maintained that languages are taught according to the majority or dominant ethnic groups within regions in Namibia:

Languages in schools in different regions are taught according to the majority ethnic groups that live there. Where you have reserves OK you can decide there is no discrimination. You can decide and go from Rundu to Aminuis and attend school there. But how can a small one say six or seven year old, far away from the parents, cope? It is impossible in that case. It means you continue on the basis of residential area those groups who are there predominantly primary as well as junior secondary school because school now go up to grade nine because of facilities. They continue to be dominated by one or two other cultural groups. If you take Aminuis now you have the Tswanas you have the Ovaherero there they can go to any school. There's no prevention like in the past but now if you expect an Oshiwambo speaking learner to go there if they do not live in Aminuis, it is very difficult. For a secondary school where the medium is English there is no option, the government as I said created the opportunity for grade eleven to be accommodated at or in towns whatever. It is opening up that one, and the hostel is also a problem, it is one of the limiting factors. Because if you do not have a place where you can live and many of the kids you have are day scholars they do not live in the hostel, and if you don't have parents in that area, or if your parents have no money, even to live on your own in a way, then it's problematic.
{Respondent #19}

He also explains that without sufficient funds for hostels or without relatives in an area, learners' chances of being in those schools are minimized. Many of these defects and shortcomings were inherited from the colonial system, which devoted its best efforts to sustaining that part of the educational enterprise set aside for Whites, and after independence, for elites, and neglected the benefits in the system assigned to other people. This led to education in Namibia, especially anything that hinges on language issues or policy, to be in a state of perpetual crisis. The following respondent, a regional education director, had this to say about the problematic integration because of language barriers:

When we talk now about the primary and kindergarten where they have to use mother tongue, it's impossible if I have to take a Nama speaking for example to go to Okavango region. The communication is going to be a problem, the language barrier. Therefore, they will use a teacher from that region, who can speak that language. And now, maybe those teachers they are not so nicely or highly qualified in that language. Those children then will get a very weak foundation, which will go to hamper them, even if they have to go later on to a better school. {Respondent # 9}

The contradiction of the mother language for the first three grades, while teachers may not have been well prepared to teach in all different languages, and the lack of material for all language groups, are a clear setback for the policy to take root and be implemented smoothly everywhere in the country.

Another fundamental yet important contradiction linked to language in Namibia is the ethnic issue. This is a very important issue for this dissertation because by understanding the dynamics of ethnicity, most of the dilemmas in social stratification and inequalities can be related to meaningful contexts. Vail (1991, p. 2), for example, explains that

With its power to divide people politically, and with its sturdy resistance to erosion by the ideological forces of national or class consciousness, ethnicity came to demand close – albeit often very grudging – attention after decades of neglect. Its source and appeal needed reasonable explanations, and interpretations of it have ranged widely, reflecting its multidimensional nature.

Even where ethnic categories are important and central they are, nonetheless, part of a wider complex of political, social, and economic relations. The movement and changing nature of people have been both voluntary and coerced and the degree to which language and culture have survived migration has varied. In all instances where there is some continuity of culture, there have nonetheless been transformations of old forms and the creation of new ones. In Namibia some groups were lumped together to suit the social, economic, and political activities of the colonizers. Fenton (1999, p. 21) argues that “ethnicity as a social phenomenon is embedded in social, political, and economic structures which form an important element of both the way ethnicity is expressed and the social importance it assumes.”

The government represented by some education officers is trying to do away with the ethnic orientation in Namibia. The claim is that ethnic categories were emphasized by the colonial government and the new government wants to do away with them as they may continue dividing the nation instead of the “one Namibia one nation” that the government wants to emphasize in the new nation building process.

As a proponent of the government position, this education officer with the MBEC provided the following perspective:

In reality we do not anymore take statistics on ethnic groupings. Yes, we do have an impression through the mind, the language that children speak, but even then, that does not really give the ethnic origin of the learner, since some of the learners speak languages at home that may not be of their ethnic region. The government decided not to handle the ethnic issue in Namibia in

terms of education. It is a problem because the reason is we all know that we try to get away from the divisive program that we had in the former government, and not to overemphasize the ethnic origin of people, although we have said, we talk of unity in diversity. We would want to have a united Namibia that is why we play down the ethnic origin of people, although we don't deny that they exist in the country. {Respondent # 5}

The same education officer in a somewhat contradictory way tried to explain that the formerly suppressed people who are now in government try to enhance their dignity. He claimed that the government is striving for the equality of all ethnic groups:

In Namibia we had the fortunate or unfortunate situation at the moment that the very people now who would emphasize the ethnic origin are the people who were subjected to the superiority and inferiority situation because of ethnic origin. And for that matter, the many people who are in government are people who belonged to those ethnic groupings, which were played down as low class citizens. Therefore, having experienced this dehumanization kind of a situation, they have, in a way, they are trying to bring themselves in a level that is to have the same dignities as others. Because the system that was in existence emphasized supremacy of one race or ethnic group as opposed to all the others. And therefore, what we are really doing now is mainly emphasizing the equality of people, and all the ethnic groupings. {Respondent #5}

The problem with the approach that this education officer proposed is that playing ethnicity down does not necessarily alleviate the ethnic existence or continuity. The consequences of playing down ethnic origin are far more destructive than its recognition and management. Examples from both developing and developed countries show that different countries have tried to play down ethnicity; Kosovo, Rwanda-Burundi, and the melting pot concept in the US are exemplary cases in point, but in none of these cases have ethnic orientations been eliminated. Regardless of the number of years that ethnicity may be dormant, eventually ethnicity resurfaces with, in most cases, devastating consequences.

Some education officers, however, explained how the country cannot do away with differences in ethnic orientation since they are based on the culture, language, and identity of the various people in the country. The following education officer with the MBEC warned that ethnicity is a reality that the country cannot afford to ignore but needs to deal with to avoid serious repercussions:

Well, one thing I can say is that there is no Namibia today without the various ethnic groups. That's it, that's the bottom line. That's the only thing I can say. So you will always have these ethnic groups. In fact we have to have these ethnic groups to have a Namibia. Otherwise you have to have your non-ethnicized Namibia somewhere else. And in Namibia it's what it is. It's an ethnic oriented, it's an ethnic nation-state. That is a reality and that's where we should start. If we want to make a difference, we should start there. We have to start by accepting that we are a nation that exists of various nationality groups. And it's these nationality groups that we have to weave together to come up with the so-called one Namibia. The 'one Namibia one nation aspect of it.' If we ignore that these ethnic groups exist, we are closing our eyes to reality, we are as good as an Ostrich burying its head in the Namib dessert sand. I think we will be making a very serious mistake, and that will backlash, we cannot get away with it. You will do it maybe ten years. In fact, I think the seeds of that they seem to result in serious consequences, serious repercussions. These are real things we cannot ignore them. { Respondent #1 }

Apart from the colonial-created ethnic identities in Namibia, the endurance and persistence of ethnicity is rooted in peoples' identity, language, and culture; as a result, it becomes difficult to think of eradicating ethnicity in any given circumstances. The following respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, expressed this view. He particularly highlighted the contradiction of the language policy which requires learners to start with their mother or home language in the first three grades, while there are fundamental problems such as teachers deficiency in all languages and the reluctance of people to move where their children would learn different languages. For him, these

issues are indirectly promoting ethnicity while the government's intention is to apparently do away with it:

That child is supposed to be an Omundonga, and if that child cannot learn your own language, it's the other way round you see. So, I admit that in that line, ethnicity is very prominent and it can, I don't know how it can be eliminated, whether we say we have eliminated it to me it will not at that level, we have not eliminated it. Because it is still a disadvantage. The child may not cross the board. He or she will have to be confined in those pockets. If you put our education in that way, or at that level, I feel our education to a certain extent is really supporting ethnicity and as a result, it is disadvantaging its own people to have this cross cultural type of a thing. But I think the best thing that has happened is that the government has tried to cushion this. Now, how do we go out of it, to say kids can cross from as early as grade one to any direction, because the policy is, the child must be able to go across the board. But at the same time, a language policy which says they must be able to learn from grade one to grade three in your own language, and in addition to that again, in our colleges of education, we have got four of them which cater for all other languages. But, the other thing which has come up in this the teachers who are teaching lower primary they are encouraged to teach in the mother tongue, and when they go and do practice teaching which we now call school base studies, they have to use the mother tongue. Now, if a teacher is from Ondangwa, and he happens to go to an Otjiherero speaking area, how would that person do that practice teaching? {Respondent # 10}

The disadvantage of learners from different ethnic groups not being able to move freely across the country's schools is explicit in this respondent's remarks. It is evident that there are more than enough inherited inequalities and restrictions on opportunities in Namibia, many of them difficult to address, without creating new ones by decisions within the control of the democratic state. Some ethnic identities are created by various circumstances, and they change with time as new definitions are realized. However, those ethnic orientations rooted in language, tradition, and culture are not easy to eliminate.

One of the apparent contradictions is that of ethnic denial in a multiethnic Namibia. Some officers talked of deliberate playing down or discouraging ethnic categories in an

attempt to forge a “one Namibia one nation,” that all people are considered as one. The government does not take statistics in schools based on ethnicity of learners anymore. However, the colonial-established former homelands are still home to predominantly specific ethnic groups. One education officer with the MBEC was more specific about the legacy of the past and also the ethnic categorization:

Apartheid was entrenched in Namibia and it saw to it actually that the Ovahimba were staying in their own area, the Mbukushu speaking people were specifically staying in their own area. The San people were designated to specific areas and the same with all other ethnic groups. So today one school or one community might primarily consist of one ethnic group.
{Respondent # 16}

The structural legacy of the previous administration, with the ethnically based separate regional structures, left a distorted pattern of resource allocation and lack of sufficient infrastructure. Namibia consists of diverse, and in some instances completely different, ethnic orientations that are bound to continue for a long time before the expected dream of equality of resources, if at all, can be realized. Fenton (1999, p. 89) cautions understanding of ethnicity in a broader context by stating that “to be comprehensively understood we need to examine ethnicity in its local, regional, societal, and global frames, and in the grounded experience of individuals, seen as actors in a series of face to face contexts.” In this way, cultural and historical understanding is always part of theory of origin, and a structural account establishes the probable limits of action within a given social system. These must be combined with motivational and meaningful accounts of how and why ethnic identities persist, acquire greater or lesser intensity, and lead to greater or lesser degree of conflict.

More generally, the macro social formations are the major economic and political structures of the social order. When these are ethnically shaped they constitute a more or

less enduring framework within which the meaning and import of ethnicity can evolve. Multi-ethnic societies like Namibia vary in the manner and degree to which wealth and power are associated with a privileged ethnic elite or with an ethnic majority. In the US, there is a long enduring association of African Americans with gross social disadvantage (Wilson 1987, O'Hare et al. 1991, Small 1994), among whom a great disproportion are the urban poor and socially excluded. In apartheid Namibia the whole concept of citizenship and practice of political participation was predicated on "race and ethnicity."

The structures of society are the institutions, intermediate between the individual and the state, which are sometimes independent and sometimes regulated by the state. Of central importance here are the educational institutions since it is through schools and universities that the cultural capital for advancement is acquired and through them that cultural identities are preserved. The most decisive cultural struggles are about the dominance of languages, which represent majorities, dominant cultures, or élites in state-regulated education systems (Ericksen, 1991; May, 1999). In Wales, in the past the schools have been the instrument of enforcing the dominance of English and are now the scene of state-sponsored efforts to revive Welsh (Williams, 1994). In colonial Namibia the state's wish to impose learning in Afrikaans on Black school children was the occasion for the Black student revolt and bloody repression by the apartheid state (Iijambo, 1991). In east Malaysia, a Malay-dominated state has imposed education in Malay on Kadazan peoples, and the Quebec provincial government has crucially used its control of state education to sustain the use of French and to delay or roll back the encroachments of English (Khan and Loh Kok Wah, 1992; Taylor, 1992). In these ways, schools and other educational institutions are cultural battlegrounds where dominant

cultures achieve their superiority and where suppressed ethnic groups or cultures, for example the San or Ovankhumbi, who are focused on in this study in Namibia, build their resistance.

Where a minority language comes to be seen as an educational and economic disadvantage, its decline may be a result of both suppression by the powerful or majority and collusion by a generation of minority language speakers. One of the dichotomies that seems puzzling is the willingness to provide for all ethnic or language groups; thus, the policy of schools open to every potential learner, yet the post independence infrastructure remains the same and therefore stifles ethnic and language integration. One respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, put it this way:

I think the policy of government is to help all the schools open to everyone as I mentioned earlier. If one goes to all our anywhere, I don't think you will easily find a school that is purely for that particular ethnic group. In urban areas they are all mixed. There are some cases for instance when one goes to the real remote area, where you can find maybe one ethnic group in that particular school, and that is not actually because of government policy that a school is having that particular ethnic group. But it is because of the nature of the location of the people. As you mentioned earlier, apartheid was entrenched in Namibia and it saw to it actually that all ethnic groups were staying in their own designated area. {Respondent # 20)

In the face-to-face social sphere, ethnic identities, and the norms, customs and values which sustain them, are negotiated in everyday life. The urban situations are different, mixed, as the respondent, an education officer with the MHEVST, said, which can be difficult for learners exposed to mono-ethnic and mono-lingual situation in their respective regions:

Namibia is definitely composed of different ethnic groups. That is a fact, irrespective of the fact that we have thirteen political regions, and seven educational regions. We definitely have a lot of ethnic groups in Namibia. Now, education after independence was to be revamped. We tried to revamp education immediately after independence. The intention was to

try and normalize or make education uniform, although in diversity. In other words, make sure that the curriculum of the country is almost the same, and catering for all the ethnic groups. So, basically the question as it states, when you say the statistical data in terms of education. I would say we don't have education for ethnics, if I can put it that way. We don't have education that caters for certain ethnic groups, but we have education that is intended to cater for the national interests of all the Namibians, education for all. {Respondent # 15}

The ethnic and language differences are difficult to overlook in a country that is divided as such. The following respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, expresses a similar idea, in a slightly different tone:

That is why I think you know the ministry has divided the education system in the regions which sometimes is ethnically based, although you have the children from different racial groups in one region. But I think the statistics can be made available because I think the information are there stipulating that this child belongs to which ethnic group. Therefore, although the government policy does strain officers to regard people from which ethnic group a person is coming from, but data are available of a child is from which ethnic group are taken where. Although it's really I think matter of concern to all who are running education, but they are available especially with us. Children whom we have are only from this ethnic group Oshiwambo speaking group, most of them. I think you only find a small group of some people in the east of Oshikoto and east of Ohangwena, Engela, and also in Tsumeb area, Oshikoto region, with only a few groups of learners who are Otjiherero and Damaranama speaking, only in Tsumeb but the entire region is constitute of Oshiwambo speaking learners. {Respondent # 7}

Yet another respondent, an officer with the MBEC, explained the issue differently, although he clearly emphasized the same issue. Ethnicity obviously is sensitive and there is a strong sentiment to suppress it. Nevertheless, it is so prevalent that some officers sounded contradictory about the issue:

Well, I doubt whether such information actually exist in terms of ethnic groups in this country. However, I am aware that there is information with regard to various regions. But these regions are obviously political regions and OK some may reflect at some ethnic concentration. But they are not necessarily so designed to be ethnic regions as such. People who, if we go back to our history and look at people who have never had to be moved from

their traditional homes, more of the northern regions of Namibia, that will be Kaoko, Ovambo, Rundu and Caprivi. In those regions you will have people who would be more, those regions will be more like you know ethnic based and therefore if one is to talk maybe of those regions. There will be differences if one is to talk of the other southern regions or the other central, central and southern regions. That are more, these people who find themselves in native reservations as they were created then by the colonial regimes and I think they remained with the exception of having changed titles, you know calling them now communal lands. {Respondent # 17}

Even in just one region, in this case the Rundu educational region, which has similar language groups but different dialects, the problem seems insurmountable. This region is divided into several circuits, but the ethnic and language issues overlap and play out according to the political divisions.

The next theme tackles the persistent and pervasive outcomes which result from the legacies of colonial and apartheid history across the Namibian society. The country inherited an acute lack of capital and expert bureaucracy.

Chapter VI

PEOPLE'S AWARENESS OF AND EFFORTS TO OVERCOME THE INHERITED APARTHEID LEGACY FOR RECONSTITUTING THE SOCIOECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORDER FOR EQUITY

Theme: Persistence of educational inequalities is due to the inherited, divisive apartheid legacy that manifests itself in many realms of post-apartheid Namibian Society.

This theme addresses the core issues of persistent educational inequalities in postcolonial Namibia. The theme responds to my primary research question as to why educational inequalities persist along regional and ethnic lines a decade after independence. Educational inequities have persisted, despite independence and reform, as a seemingly intractable legacy of apartheid. My findings show that the legacy of apartheid is deeply rooted. Respondents interviewed emphasized the disparities in socio-economic status of various groups of people and the systematic divisions that stratify the people of Namibia, not only along regional lines but also based on ethnic, race, religion, gender, urban-rural, and class differences. These disparities are reflected across my three main data sources. The responses below are representative of disparities in the education dispensation along ethnic and regional lines, based on the inherited legacy, despite the government's commitment to assuring equal educational opportunity.

To be sure of reversing the apartheid system, the government has indeed made important efforts to overcome the disparities of the past, particularly by using education, as was shown in the perceptions of the respondents quoted in previous themes.

While the government's good policies are planned with the welfare of all in mind, questions remain whether the reformed education has actually unified the country. Has it achieved the intended primary education for all as envisaged in the policies? Which

languages are reinstated as languages of instruction in schools, under what criteria? Does the concept of basic education for “all” include the hitherto neglected non-formal and adult education sector, to cater for those who did not get an opportunity under apartheid? Does the reformed education now develop the skills, knowledge, mind, character, and growth of all individuals as desired and envisaged in the country’s constitution?

Most education officers interviewed consider (for the most part quite as expected) the independent government to have done much. Some of them, like the education officer below, who is with the MBEC were skeptical about how long it might take to end persistent inequalities along regional and ethnic lines because of the great damage done by apartheid.

But nevertheless, the government with the assistance of the international communities, various governments and international organization who are funding our system, so at least we have schools, classrooms in the area, roads in the area and the others. But I tell you it will take time before these things, because it is and a backlog which had been created about a hundred years ago, and you cannot expect this to be addressed within nine or ten years. No, It will take time. It will take time. Yeah, it will take time. You see it's a great damage done to the regions, the areas, the former northern area, which I really talking about, it's a great damage done. {Respondent # 1}

But as the several education officers noted, there were eleven separate education departments, consistent with apartheid principles, and these had different impacts on different ethnic groups, depending on their size and power.

Information from the interviewees and the wider literature indicates that the most limiting, even debilitating, factor in integrated schooling in Namibia is the legacy of apartheid. I cannot agree more with Mda and Mothata (2000, p. 51), who emphasized that

Apartheid was a well-thought out, thorough, and long-term political ideology to keep races separate and unequal. Its laws made it difficult for people of different races and ethnicities to know one another and get along, since each group was separated and isolated from others legally and physically. Schools therefore experience general problems of reconciliation and interaction between diverse cultural and linguistic groups, after years of separation.

Throughout the analysis of the past and present educational deprivation and privilege, the disadvantaged position of Blacks can be seen. Colonialism dispossessed many Blacks of their land and livestock and rights, which began a process of culture change that led to the unruly situation in postcolonial Namibia as the legacy left a culture of violence and destruction. The postcolonial Namibian constitution provides the historic bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterized by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice. That is, a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence, and development opportunities for all Namibians, irrespective of color, race, region, ethnicity, class, belief and sex. However, the current situation is marked by rapid urbanization, and thus a growing drift to towns and unequal access to education, health, and other social services, and a marked difference in income, residence, and occupation of various socioeconomic groups. On the mentality underlying some of the above aspects, this respondent, a regional education director, attributed them to the legacy of apartheid:

I believe learners see things as not yet belonging to them. As I put it to you already, because it is now how many years since independence, it is nine years and some months and then our learners have a culture of violence. When we talk about a culture of violence then it means in whatever something is not according to their idea or acceptance, then they start revolting. When they start revolting and confronting they do it through the method of destroying those things. Which is a legacy we have from the colonial period. They still have that mentality, even the moment they have to start a strike or boycott or whatever, they tend always to go to

a bit of extreme otherwise you, if you don't have proper control you can realize they destroyed everything. {Respondent # 8}

The government is trying to address the disparities in education by involving bilateral and other assistance from donor countries and agencies, which it directs to specific areas targeted for development. These lending agencies and donor countries have their criteria for funding (and push their own agendas) that are often labeled "universal," but which are for the most part not favorable to local conditions.

In discussing the factors surrounding the need for reforming the inequitable education in Namibia, one must have a complete comprehension of the extent of the socio-economic and political problems and dynamics that exist in the communities within regions. Some current practices forced Namibia to experience serious social, economic, and political problems similar to the problems created by apartheid. These problems must be resolved if the future is to be made more meaningful for all people. In all practical realities, education has often been regarded as a means to resolve these challenges and problems. However, the situation in Namibia, or perhaps in all of southern Africa, leads to the conclusion that the current educational process is far too inadequate to help solve these problems. I cannot agree more with Mathews (1988, p. 8), who notes that

Education alone cannot transform underdeveloped communities. Unless it is integrated with social and economic change and puts more resources and power into the hands of the rural and urban poor, it will simply lead to frustration, bitterness and revolt.

According to respondents and the wider literature, what is therefore needed is a fundamental change or reform in education to meet the needs of an increasingly complex situation. As we change the political knowledge base to include the true principles of

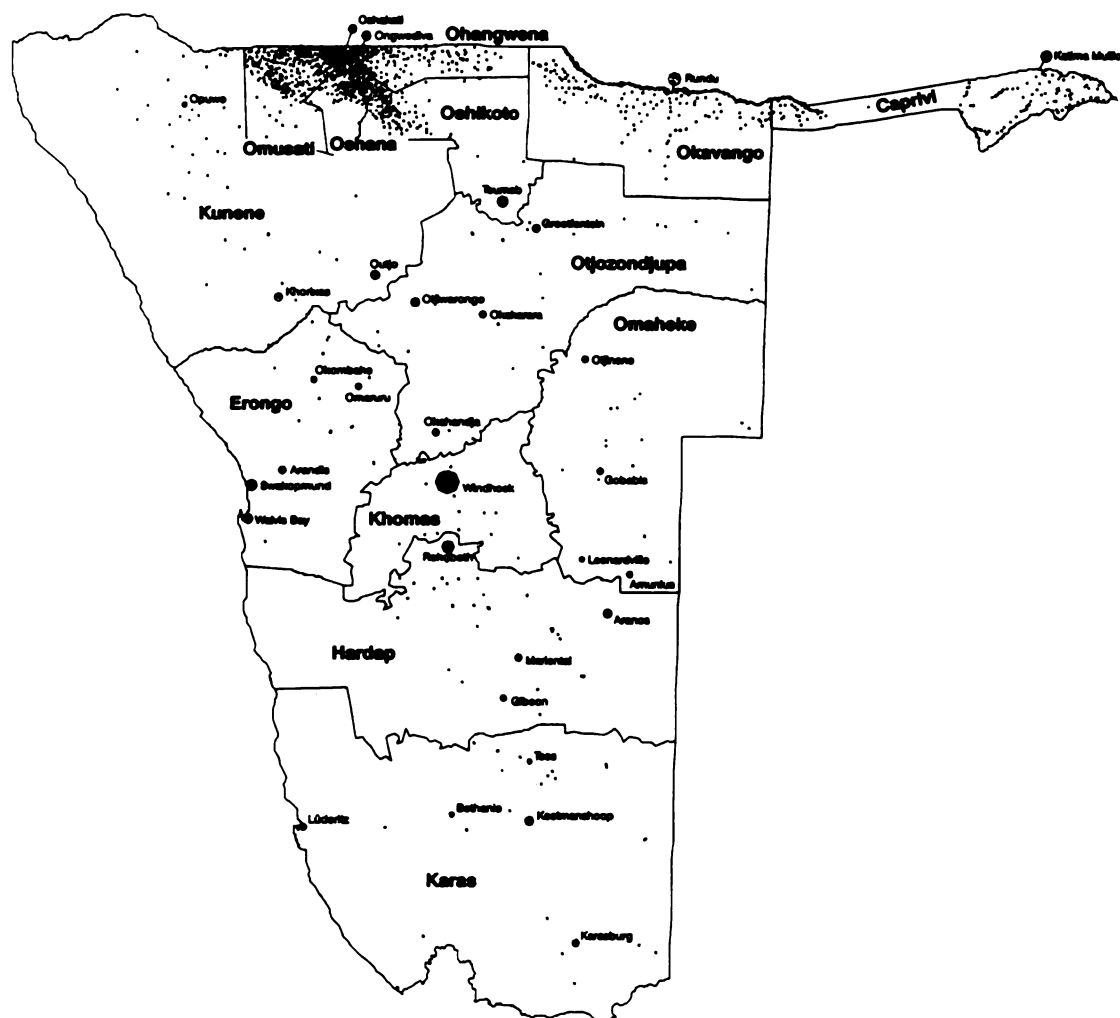
democracy, we begin to unravel the complexities of the apartheid legacy aftershock. This study takes the position that among the viable methods of seeking solutions to the multiple problems of inequities, poverty, regional and ethnic stratification or neglect and exclusion, first should be to strive to eradicate or, initially at least, reduce poverty. Secondly, it is crucial to initiate basic education reform that will cater to all communities in an equitable manner. The intractable nature of inequity, as a legacy of apartheid and the persistent inequitable social, economic, and political challenges facing the country, requires a comprehensive solution to avoid eventual national disaster.

The serious issues raised by respondents and as shown in other chapters have indicated that the Namibian education system entered the post-apartheid era with a legacy of unjustifiable inequalities of various kinds. A major challenge for the new government with its national reconciliation policy is that of putting into place policies that help unwind this legacy of apartheid. That should lead to the creation of an education system in which the basic principles of equity are satisfied. See the postcolonial Namibian map (Figure 4) showing the thirteen political regions and the concentration of the population and schools.

Some indication of what policies the new Namibian government adopted can be seen in a discussion policy document; Toward Education for All, A Development Brief for Education, Culture and Training, published in 1993. Some of the responses are critical of some of the policy guidelines stipulated in the document. Among other things, the document recognizes that three main features characterized the previous education:

Figure 4

Namibia's postcolonial thirteen political regions and their concentrations of population and schools, 1995



(Source: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996)

First, the system was fragmented along racial and ethnic lines, and has been saturated with the racial ideology and educational doctrines of apartheid. Second, there was lack of access or unequal access to education and training at all levels of the system. Vast disparities existed between Black and White provision and large numbers of people, in particular, adults, out of school youth and children of pre-school age, had little or no access to education and training. Third, there was a lack of democratic control within the education and training system. Students, teachers, parents and workers have been excluded from decision-making processes. (Ministry of Education and Culture 1993, p. 20)

Regardless of these observed and clearly articulated deficiencies of the previous regime, the inequalities continue and part of the explanation from the respondents is that the legacy of apartheid is responsible for the past injustice and disparities. The features listed above are concerned chiefly with issues of equity and of accountability. Equity issues arise because of the racial and ethnic fragmentation of the system and because of the inequalities of access that characterize it. This respondent a regional education director, had this to say to that effect:

But if we come up with a policy of equity, and redress the past inequity, I think if we do that, we might come out with a very good improvement of education in this country. That applies to the whole country, not only to Rundu. {Respondent # 8}

Although many of the respondents also made reference to infrastructure, resources, facilities and other factors, as a group they seemed to be more aware of the various colonial factors, i.e., apartheid legacy, that have been associated with the enduring inequalities.

The following theme addresses the plight of the educationally marginalized communities. Some of the marginalized communities are the San, farm workers and their children; Ovahimba, street children; Ovankhumbi, squatter settlement dwellers; Ovazemba and other minority ethnic groups in remote rural areas. The marginalized do

know what affects them and are seeking parity through meetings, letters, headmen and chiefs, radio, parents, and the education commission. This study specifically focus on the Hai/ /Om, one of the San group in the north, Oshikoto region around Oshivelo area and the Ovankhumbi, in the Kunene region based around Epalela area. Some deprived communities even strive to build schools and additional classrooms to supplement existing limited classrooms in their areas.

Theme: The marginalized know the educational inequalities in relation to access and quality that affect them; and they seek parity in relation to valuing education in various ways.

This theme addresses the crucial issues of the educationally marginalized and socially as well as economically deprived communities in Namibia. The theme initially addresses the contentious issue of marginalization from the officer's perspective, then in the second part, expresses and expounds views of the marginalized themselves. There are clear indications that both the education officers and the marginalized communities themselves are cognizant of the problem facing the educationally marginalized and socially stratified communities. Bradshaw and Ndegwa (2000, p. 312) confirm that "seemingly, parents and community stake holders were motivated to build schools because they wanted their children to receive an education that the apartheid state had not provided." It is also abundantly evident that both these groups are doing several things to alleviate the plight of those at the bottom of the ladder in Namibian society.

The interviewed government education officers had various explanations, differing points of view, and sometimes contradicting statements about the educationally marginalized and socially stratified communities in Namibia. Although, according to some officers, the most educationally marginalized are the two groups, the San and the

Ovahimba, other officers acknowledged that there are many educationally marginalized and socio-economically deprived communities within the country. This national education officer in Windhoek with the MBEC wanted to give a general picture:

Other than the San we have many other educationally marginalized people in Namibia. In the Kunene the Ovahimba, Ovazemba and other ethnic groups who live there, the street children, farm workers children. What you find on the farms are different ethnic groups according to the region where the farm is situated. You find Nama speaking you find Oshiwambo speaking, and Otjiherero speaking, there are speakers of kavango languages, and they are mostly on the commercial farms. I am not talking about communal farms, I am talking about commercial farms. You find basically all different ethnic groups on these farms. {Respondent # 1}

As I indicated in the previous chapters, what is referred to, as communal farms are the former homelands, which changed names after independence as many people now call them communal areas.

Educationally marginalized children face a multitude of problems that hinder access to equal education opportunity, let alone quality education, which require serious and committed strategies. Most of the officers mentioned the San and the Ovahimba as well as “other” small minorities to be marginalized. The following officer, a regional education director, perhaps due to being in one of the deprived regions, extended the scope of the marginalized by lamenting that

We are even part of the marginalized ones. That's why in our meetings we are always demanding an equal share, which the other people are also getting. That is why we are saying the budget must be re-addressed, so that you could allocate more money to the regions, and particularly to the schools. Like well we have the Ovahimba people, the San people and so in our area here in the sea. They are also demanding that they also would like to have the equal treatment and also persons, for example want secondary schools to be established in the area. Currently we are busy with the upgrading one of the typical San schools with Outsathima in the west of, Ondangwa west you see. The demand is that we have to upgrade that school up at least to a secondary school. It reads up to from grade one up to grade ten. That's a demand for the community, a demand for the community

because it's a long distance to travel from home to school and so on. It is also one indication that people are right there, rightful share to be treated equal like the other people. {Respondent # 12}

The awareness of educational marginalization for some groups among the officers is high. Some of the dilemmas and challenges that cripple the needs of the marginalized and which they are aware of are shortages of schools, classrooms and hostels, basic infrastructure, and modest to low economic activities. I found this education officer with the MBEC to have an interesting way of viewing the issue of marginalization and possible remedies to the problem:

Well, when you look at the situation, the heterogeneous society within Namibia, you will find that in terms of marginalization the two groups the Himbas, and the San, and probably others that we do not know also are affected. But those two are really the most marginalized societies within our society in the larger society of Namibia, part of it can be attributed to the fact they have a nomadic life style. Perhaps what we need to inculcate what the government should be doing is to invest more in trying to promote. We need to embark upon a comprehensive program of education, educating them, not education in terms of formal education, but really educating the marginalized groups in society within their own environmental context. By promoting not only the establishment of their infrastructure, but also promote the independent line of thinking as to how they would like to act and live within their environment. {Respondent # 3}

There are clear indications that the education officers are aware of the magnitude of the problem, and that the government has and is still trying to perhaps not level the playing field, but limit or reduce some of the deep rooted inequalities and marginalization. The two groups, the San and Ovahimba, were also featuring prominently in the MBEC education officer's responses. However, he also recognized that some groups were completely left out by colonial practices and deserves to be considered:

But there are some indications that some things, that show that the government is doing something to reduce the inequalities, yeah, they are

trying they are doing something in the provision of education. But it is not enough. When you are looking at those extreme marginalized people, you can only see these efforts, when they are going to the schools, but I am not quite sure that in the past five years much has been done, to provide education to marginalized people. It's always on the agenda, government agenda, but they are very few practical examples to indicate that government is very seriously able to provide these people with educational resources. I am specifically talking about Ovahimba and San there is not much done to be quite honest with you. Also besides the San and the Ovahimba people, there are other marginalized people in Namibia. They are there those people in remote areas. There are people that we need to reach them. They have been left out, they are just left there, and they are there in their own world. {Respondent # 1.}

One of the contradictions is apparent in some of the responses like the one below.

While the respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, thinks and acknowledged that the marginalized deserve special attention, he also claimed that the government provides education to all Namibians on an equal basis:

But of course there are those groupings that were left very much behind than others, like the San and the Ovahimba and all the others that would need special treatment. Those are things that the government has already started giving attention to through the allocation of a number of donor funds to those specific communities. But of course from the government side it could also start coming up with a vote on its budget that would specifically provide for the needs of those specific marginalized groups. But otherwise when we talk about educational provision to regional and tribal groupings we do not make any distinction really, we provide education to all Namibians on an equal basis. {Respondent # 5}

The next education officer who is with the MBEC, seemed to disagree with the last statement above about government provision of education to all Namibians on an equal basis. He also sees regionalism and ethnicity as realities that are dealt with in a denial manner:

We have the so-called sensitization. We send people to tell all the various ethnic groups in Namibia that we are no longer emphasizing their ethnicity, though we accept, this is a reality, but the emphasis should be then on the nation building. Ethnicity is a reality in this country. That's why we are having here in Namibia, that we are a nation in diversity.

Those diversities is diversities of the ethnic groups but that's why that every child here in Namibia, as from the lower primary onwards there, they are entitled to have that free education. That free education is not only for specific group, but for every one, the marginalized and also now, a lot of efforts are being done in connection with the marginalizing group, so that we can bring them to be equal to the other. {Respondent # 16}

Recognition of the diversity that the respondent referred to does not necessarily enable various ethnic groups to attend schools equally as they desire. After all, other respondents acknowledged that some groups and families, although eager to attend schools, simply do not attend because they cannot afford to, and that they are in one way or another marginalized.

This one respondent, an officer with the MHEVST, felt that the marginalized do not articulate their problems and challenges fully or appropriately. He knows and argued that the marginalized are aware of the disparities and that they try different ways of expressing their grievances so that their voices are included. This suggests that the people do realize their marginalization:

You see the affected people if they are aware, then it's one percent, that they are marginalized. They may not be aware of them being marginalized because also to them that concept of being marginalized is not getting to be known. Just now for example, we have seen the Kwai community, this is the Bushman in the western Kaprivi. It is only now that they say we don't have clinics. We have to move to go to chief Mambo who is a Mbukushu to his clinic, and sometimes they close their clinic, because we don't have access, why can't we also have access to clinics and schools. We don't have schools here. They have realized it. Some of them have come together but no, if we are Namibians we need these also. We don't need to beg some one else. The government must provide us with something. So you know, there has been a bit of standing up on the part of the marginalized people saying no. I think you people are just deceiving us here. We also want to be educated, we also want to say this. Like this thing of schools created in the rural areas, no roads. They also came up and said look, how can you build a school like this, and the inspector can't even come here because there is no road. There is no road at all. And yet you have built us a school but where is the road? How can we go there? {Respondent # 11}

It is important to notice that the very same population groups that are educationally marginalized at the primary level also find it more difficult than others to get access to higher levels of education. Responding to the follow-up question, on what evidence exists that the marginalized minority groups are aware of the educational inequalities and are seeking parity, the following respondent, a regional education director, had this to say:

That's very difficult, I must say that I do not know whether they are aware. Perhaps it is a fifty-fifty situation. They must, specifically the minority marginalized groups in terms of education it is not yet clear whether they appreciate or want it. But we are getting to them, that well, it is important, because in the life of hunting and gathering, the time of that is long overdue. It is no more, and therefore, the time has come that everybody moves on because everybody else started by gathering and hunting, everybody else. We all moved from away from there because conditions continued to deteriorate, they could not just get any wild fruit, the animals were scarce, and they started sitting and doing some cultivation. {Respondent # 13}

While the above respondent felt that the marginalized are not fully aware of the inequities and may not appreciate the formal education, the respondent below, an officer with the MBEC, confidently gave explanations, examples, and evidence on how he sees the situation:

The evidence is there, we hear these people complain or put up their grievances over the radio and people talk about it. Look at the specifically the Ovahimba people, they come and see the president, they come and see the Prime Minister, they come from Opuuo and they get into our Ministers office and talk to them. They are aware of their plight OK and they think, at this stage I think everyone has, and also the system you know it is well good about our democratic system. It has made people aware of what they should really know. It is left then to the people to decide whether they want to change or not. A number of our people have really taken it up. The problem that I am seeing here is mainly with the San communities, one can see a lack of I do not know whether to call it a lack of interest or perhaps a lack of information about the benefits of education. Because you will see more of government going to preach about the benefits of education to those people

than those people really coming to demand from government about their entitlements. Whereas in other areas you will see people coming to demand from government what they want done for them, while government can also go and preach to them what the benefits of education are. So I think a lot of work needs to be done and mobilization needs to be really done especially in areas inhabited by our San communities. {Respondent # 17}

According to him, even the marginalized communities are aware of the educational disparities, and they do take initiatives to improve their situations. However, he expressed that the San communities seem to show a sign of withdrawal or perhaps they are not interested. It cannot be the case that the San people may be disinterested because the following respondent, a regional education director, knows of a San group that strongly complained about the poor conditions. Perhaps this is a situation that cannot be generalized:

At this point in time really I do know about the Khoi people in say Mukwe, western Caprivi, close to Rundu, they are also complaining, they are one of the San group. Remember that group part of who fled to Botswana, that is part of them. Tsumkwe I was there, at least they have buildings there and some small things but Tsumkwe at least bring something to Tsumkwe because you have a road even from Grootfontein, a proper road, you can travel easily to Tsumkwe and come back. Distribution of resources is very scarce there. {Respondent # 8}

In spite of few programs geared towards preparing San children for school, large percentages of San children were not reached. The education officers interviewed all acknowledged that there are some groups that are more marginalized than others. They also know the less or little resources that some people receive but they seem to be in a difficult position themselves in that they do not have solutions. This education officer with the MHEVST put it this way:

It's not only in the northern region. You can also talk about northwest region where our people are living. I am talking about the Ovahimba and those people who are living there. We can also talk about other marginalized groups in the northeast San or Khung. We need to get them education as

well. The distribution of educational resources to these people are still much low, they are still much low. Not much has been done, there are few schools you can call. There are very few schools for children where we can really find people who are living. We need to reach this people. I don't know how, but they also need education. {Respondent # 15}.

A high proportion of the parents of the educationally marginalized children, especially and particularly in remote areas are not only poor but also illiterate. Integrated community education programs to improve the understanding of the parents about education can be a desirable alternative especially in isolated small communities. Otherwise the education officer from the MHEVST below has another understanding about the educationally marginalized children and their parents. He believes that the marginalized do not value formal education the same way as others do, which is a rather contentious position:

I think there is a problem of the marginalized communities. They are still not having any really attachment to education. So, they still regard that they are being forced. Their children are being forced to attend classes, because they did not see, these people I don't blame them because in the past, we tended to look down upon (denigrate) degrade them. But there is no one from their part, more especially San people, coming back and telling them the importance of education as they see. Because it is always easier to hear it from the mouth of somebody you know, somebody you trust, than to hear it from a stranger. I think now that at least we got some, I think, there is one or two at a private school here and this, so one at Maria Mongere secondary school, a San person now attending upper grades. If this only will help them, when these people go back to them, to their own community. They can only convince them to regard education as serious, I mean as important, but at the present moment, during the rainy season or when they want to go and get fruit from the bush, they just decide to go. And you cannot prevent them from it, going there. At some places, if you provide food to learners, they will also provide food to parents. If you cannot provide food for the parents, then they take their children away to go with them because the value of education is not realized by these people. {Respondent # 11}

Evidence from the various respondents clearly indicates that not only are the marginalized aware of the deprivation and social stratification, but also that these people are

actually seeking better opportunities for their children. In a more or less similar view another regional education director has the understanding that some cultures may have their own different perception of formal education and thus do things their own way and end up in the marginalized category:

But now and I am saying culture, is also playing major role in this education. Our fellow people, the San people, they have additional movement. If wild fruits are plenty, then all of them may have to move away from Rundu maybe for four months, they go deep there, which means all the children go with the parents. Then we have to close the school, until the wild fruits are going to finish, then they will come back. That's their culture. But now what we are trying to, we want to tell the people that now, we cannot continue to follow this type of culture. We have to change. There are certain elements of culture, which we must change. But culture also, not ethnicity, we must talk about culture. But cultural background is also a very, it's very influential in the school. You see that in certain groups, a girl from childhood she has to be told not to be competitive to boys, because she is under boys as a lady or as a girl. {Respondent # 9}

These are people who have led the same lifestyle for a long time; and since the colonial administration did not include them in the formal education offered to the rest of the population, they continued with their nomadic and other ways of life. Kann (1998, p. 5) argued that “it should be emphasized that the marginalized children are entitled to their share of the educational budget. In fact, as they have been denied their educational rights earlier the additional cost of including them now must be accepted.”

The post- colonial efforts of the government for innovative and progressive programs for testing alternatives to mainstream education are still in their initial stages. Perhaps they require further research, scrutiny of other hidden factors and culture sensitivity to understand these people's behavior. This regional education officer preferred this interpretation:

We have some, what we call marginalized groups, particularly the San and then the northwest Kunene, Ovahimba. They are nomadic, they move

around. They wouldn't stay at the school, even if there is a school. They take their Cattle and bugger off fifty kilometers away, and they are away from school. But we have made various plans also through donor aid, particularly Sweden, we have projects to ensure the school attendance of the San population Bushman population, and then in the Kunene region we now have an experimental pilot phase of mobile schools. It's a Land Rover and a tent, and this and that a caravan for the teacher, and if the community moves, then the teacher moves. The teacher moves with it. And that is now the second year of the pilot phase, and it's going well, and it has increased the access there too. {Respondent # 8}

It will most likely take a long time for the stumbling blocks that inhibit access to education of the marginalized communities to be removed. There are various dynamics and problems that desirably need to be taken into serious consideration to convince these nomadic people about the importance of formal education. The next education officer with the MBEC tended to think that these people seem to be content with their way of life:

Because of the San's nomadic life, yes because of the nature of their movement, from that, one can see that it is difficult for them to have free access to education. The other groups that can be regarded as marginalized are the Ovahimba, Ovazemba and Ovankhumbi. Where do we find all these people? They are in the northwestern corner of Namibia. These people have a tendency of looking after their cattle and they appear to think that well, what they are doing or the economic activity that they are engaged in are perhaps sufficient for their existence. Hence they tend not to send their children to school, and hence, they can be regarded perhaps as educationally marginalized. {Respondent # 1}

There are obviously reasons, for example, distances to facilities in remote areas, lack of schools and classrooms, and isolation, for the lack of access to educationally marginalized children and communities. While poverty, illiteracy, and culture are part of the contributing factors, stereotypes and attitudes of others towards these people can also be attributed to the dilemma and plays a significant role in keeping some children out of school.

Another mechanism used to create and maintain differences between ethnic groups is stereotyping (Royce 1982, p. 8). Stereotypes are the manifestation of perceptions about other groups. These perceptions may be firmly fixed in reality, they could be based on myth, or some combination of the two (Royce 1982, p. 5). Although stereotypes typically have some basis in reality, they do not fully reflect it since they are usually also judgmental. Stereotypes emphasize only a few attributes, which for them represent the whole group. They do not take into account individual differences within the group (Schaefer (1984, p. 27). They are typically caused by incomplete or limited knowledge about other groups (Royce 1982, p. 159). The following education officer, who is with the MHEVST, partly confesses to the ill treatment of certain groups:

There are people who are marginalized indeed. Maybe we can just give one example. The Tsumkwe area, we regard those people as marginalized, and I think we did not do well in terms of resources allocation to them. We did not do well at all. One, resources are limited in the existing schools. There are very few schools in that area. What type of teachers did we give them? The teachers that we have given them tend to think in terms of stereotypes, we feel they are Bushmen. We must give them even this type of treatment. That was the trend that's why I am saying it that way. We have given them teachers, but they could be teachers, who may not be qualitative, and as a result those people, to bring them in the mainstream, it might create a problem. As to whether they are marginalized, there is no doubt about that, those were marginalized from colonial era up to now during independence and they know it very well themselves. {Respondent # 20}

The following regional education director also explains the endemic problem of the legacy of apartheid and how it caused various groups to have pre-perceptions about others, thus limiting their possibilities for schooling:

But due to this what apartheid had planted into the people, pretty negative. Because they were feeling inferior to compare them with the black people, and now, and now we discover that no, we have these people. Maybe we have to build another school for them, a completely separate school for them. But it will be a choice for the parents and the child. The one would say no, I am going to go to the school and continue. The one who is going

o feel no, no, if we go there they call us Muduni, Muduni, (derogative for San in Kavango dialects) now it make me not to do study nicely, they won't go there. And all for the other place African. If they want to go there, they are not going to be prohibited. But now and I am saying culture, is also playing major role in this education. Our fellow people, the san people, they have additional movement during different seasons.
{Respondent # 9}

There were considerable responses showing not only the existence of the marginalized communities in Namibia, but also various misunderstandings, attitudes and efforts by the government to alleviate the plight of the marginalized communities. The following cluster of responses from the education officers acknowledges the awareness of the inequalities by the marginalized groups and how they articulate them in various ways. Kann (1998, p. 6) rightly argue that

It is a fallacy to believe that poor parents do not understand the value of (school) education and therefore do not send their children to school. Most poor parents see education of their children as a way out of their own miserable situation. Only few parents do not understand the value the education of their children. This needs to be recognized and addressed. However, many parents do not know their rights as far as the education of their children is concerned and school staff is not informing them properly. As a large proportion of these, parents are not only poor, but illiterate, the best means of information are radio and community meetings.

In a kind of counter viewpoint or different understanding from the preceding responses, the following education officer with the MHEVST opposes the views of the previous officers. He felt that if the marginalized are exposed enough and given opportunities to reach certain levels of achievement, they could be exemplary to the rest of their communities:

That's why the government came up with all ways and means and mobile schools and those kinds of things to help them become part of our educational system and to achieve their goals through the system. But now it is, I don't know how to answer the question. I met somebody in South Africa at a workshop who, is a Bushman of some kind, well

developed intelligent and educated guy. He is actually the manager in the Tsumkwe area at the moment with this project of SIDA. One cannot say that the people do not want to go into our education system because of their traditional or cultural beliefs. But it's a question of people out of themselves must come out as models, so that the other people in their communities can look at them and say I also want to become like that person someday. So we really need to get more of these people educated. {Respondent # 4}

Role models of the same marginalized ethnic groups can be exemplary to the rest of their communities. Because of the past deprivation and neglect, however, there are few if any of the expected role models. The following education officer with the MBEC was certain that the marginalized are indeed aware of the inequalities and deprivation. There is general self-awareness of poverty among groups and communities. They know that being educated is a way of escaping poverty. He challenged those who allege that the marginalized groups do not value education and want to maintain their ways of life:

Now people are very much aware of the marginalization and inequalities. You don't even have to go far, that question you can ask from the people, any grassroots people. If you go to any community and you talk to parents about education, they want their children to go to school. Factually yes, yes, yes, because it's a way out. You see it's a way of escaping the poverty trail. The allegations that the San do not want formal school, the Ovahimba want their children to look after their cattle. It is a very vicious understatement. Whoever is making that statement, it's false. We had a big conference a year and a half ago, where there were a big San contingent from all parts of the country came together, mostly high school pupils. And they were serious about seeing education as one of the ways to get out of the social malaise that they find themselves. But you see, I think people who come with this argument many times are those who do not want anything to alleviate those people's problems. {Respondent # 17}

These statements demonstrate clearly that the marginalized are not only aware of the inequalities but that they also do something about it. The marginalized may indeed follow their lifestyles, which is understandable, since they deserve to resort to their familiar lifestyles, especially when they are being neglected. The false image that some

people may have about the marginalized communities emanates from the factors discussed earlier in this theme, and in various other sections of this dissertation. Prejudice in Namibia is prevalent and follows the same patterns as described earlier. Each 'racial' and ethnic group is distinguished by stereotyped attributes of physical appearance, dress, language usage, role behavior, gestures, and other characteristics (Pendleton 1974. p. 88). He also discusses how values and attitudes are associated with particular ethnic groups and 'racial' categories (Pendleton, 1974, p. 90).

The following regional education officer gave numerous ways that the marginalized show their awareness. He also acknowledge the fact that the inequalities exist and need to be addressed:

Now I think they are very much seeking educational parity. There is a lot of evidence that show? Oh yes, in meetings the presidential commission on education as you know that is still going on. The commission is still going on, they had sessions in various areas of the country. You look at the demands of the people. But, we get letters all the time from concerned parents, from headmen you know in the most remote areas. There were two from Epupa in the Kunene region here with me, Kasita and some body else, and I bring in my Otjiherero speaking director in so that they can speak in their own language then he can translate. And they sit, and they tell all the things that they want to contribute they want to build even schools, but the ministry must give this, this and that out in that remote area. So they are very much aware today of certain shortcomings and disadvantages that they are suffering. They get no inspectors, the inspector doesn't visit them. We say sorry, the inspector has no transport budget or other problems, and they have not received their textbooks. They have not received this and that. They complain immediately. We cannot always attend to these complaints, but they are there. {Respondent # 8}

The officer above did a good job by showing exactly how the marginalized seek parity and how they go about it. He also disclosed that in cases of language deficiency, some of the employees, who speak the specific language of the people in question, offer to translate. In a rather self-contradictory response, the respondent below, an officer with

the MBEC, claimed that there is no sufficient mobilization of various communities by the powers that be, so that people understand its value and get educated. In the same response he alludes to the government having integrated the San people in different schools all over the country. He also alluded to the battle between tradition and modern practices:

I remember when we were talking about marginalization, it is true that there is a constant battle between traditional practice and modern way of life. Obviously it is not only we who are talking about the lack of commitment. I think there has not been very strong mobilization about formal schooling, to realize the benefits of education, or let me say education has not been yet brought to them, and that also has obviously in itself has become a serious obstacle to effectively address the question of equity. Now, but then obviously there is hope. Normally we know that this government as long ago as 1995 took a lot of San people and integrated them into various schools around the country. And the report that we are getting this year is that many of them are doing well in colleges, teacher colleges and so on. I think that group of people serves as a hope. But I should say that from that perspective obviously our people themselves also, because of recent events that we are aware of, you see have not taken upon themselves to demand equal educational opportunities. They have not taken upon themselves to exercise their rights. But obviously one cannot blame them because historically, those types of things were restricted and it still exists, and as long as they exist, marginalization and inequality will also continue to be a long road to equality. {Respondent # 16}

Traditional practices seemingly conflict with modern living. The respondent claimed that there is insufficient mobilization about schooling; otherwise there are positive responses from people if they are educated about the value and importance of education. Consequently, he figured considering Namibia's past disparities, the need to reform education in a way that involves constant encouragement and sensitization to enhance peoples' understanding, appreciation and participation could lead to effective awareness, and thus adjustments to new social and educational environments. The next education officer, with the MBEC, tried to shy away from directly responding to the

question of awareness of the marginalized and action about it; however, he eventually stated the keenness of the people, the reluctance of government, and the reality of persisting inequalities, marginalization, and other disparities:

Really for that one I am not sure because I just work with statistics here. So whether they are keen, some of the people who are working closer with those deprived people might know better. What I know is that some of those marginalized learners were at school already, and the San people I know that there are some of them who are having computer courses who are undergoing computer courses. Which is a sign that the parents are willing so that the kids can be educated. Even this morning on the news I was listening when some researcher said, "there is a need for some schools to be build at those, the former Bushman-land." So which means there is a need for those kids to be educated, their parents are keen. But maybe the government is just reluctant maybe they are having lots of work to do, but in reality those formerly neglected areas are still suffering a lot.
{Respondent # 2}

He acknowledged that at present, the problems of Namibia are many and varied, ranging across deprivation, corruption, and economic decline as well as lack of confidence among the people for the future. It is a tragic reality that the legacy of apartheid has left huge inequalities that, in the post-colonial dispensation, play out in socioeconomic class, regional and ethnic manifestations. The following respondent, an education officer with the MBEC, depicts the educationally marginalized awareness through ethnic involvement and scrutiny in the distribution of resources:

So this ethnic issue is a very important thing that we need to address I think. And I think now the people start realizing the problem when it comes to which is governing us, we are not talking about the politicians, we are talking of people who are going to key positions in the ministries, and how do they distribute resources, because they are in charge. Now people will start thinking, oh, who is distributing the resources? Oh, he is not from my ethnic group, oh that's why it is a crucial issue. Then I think from there, you can never ever phase that one ethnicity out within a year or two. It will take time. {Respondent # 7}

Ethnic identity may increase due to inter-group interaction and can lead to socio-economic inequality and prejudice. Van den Berghe (1970, p. 43) explains that "this will continue to occur as long as there is a system for maintaining social distance." Social distance occurs when individuals in an ethnically plural society like Namibia, do not interact on a personal level but tend to react or withdraw from members of other regional groups or 'racial' and ethnic categories. Due to Namibia's past institutionalized regional divisions that strengthened prejudice and stereotypes, withdrawal tends to be prevalent, thus illuminating the awareness of those marginalized who are at the periphery of society. The situation has however slowly been improving, and the socially stratified are increasingly getting involved in educational matters and national issues that concern them. The following education officer, with the MHEVST, showed some optimism:

Well, I think the tendency is still to regard education as education for those ones learning and the education ministry. The marginalized sometimes tend to withdraw and think, that is their education and their schools. We are still having problems to get them involved in the education of their children, because in the past, they were not involved, and now we are struggling to get them involved. But I think the tendency is slowly improving, they are at least coming up. When we call meetings they attend the meetings, and when the schools reopen, they are now, at the present moment taking their children to school. This is showing an improvement. {Respondent # 11}

While there are these good signs of the marginalized communities involvement in the educational matters of their children and communities, spreading the benefits of independence to Namibians who are impoverished, uneducated, and located in remote areas of the country is not easy. But it need not be impossible. Moreover, in Namibia, inequality is not just an educational phenomenon; it is also a socioeconomic and geographic phenomenon. Namibia's poor live overwhelmingly in the former homelands in the rural areas of the country, especially the north. By contrast, the areas that are receiving the most

attention, from the government and foreign investors alike, are those that were already the most privileged under the previous apartheid government. Thus, this perpetuates endemic educational inequalities, and more awareness from the victims of the inequalities.

Background Information on characteristics of the two interviewed groups

Having dealt with the awareness and action on marginalization according to the education officers thus far, I now turn to the responses of the victims themselves. These are the people who are identified by others as marginalized, and also who themselves are aware about the educational deprivation and what they as individuals and as communities do about it. The group interviews were fundamental in getting opinions of the educationally marginalized and socially stratified of society themselves. The responses of the two groups interviewed for the study were treated different from those of the education officers because they had a different set of questions. Nevertheless, they were treated the same as groups because they are all marginalized. Their questions were tailored to understand their feelings, experiences, and their ultimate involvement in seeking parity to alleviate their specific situation and position of being educationally deprived. According to the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalized Children (1998, p. 4), "Most of the parents are not unaware of the importance of education, as is often argued by the non-marginalized part of the population."

As a response to a question about school-age children who do not go to schools in their specific regions, various group members of both the Hai/ /Om and the Ovankhumbi groups were emphatic about the lack of money to send their children to schools, about high unemployment, and thus, about the inability to afford expensive schools. For those who manage to educate their children through grade seven, secondary education becomes a

double dilemma because first, it is not available in their area, and secondly, the far away schools require additional cost. A member of the Hai/ /Om group had this to say about their precarious deprivation:

The main problem we have in this region or community is money to send our children to school. This is one place where you find 80% or perhaps more or higher unemployment. The only school here goes up to grade seven. Parents try hard to get their children to school here, but after they complete grade seven, they cannot proceed because the cost of school and other associated costs are too high. The nearest secondary school is Oshikoto in Tsumeb where if our children attend, they are supposed to live in the boarding. That is additional cost and for people who are very much impoverished, they cannot afford. Some of the parents here manage to send their children there, but children complain bitterly when they come back home about the treatment, food and stereotypes from other learners. {Hai/ /Om group respondent}

Stereotypes are the manifestation of perceptions about other groups. These perceptions may be firmly fixed in reality; they could be based on myth, or some combination of the two (Royce 1982, p. 5). Although stereotypes typically have some basis in reality, they do not fully reflect it, since they are also judgmental. Stereotypes emphasize only a few attributes to represent the whole group. They do not take into account individual differences (Schaefer, 1984, p. 27). They are typically caused by incomplete or limited knowledge about other groups. One Hai/ /Om group respondent spoke his mind on this:

These days without education, a person does not progress in their life. If you drive around this region you can feel very sorry for so many children who are just roaming around without going to school. Let me emphasize that it's not because of the stereotype that Hai/ /om people do not care about schools but the reality is that social stratification and marginalization which we expected to be done away with during independence is still haunting us. The government must convince farmers to build schools on their land to cater for the many farm laborers who suffer without education. {Hai/ /Om group respondent}

Despite the stereotypes and other difficulties, for example, claims that they are not interested in schooling, the marginalized communities' proved differently. Their

willingness to sell their domesticated animals and other belongings like crafts and jewelry to pay for schools and their associated costs is a good indication or testimony that they have great interest to get their children educated. Another Ovankhumbi group member explained the situation as follows:

Some of the parents tried to get money to pay for their children's education. They would sell their domestic animals like cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, pigs or even chicken to raise funds for their children's school needs. Some made an effort to facilitate for their children's education up to grade twelve. The problem then come after the child complete grade 12. There is no other hope that for example, a child may get a certain job to survive and help their parents. This is a type of discouragement for parents who try and led their children get educated but still no improved future for them. Even those who finish grade 12 are just sitting at home with nothing to do. That situation result into parents opting for their children to go to towns to look for employment instead of being at school and get an insufficient education.
{Ovankhumbi group respondent}

These responses, which are similar for both groups interviewed, indicates that there is willingness for them to send their children to school but the harsh conditions works against them to the extent that they get discouraged, demoralized, and disappointed by the system.

The fact that high proportions of people from the marginalized groups are illiterate does not mean that they do not understand the importance of education for their children. It is rather the opposite. They blame their own situation on the lack of education and are prepared to spend a lot of the little they have on education of their children in order to brake the vicious cycle. While schooling conditions are difficult, the aforementioned high unemployment and their natural habitat that they lost to modern farming and ranching does not assist the communities out of their plight. Responding to how important schooling is for their children, all the participants of both the Hai/ /Om

and the Ovankhumbi groups acknowledged and endorsed that they value the importance of schooling and a decent education for their children:

We understand the importance of school and the importance of education. The problem is that we have no other way no money no jobs in order to live or to support our children until at a certain stage or level where they can achieve something from education. This is a big problem, the parents cannot especially after grade ten or grade 12. They can't do anything but they understand that school is very important for their children.
{Ovankhumbi group respondent}

Similarly, members of the Hai/ /Om group reiterated the problems caused by the stringent or unfavorable conditions that incapacitate their efforts to get an education. They complained bitterly about the careless landlords or farm owners and the government that does not take the farmers to task. Some respondents even mentioned lack of proper representation in their independent country. The forlornness showed in their faces as they disclosed how they cannot roam freely for their natural necessities and how some people were accused of trespassing and were killed by farmers. For them, all these are good reasons to get educated to cope with changed conditions:

If we look in this region there are many children like this one standing here or even older on commercial farms, who are supposed to go to school but they don't. Not because we do not value education but because many conditions including money and carelessness from landlords are not favorable for these children to attend schools. The farms are all over in this region and they are very big. The farm laborers who earn very little money can really not, out of their meager salaries send children to school. Most of these children then end up being employed by the farmers for next to nothing, generation after generation. {Hai/ /om group repondent}

All the evidence from the two group responses indicates the lack of representation by the government and the carelessness of the various employers who instead exploit these people for their own benefit. Another Hai/ /Om group respondent expressed their

hopelessness after they tried hard to convince the authorities about their educational deprivation and other hardships:

That is one of the biggest problem of the Hai/ /om people. People really want to send their children to schools but those hardships they face put them off completely and they feel hopeless. The community leaders and elders tried to speak to the government and the farm owners to educate the children whose parents work on their farm but up to now nothing was done. The landlords or farm owners care less about the people who work for them. They do see these problems but they do not do anything about it. We do not know why that is the case. We keep wondering why the government does not represent us to these destructive farmers. The government could ask the farmers to build schools on farms or to be responsible for the education of their workers children. But this does not happen. We seem not to have proper representation in our independent country. {Hai/ /Om group respondent }

The marginalized may not, as claimed, understand, value, or accept the modern education; however, they have indeed come to terms with the realities they face in the changed local, national and seemingly global conditions. The evidence given by this Hai/ /Om respondent is indicative of these peoples' awareness of the deprivation and that they are determined to do whatever they can about it to improve not only their educational difficulties but also their living conditions in general:

We know the importance of education. We want and can do anything for our children to be educated. Unfortunately we cannot live like the way our ancestors used to live. Everything has changed our hunting and gathering areas are now demarcated farms. Owners of farms shoot and killed many who "trespass" in their farms, we cannot roam freely as before. That's why even our elders nowadays understand that our people need to be educated. We do not know who will rescue the Hai/ /Om from these humiliation. {Hai/ /Om group respondent }

The helplessness felt and expressed by these people was touching. These are all indications that they are trying to improve their lives and strive to get an education but seemingly have all the odds against them. As a partial insider I could not help but feel the gross injustice meted out on these deprived communities.

The participants demonstrated that they do care for schooling but the magnitude of marginalization creates an impediment rather than a conducive learning atmosphere. One of the Ovankhumbi group members preferred to put it this way: "We complain about a lot of different things in this region to the government but nothing gets done. It is very demoralizing especially when you see that other regions are being catered for, but not ours." The marginalized are poor, a high proportion of them are illiterate. However, a vast majority of these people are keen to get education both for themselves and their children, if it is made financially and practically possible.

On whether they are seeking parity or in any way are doing something about their socio-economic and educationally deprived conditions, the following Hai/ /Om respondent lamented that they are sidelined while others come and take over their land. He explained how they went about a protracted dispute over land with the government, which promised to assist, but the issue is not yet resolved:

If people come and stay in what is supposed to be our habitat or land and they are privileged, we have no choice but to conclude that they are enjoying the fruit of independence while we are being sidelined. That's why a few years ago maybe you read while in America that the Hai/ /om people had an uprising demanding their habitat back from the government. Such situations become unavoidable. In actual fact what happened is that we first had good discussions with the government. We respect authority and we wanted to go through the right channels. We went for various discussions to Windhoek with government officials. That time we had not even appointed or elected our chief and then the government asked us to go back and choose our traditional leaders who would represent us in this and other pertinent matters. We did exactly as told by "our" government, but they seem not to have respected our demands, that is why we had that uprising where we demonstrated at the gates of Oshivelo for them to see that we were very serious with what we want done for us. Believe you me up to today nothing is done to alleviate our pathetic situation. The government did not give the problem the attention it deserves. What do they expect in the future if not total anarchy? { Hai/ /Om group respondent }

Their evidence proved beyond a reasonable doubt that indeed they are conversant with what is going on and that they are prepared to confront the government about not only their educational blues but also their lost habitat and living conditions in general.

Addressing the same issue, another Ovankhumbi group member expressed it this way:

People themselves in this region tried very hard. They solicited for the existing schools to be built. The leaders of the community were sent to talk to the government and we build our own shacks and under the tree schools. That is when the government realized that this people need schools then they put up those few structures but it is still not enough. Because of the few classrooms in the government-erected structures, the community is adding classrooms with local materials. We want our children to be educated within the region to also be exposed to and maintain their culture. We are afraid for children to go very far. If it were not for the drought whereby there would be many trees and bushes, we would even erect these kinds of structures up to university level for our children to be educated and contribute to the development of the region. {Ovankhumbi group respondent}

Another Hai/ /Om group respondent contributed by saying that “we want our children to be educated, the children themselves are eager to learn but the system is frightening.” One of the major problems in the existing schools is the endemic lack of water. Yet another Ovankhumbi group respondent burst out, “We at least try to provide food for learners but without water, the whole thing becomes unhygienic.” There is no clinic nearby, no police station; the nearest of these facilities are 50 and more kilometers away. For some communities in deeper remote areas, the distance to facilities is even longer. The next Hai/ /Om group respondent was more explicit about their situation:

We have a committee here and we try to work very hard to give our problems to the government. For example we gave our questions, observations and demands to the government in 1994 but up to now nothing was done about it. This is our independent country and the best representative of the people is supposed to be the government but so far it really disappointed us. We eventually lose popularity and trust from the people we represent because they think we do not do our responsibilities as representatives of our community. It is not true we work hard, try all means to represent our people but the discouragement from the

government baffle us. The quieter the government the more our people here become disillusioned. That is why we all decided that we go on strike maybe that way they will listen to our problems. {Hai/ /Om group Respondent }

The neglect is also evident through the adults who did not get a chance to be educated during the colonial times but who still want to improve their knowledge. The next Hai/ /Om group respondent concluded the discussion or interview on a very sad note:

I want to emphasize the fact that our people are really displeased with the way we are deprived of so many things in our independent country. We are so marginalized that life has become a waste for most of our young people. Young girls turn into prostitution and the young boys just leave home to work for close to nothing wherever they can get anything to do. In fact, this is a kind of slavery for the Hai/ /Om people. {Hai/ /Om group respondent }

In accordance with evidence from these marginalized groups themselves, the deprived communities are poor and illiterate and educationally as well as socio-culturally marginalized, and therefore, they find it difficult to get their children into schools and keep them there. The Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1989, p. 18) reported that "In the case of most of the groups, the issue of education is part of a wider social problem. It is in the context of this wider social problem that some young people become educationally marginalized. However, in some of the cases education is part of the solution." There are substantial disparities caused by the very skewed income distribution between urban and rural areas as well as between regions.

In a country where some children do not attend school because of lack of the ability to pay, let alone being recognized as authentic identities, free education remains just policy on paper. Kann (1998, p. 10) appropriately emphasized that "it is the implementation of the overall policy and the use of the proposed policy options in that context that can make a

difference for the educationally marginalized children. However, it is easy to continue to marginalize and therefore, monitoring of the implementation is crucial.”

After apartheid ended, some marginalized groups took their own steps for recognition of their identity and for access to equal educational opportunity. This is one of the reasons that after independence, various groups have been determined to and have pushed for equal access to education and the recognition of their culture, heritage, identity, and do push their agenda to educationally improve their lot. Some groups have even gone to the extent of reinstalling their kingdoms, for example, the Damara kingdom and the attempt by Ovakwanyama, while others, like Ovazemba, are still lobbying to reinstall their kingdoms, as well as other practices that were disregarded and or diverted to other purposes during colonialism.

While some educational officers attributed the marginalization of some groups to the groups themselves, other officers clearly disputed that allegation and gave evidence to the contrary. The marginalized groups themselves explicated their ardent awareness of educational deprivation and determination to seek parity. Other intervening factors like stereotypes and lack of confidence in conventional education by these groups, thus, aligning to their traditions and culture, were also raised by both the officers and the groups. However, they also gave sufficient evidence of the groups willingness to educate their young in accordance with the changing social, economic and ecological realities.

The concluding chapter discusses some of the implications, philosophical viewpoints and recommendations for the continuing inequalities that persist along regional and ethnic lines in postcolonial Namibia.

Chapter VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the study

Before concluding, it is necessary and of utmost importance to reiterate that education exists in political context in a state. In this study, I investigated why educational inequalities persist along regional and ethnic lines in post-colonial Namibia. Inequalities usually express themselves via social cleavages along lines of political, ethnic, race, class, gender, and power divisions in a society. It is important to note that those affected by such cleavages are real actors, real people looking out for their particular and/or collective interests. In other words, the bearers of these cleavages encounter everyday “lifeworld” realities, to paraphrase Marx, Weber, Habermas, and some postmodernists.

In this study I sought to determine and understand a) how educational resources are allocated and distributed to various regional and ethnic groups and thus how they affect the performance of not only the learners in schools but also the socioeconomic status of people in the various regions; b) whether equalizing resources to groups improves or instead exacerbates educational inequalities in the post apartheid dispensation; and c) whether the marginalized, especially the rural dwellers, and the urban deprived are aware of the stratification and whether they are seeking parity to improve their situation. My research interests are characterized by concerns for equality of educational opportunity; regional, class and ethnic stratification; and social justice.

My goal was to understand better the factors that lead to or influence the persistence of educational inequalities along regional and ethnic lines in post-colonial Namibia.

The study involved how education impacts virtually every family and constitutes the wealth of the country. The study highlighted the rampant poverty and unemployment in various educational communities, barriers to access to equal educational opportunity, availability of and scarcity of infrastructure, and issues of human and natural resources. It also focused on shortages in facilities, un- and under-qualified teachers, a contravening language policy, and the infamous land policy, which is a dilemma that jeopardizes the redistribution of the population according to post-colonial requirements for development.

I have argued throughout the dissertation that education policy-making needs to be defined and understood very broadly. Education policy is not confined, in my view, to the formal relationships and processes of government, nor only to schools and teachers, nor to legislation affecting them. The conclusive, broad definition requires that we understand it in broader perspectives, that is, in its political, social, and economic contexts, so that those contexts also require study because of the ways in which they shape education policy. If we exclude them, we are not providing a comprehensive picture. We are also required, I believe, to explore the effects of prevailing ideologies on education policy. Clarification of the historical context within which education policy in Namibia has emerged and continues to be framed illustrates the ways in which explanations of events are tied into prevailing ideologies and are shaped by them, which in turn underlines the need to take account of ideologies in framing research practices.

Since gaining independence from South Africa eleven years ago, the Namibian government has been trying to reverse the more than a century's neglect caused by

colonialism and apartheid. Beyond expanding access to schooling, the government is attempting to allocate resources equitably, desegregate White schools, and reduce race-based disparities in school quality at all levels. Nevertheless, the deep-rooted inequalities, insufficient infrastructure, and acute shortage of skills in all aspects of society are detrimental to equal educational opportunity. Bradshaw and Ndegwa (2000, p. 312) found that

The surge in optimism and expectations in the new Namibia was quickly followed by a jump in school enrollment and a paradox emerges: if mass expansion erodes quality, then only symbolic opportunities are being granted by a regime that is eager to advance its own political legitimacy.

The other influential factors that deny equal opportunities to quality education for many are the rampant poverty and the skyrocketing costs that have accompanied the expansion of schooling in Namibia. Market oriented policy frames, aimed at decentralizing power to local agents of the state, may fail to raise school quality or reduce gross inequalities, eroding the long-term legitimacy of the rulers. How to encourage democratic participation locally while institutionally constructing a unified nation-state, in the historical context of regional and ethnic segmentation and stark class inequalities, represents a long-term dilemma that is continuing to plague the ruling party leaders.

Modern progress in the education sector has led to a pair of telling contradictions. Rapid school expansion has served to undercut quality. Under apartheid regimes this inverse relationship was engineered with intent; Bantu education in what was then South West Africa (Namibia) aimed to root out political opposition by opening up access for thousands of Black and Colored children to enter low quality primary and secondary schools.

As indicated in parts of this study, "education for all" is an ideal towards which all those who espouse it are striving. This is, however, an enormously ambitious step that is being proposed by a very young democracy, which is beset with many problems that are a legacy of many years of **segregated education**. Inequalities in education provision, both in human and material resources, and in light of conflicting interests is caused not only by regional disparities and multicultural and language diversities among Namibians. It is also caused by inequitable distribution of resources of the past and present dispensation that separates the people of Namibia into "haves" and "have-nots," and that exacerbate such endemic problems. This picture is made even gloomier by the financial constraints which the country is currently experiencing, and the high rate of unemployment.

In this chapter I will summarize and discuss the major findings from the analysis of my qualitative data. I will discuss some of the implications that these findings have for our on-going efforts not only to address but also to continue research and evaluation to understand the rampant educational inequalities that plague the nation. I will identify some of the limitations of the present study, and finally, I will suggest possible directions for future research in this area.

Summary of Major Findings

My analysis of these data resulted in nine major findings, which are summarized below. The study identified crucial factors and intervening variables that are not only important for serious consideration in reconstituting education in post apartheid Namibian state, but without which the alternative is anarchy-ridden crisis. Unfortunately, the latter alternative is currently prevalent, and the situation is slowly eroding towards

deeper inaccessibility, inequalities, and urban-rural and regional divides, which usually result in the breakdown of well-intended policies and practices of the post-colonial establishment. The following is my more specific summary of the findings from various data sources as they relate to the major nine themes I identified.

The findings generally show that there appears to be a clear connection between persistent educational inequalities and the skewed distribution of resources to various regional, socio-economic, and ethnic groups. The data suggest more specifically the following nine themes: (a) There is poignant poverty and unemployment, and education is very expensive; thus, many Namibians, particularly the formerly deprived and more so those in remote rural areas, cannot afford to educate their children. (b) Despite the renowned government policies, resources, infrastructure, and capital are inequitably distributed, which leads to unequal educational access and outcomes. (c) There is an acute shortage of qualified personnel to fill the many places as a result of the post-colonial expansion. Lack of incentives, ethics, and un-discipline affect the quality of education. (d) Equalizing allocation of resources to various schools does not necessarily equalize educational outcomes; overcoming educational inequalities requires political commitment, effective management, and accountability. (e) Regardless of the enunciated efforts for “education for all,” “reconciliation,” and Namibia as one nation, regional, residential, ethnic, and socio-economic divisions inhibit access to quality education and equality of educational opportunity for all. (f) Equal distribution of resources in the hitherto grossly skewed allocation does not solve the dilemma of the historically marginalized schools and communities but reinforces socio-economic barriers. (g) A contradictory language policy is a problem that contributes to unequal educational

opportunity and exacerbates regional and ethnic divisions. (h) Persistent educational inequalities are due to the inherited, deeply rooted, divisive colonial legacy that manifests itself in many realms of post-apartheid Namibian society and will take a long time to undo if at all. (i) The marginalized are aware of the educational inequalities, in relation to access to and quality of education, that affects them, and they seek parity in relation to valuing education in multiple ways.

Prevalent Myths and Realities

Educational inequalities and other forms of social stratification persist along regional and ethnic lines because of the inherited legacy of divisive infrastructure and the hitherto institutionalized, systematic apartheid racial and ethnic separation. Besides the destructive legacy, however, a combination of lack of expertise, i.e., insufficient sophisticated bureaucracy, limited political commitment and thus inaction, a controversial language policy that limits integration and exacerbates regional and ethnic division, and the dire shortage of essential facilities promotes inequities and prevents implementation of post-colonial ambitions.

Triangulation showed how the different data sources agreed and disagreed, and thus both confirmed and disconfirmed some of the initial hypotheses. Triangulation is where two or more distinct methods (e.g., semi-structured interviews, observation and diary accounts) are employed to measure the same phenomenon, but from different angles. The rationale is that cumulatively the weaknesses of one research method are offset by the strength of the others (Arksey, & Knight, 1999. p. 23).

There were indeed significant differences among participants, especially among the education officers, on certain issues. While some acknowledged rampant poverty,

inequity, and the acute lack of skills, others felt that the government is doing a lot and that the deep-rooted disparities will take longer to reverse. Some respondents believe that equalizing resources to different schools and regions can take care of the disparities, while others are convinced that equalizing resources to a differentially facilitated infrastructure increases the gap. Proponents of the government policy on language expect regional and ethnic tensions to end or be reduced by the “one Namibia one nation” concept, while opponents clearly see the language policy as the major cause of further divisions and social stratification. These controversies and differences illuminate the myths and realities of the regional, ethnic, and inequalities as it unfolds around intended and unintended consequences in the Namibian post-colonial education dispensation.

An interesting difference that has sparked continuing debate is the claim by some respondents that the marginalized are not aware of various disparities, and that they are not interested in conventional education. However, others have objected to this and believe that the state must reverse the current skewed infrastructure, facilities, and stereotypes. The marginalized themselves showed and expressed willingness to educate their children, but they are disadvantaged by factors ranging across poverty, unemployment, and lack of basic facilities in their areas. They acknowledged that the changed circumstances infringed on their lifestyles; therefore, they believe that education for their children and future generations is the best way out of misery, marginality, and helplessness.

There is, therefore, continuing debate about various issues that lead to educational and other inequalities in the Namibian government in particular and in Namibian society in general. The reality of Namibia as consisting of various regions and a multi-cultural,

multi-ethnic, multi-racial, hence, a multi-lingual society should be a new point of departure for curriculum policies. This means that goals such as "education for all," with desired access, equity, quality and democracy, improved scientific skills, the integration of education and training, and the encouragement of civic responsibility, are to be conceptualized and implemented against this background. Avoiding the pitfalls of uncritical borrowing on the one hand and insularity on the other, Namibians should continue to look for creative ways of meshing the specificity of the Namibian context with the quest for universally acknowledged educational achievement.

Conclusions

There is crucial need for careful evaluation of not only colonial policies and practices but also the post-colonial practices over the past years. I agree with Cohen (1994, p. 396), who appropriately argues that

Action cannot be accomplished without meticulous and thorough research. For example, to ensure that training does not occur in a vacuum, Namibia's reform process should be studied carefully, the better to ascertain what precise professional skills are needed. This calls for undertaking a national inventory of available expertise and a needs assessment of the country's requirements.

Such an inquiry will not only help to identify the priority areas to be targeted and the personnel needed for developing appropriate infrastructure but will also help reduce the shortage of limited places for learners and re-direct appropriate skills where they are required. From this research, for example, it is clear that special attention should be directed to providing learning facilities for learners in their proximate areas.

Arrangements should be made, either through incentives or conducive conditions, for personnel to be attracted to and be retained to work in the remote areas of the country, and to building up a pool of well trained professionals to serve in the deprived areas. The

enormous tasks in terms of reversing the apartheid colonial misdeeds are the provision of facilities and the availability of suitably qualified personnel to meet those serious challenges. The current trend in Namibia, which is all too typical of other post-colonial African countries, is for the well educated staff at the local levels to move to urban areas, leaving institutions in the rural areas with the majority being served by under or unqualified personnel.

The government has in principle and by intent been very strong on the issues of unification with access, equality, democracy, and quality of education for all. The first criterion of access can therefore be said to have been satisfied, although, considering the costs of education both public and private that continue to rise, there is considerable danger of dual systems of education developing, with one sector affordable only to those citizens able to pay heavy fees, while the rest have to be content with poor public schools with inferior resources and facilities.

Since independence in 1990, the Namibian government has focused on the development of new educational policies. These policies have not only transformed the education system, which was highly fragmented and chaotic during the apartheid era, but have also given direction and support to two indispensable constituencies: those who are expected to implement, i.e., educators, and those who are to benefit from these policies i.e., learners and communities. This returns me to my starting point and the argument at the beginning of the study that stressed the significance of education as a site for the development of capacity for social practice, and thus the continued significance of teachers and all those involved in the delivery of education.

The introduction of compulsory universal education, necessary as it has been, strengthened the position of those in control of the state. Their authority is now exercised through a variety of means. In the final analysis, the Namibian government's primary reason for pledging itself to the promotion of "education for all" and lifelong learning is an effort to narrow the gap between the highly educated (usually the high-income group) and the long-standing poor and dispossessed. The provision of structures which allow the undereducated poor to improve their qualifications in fields of their choice is crucial. It is their only chance of improving their employability in a world that has come to depend so much on the versatility of skills that an individual possesses. However, the structures in themselves will not ensure that Namibians become lifelong learners.

Only a foundation of good teaching and learning in all schools can assure the country of young people who emerge from school with such confidence in their potential to learn that they will always be eager to learn whenever the situation demands it. It is, however, unlikely that the current poorly resourced schools can equip learners in this way. Those learners who are fortunate to be in well-resourced schools will definitely benefit from innovative teaching and learning encouraged by, for example, the learner-centered policy. The combined result is, however, likely to be an even wider gap between the highly educated few, who will explore all avenues of lifelong learning at their disposal, and the majority with low qualifications and a restricted vision of what is out there to be accessed through learning.

My larger argument is that since education is a highly political terrain, we need to explore substantively the political economies of social justice. Again, social justice

cannot simply be mired in moralistic and ideological chit-chat; it is, instead, everyday, lived reality. Boxill (1992, pp. 226 – 270) states that

Social justice and equity, as expressed through the cultural, political, and material everyday-lived realities of common and not-so-common humans were not explicated in any detail. Thus, social justice, if it is to be meaningful, must be anchored in matters of class, ethnicity, gender and politics.

The issue, as Boxill (1992, p. 269) suggests, may have something to do with “a broader agnosticism about the capacity of human beings to treat fairly those who are markedly different from themselves in outward appearance and markedly weaker.” To that extent, we must explore the implications of a social justice perspective for all the various groups, privileged and marginalized, within a state.

In Namibia, just like in many developing countries, education is regarded as an instrument of power and wealth. As Coleman (1965, p. 12) has aptly observed, “Once regarded as an essential conservative, culture preserving, culture transmitting institution, the educational system now tends to be viewed as the master determinant of all aspects of change.” At independence in 1990 the SWAPO-led government in Namibia recognized that education is a very powerful instrument for social change in a process of dynamic nation building. According to its policy documents, the government is committed to creating in the country an educational system capable of ensuring that every citizen is given full and equal opportunity to develop her/his intellectual and working capacities, both for their own good and for the good of the nation. But Namibia, as a fledgling state, lacks the resources and organizational capacity to deliver on these modern policy fronts that must keep pace with ever-widening faith in the modern school. These conflicts, if left unresolved, may erode the state’s legitimacy (Bradshaw & Ndegwa, 2000, p. 311).

The anticipated post-colonial transformations, with consequent pre-election promises, nevertheless played out differently, mainly in the persistence of inequalities as the legacy of apartheid, clearly manifested in the function of the inherited state. Inequalities of access to educational facilities and the evident contradiction between policies and practices are testimony to current reforms not going far enough. Initiating change is an enormous task, but it is a task that must be accomplished, because while the risk of failure is there, the consequences of not trying are devastating. A relationship must exist between social transformation and educational reform because these are the two pillars of development the nations of southern Africa need to ensure the achievement of national development (Mungazi & Walker, 1997). The system of education in Namibia is in urgent need of reform because the patterns of inequality built into it when it was established were not significantly changed or reversed at independence. This would have required far more radical reforms than any which have been accomplished to date. Reforms are effected slowly in Namibia. The narrowness of the financial resources of the country is a serious obstacle to development. Namibia has always lacked the resource base and will continue to have limited resources to carry out extensive reform. The present partial reliance of education on overseas funding and skilled personnel to promote development has its roots in the country's colonial past.

The educational opportunities offered or provided by government should be open and available to all on a basis of genuine equality, which is unfortunately not the case in postcolonial Namibia but which was the promise prior to independence and during the subsequent election campaigns. The post-colonial government has proclaimed the philosophy of educational equality, access, equity, and democracy as a basis for planning.

The document "Towards Education for All, A Development Brief for Education, Culture, and Training," published in 1993, claimed to have originated the philosophy of these principles. This "new" philosophy was that "the best education that the country could afford must be open to every child, because all children are equally important." From then on, education would be a unifying, not a stratifying force in the society, and the poverty or low social status of parents would no longer be a barrier to a sound education, nor would it determine the social, economic, ethnic or civic future of any child.

The new dispensation was supposed to be an Educational Revolution that would ensure that no Namibian child would be barred from facilities by the circumstances of her or his birth or by her or his poverty from qualifying for any position in the country. These goals were thought to be achievable even though equality of opportunity might still remain an elusive utopian ideal. Several authors, including Jauch (1998), UNDP (1998), Amukugo (1993), Strauss (1990), and Brock-Utne (2000), among others, echo these objectives.

The post independent national plan for Namibia as represented by the democratic constitution aimed at safeguarding the education and rights of all citizens. Nevertheless, it is evident that the expansion of education as a way of meeting the need and demand for education was hardly feasible, and that it would continue to be necessary to develop and expand schools in all regions of the country. Due, however, to lack of infrastructure, insufficient capital, lack of qualified human resources, and the ethnic tensions that manifest on language and regional disparities, the expected educational reform has been stifled and has resulted in lack of access for a great number of learners, particularly in the remote regions. Consequently, most of those who do have access to schools face

difficulties of quality education. All these, therefore, lead to persistent educational inequalities that manifest on regional and ethnic lines.

Implications for Further Research

There is still a lot of research needed in the area of educational inequalities, regional and ethnic stratification, and poverty alleviation. Through responsible and accountable governance the government could enable learning and research institutions to carry out appropriate research. Researchers should pay closer attention to critical literature such as Fanon's (1963) position in his "The Wretched of the Earth" if they are to reveal the hidden niches of development, underdevelopment, corruption, and the daily struggle for survival of the deprived majority and marginalized minorities. Clearly, this type of literature reveals the turmoil afflicting ordinary people as they confront the social classes that rule over them, and how they emotionally and psychologically try to deal with the scars of oppression and powerlessness.

I do believe that the present study needs to be replicated to test the validity of the major findings reported here. We need to know to what extent the pattern of results obtained in this study seem to hold true with other participants in other settings. This study provokes numerous other issues for the areas of future research. An important implication for further research is an investigation of regions, all the ethnicity and inequities as continuous measures of segregation and division.

The University of Namibia, the Polytechnic, the research institutions in the country, as well as teacher training colleges and various ministries and non governmental organizations could play an active role in investigating and advising the government with their findings. Other various training and learning institutions capable of conducting

research should, through collaboration, conduct investigations that will enable policy makers to make decisions that could alleviate the country's shortage of both appropriate infrastructure and qualified personnel to serve anywhere in the country.

Reforming the Namibian education system significantly will demand not only vast financial resources but also a strong political commitment ensuring necessary human resources. I do not think there is any simple way to overcome the kinds of difficulties I found or encountered in the educational, social, economic and political problems of Namibia. It may well be vain to expect exactitude in the study of similar events anywhere else. Moreover, the quest for validity demands not only that we accumulate facts, but that we place them in an interpretive framework that allows for the diversities and ambiguities inherent in education systems.

Finally, we need some longitudinal research that examines the long-term impact of educational inequalities and social stratification. There is much that is in a state of flux. The greatest challenge facing post-colonial institutions is to implement a system that is still under construction. As Mda & Mothata (2000, p. 194) reckon, "The fact that not all the proposed structures are in place presently, and those that are in place are still at the stage of constituting themselves is a cause for concern." While very few can doubt the good intentions behind postcolonial government policies proposed and being developed, it is a source of some apprehension to acknowledge the difficulty of implementing even very modest educational reforms and innovations.

Further researchable hypotheses can be derived from connecting some of the empirical findings presented above to broader questions of theoretical discourse, as Munch (1994, p. 5) argues. It is also the case that many other aspects of social reality

(e.g. racial, regional, ethnic and political orders) remain largely unspecified. Further research can, thus, identify “the conditions under which the application of dialectical theory yields...explanations and predictions of facts and...solutions for problems” (Munch, 1994, p. 5). The conceptualization of regimes of social reproduction requires further refinement, so that more and more aspects of social reality can be captured and integrated into our theoretical frameworks.

Summary of Recommendations

This study started with a number of assumptions based on lessons learned through development work with various rural and deprived communities. Some of the assumptions were confirmed by the findings as the information in the text confirms. I shall be satisfied if this study makes some small contribution to a better understanding, a greater sensitivity, and an increased awareness of the issues at stake at the present. It is important that we accept that education exists in a political context. Schools are part of society, and when those whose duty it is to promote education and provide resources, for example, have to decide on priorities within the country and within the general education system, between urban and rural, let us say, they are making political decisions. The discrepancy in per capita expenditure between what is spent on an urban child and what is spent on a rural child not only reveals where our priorities lie, but is also an expression of political viewpoint. If education, therefore, is a political question, it must be publicly examined, particularly by teachers, learners, and parents, and it is a question to which everyone must address his or her mind, particularly in the kind of crisis in which Namibia find itself at present.

Ideally, educational programs need to be embedded in a complete development strategy for all communities, including income generation and development programs with a cultural emphasis towards such issues as ethnic identity, multiculturalism, and regional awareness. Le Roux (1998, p. 121) observed that "it is unlikely that southern African governments will develop a more accommodating attitude towards alternative education for ethnic or other minorities, therefore programs have to be designed so that the San organizations would eventually be able to carry such operations themselves." So far, most programs for the marginalized groups education were geared towards preparing and adapting them to fit into mainstream education. Stronger pressure should be put on the education systems to become more accessible to the needs of all the children they require to serve. Since some ethnic group children, for example the San, seem to show the most acute signs of trouble with the current education system, alternatives could be developed for the affected groups to serve a wider purpose. Many questions are being raised about the relevance and appropriateness to the African context of the westernized type of education offered to children over the entire African continent.

The education situation has to be addressed in totality. Parents of minority marginalized ethnic groups interviewed want their children to be educated, contrary to prevalent belief that they are not interested in conventional education. Their hope, however, is that culturally appropriate and alternative education for their children would address the poor performance and drop out problems prevalent in the current classifying system. These parents as well as their children also want to be convinced that the alternatives would bring their children to the same academic standards as the other groups, so they can participate on equal footing in the modern world.

Efforts to transform education for the benefit of the nation must seek to reduce the enormous socioeconomic and cultural as well as personal differences that exist between people and regions, and more so between rural areas and urban areas. Equalizing education would mean eliminating differences in the nature of conditions between regions and urban and rural areas, such as schools, books, and teachers. Unless Namibians make a concerted effort to eliminate the aforementioned differences and work toward an egalitarian resource allocation accompanied by fair distribution of human resources, the country will continue to experience the unacceptable scourge of development.

It is through education that the state develops its human resources and enables its institutions and systems to function. A society without skilled human resources lags behind in development. Also, education enables citizens to compete equally and fairly for social positions and occupations. Education provides the experience that enables citizens to interact more efficiently and confidently with their environments. They are thus better prepared to manipulate the environment for their survival. Namibian education policy work and implementation will therefore benefit significantly if it roots itself more firmly in local realities, dynamics and constraints on the ground, and if it promotes a dialogue and debate among the various actors involved at all the levels of educational policy-making.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Sample Interview Questions

Tangeni Iijambo

The purpose of this interview is to gain information about your experience in access to educational opportunity and inequalities of educational resources. I will ask you a variety of questions related to your life as a student and learner in many different ethnic or regional settings. I hope that we can consider many of these questions in some depth in order to gain a rich understanding of educational inequalities and access to schools for various ethnic groups.

What statistical data do the Ministries of education have on ethnic groups in schools?

What has the new government done to eliminate the apartheid, unequal, and inaccessible education?

What needs to be done to ensure ethnic and regional equity in schools?

How are educational resources allocated to marginalized ethnic and regional groups to assure equitable distribution?

What does the government do to reduce inequalities in the educational provision to various ethnic and regional groups?

APPENDIX B

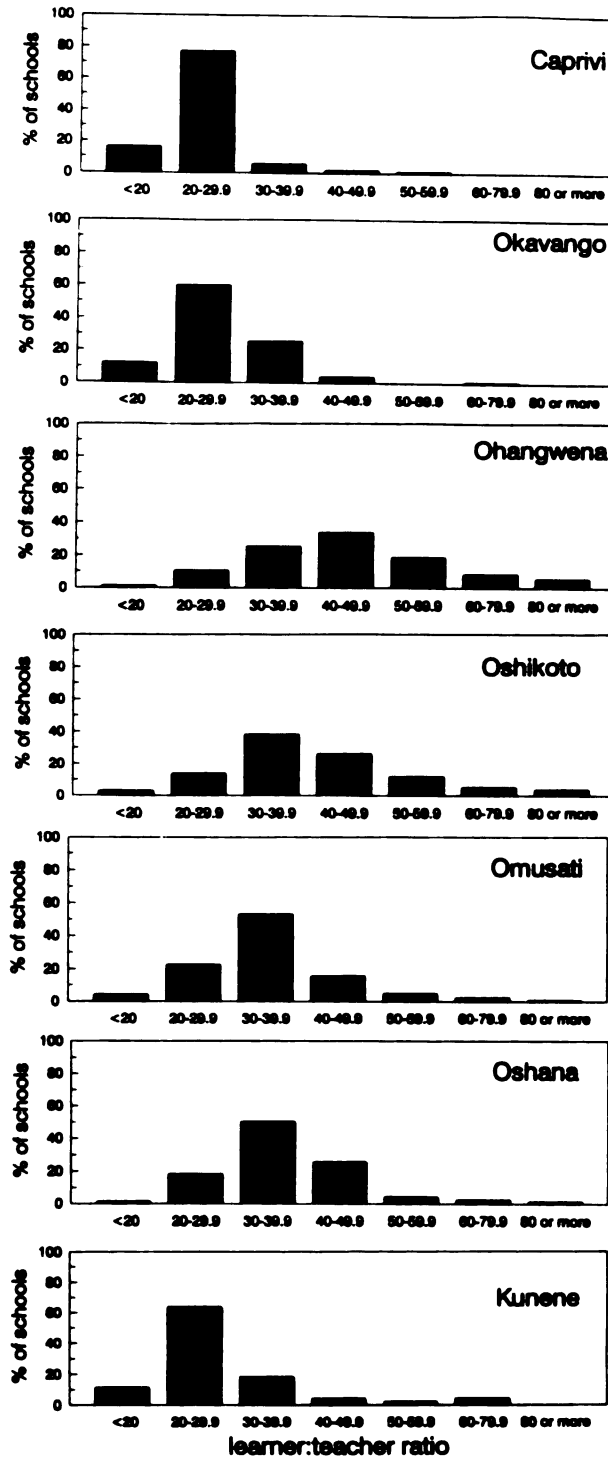
GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I will spent 45 to sixty minutes talking with you about issues of inequitable educational distribution in Namibia. This information is for the purpose of my dissertation that I hope will influence our education policy on access to educational opportunity for all.

- a. Some documents and other information show school going age children who do not go to school in this community and region. Can anyone say what led to this situation?**
- b. How important is schooling for your children?**
- c. Does the community receive a “fair share” of educational resources?**
- d. Which language is taught in the first five grades of school in this region? Does it matter?**
- e. What difference did you notice from colonial to independence about access to education, curriculum, quality of teachers and education?**
- f. How important is schooling and education in general to your community and region?**

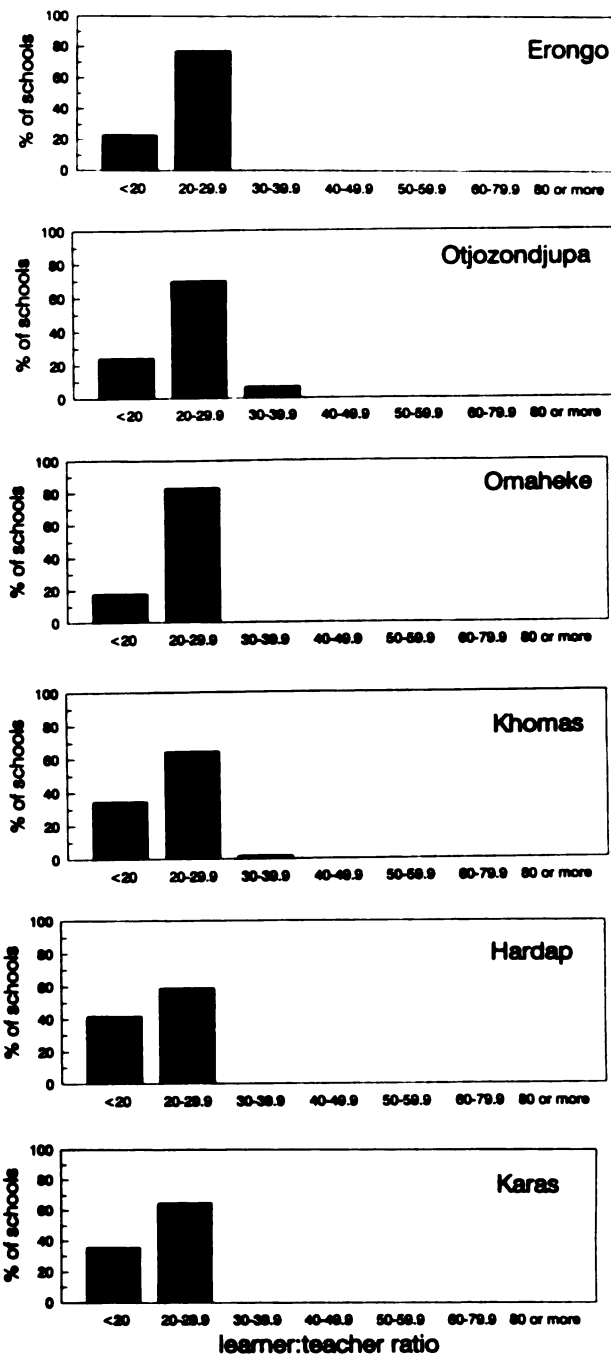
APPENDIX C

LEARNER-TEACHER RATIOS



APPENDIX C (continued)

LEARNER-TEACHER RATIOS



(Source: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996)

APPENDIX D

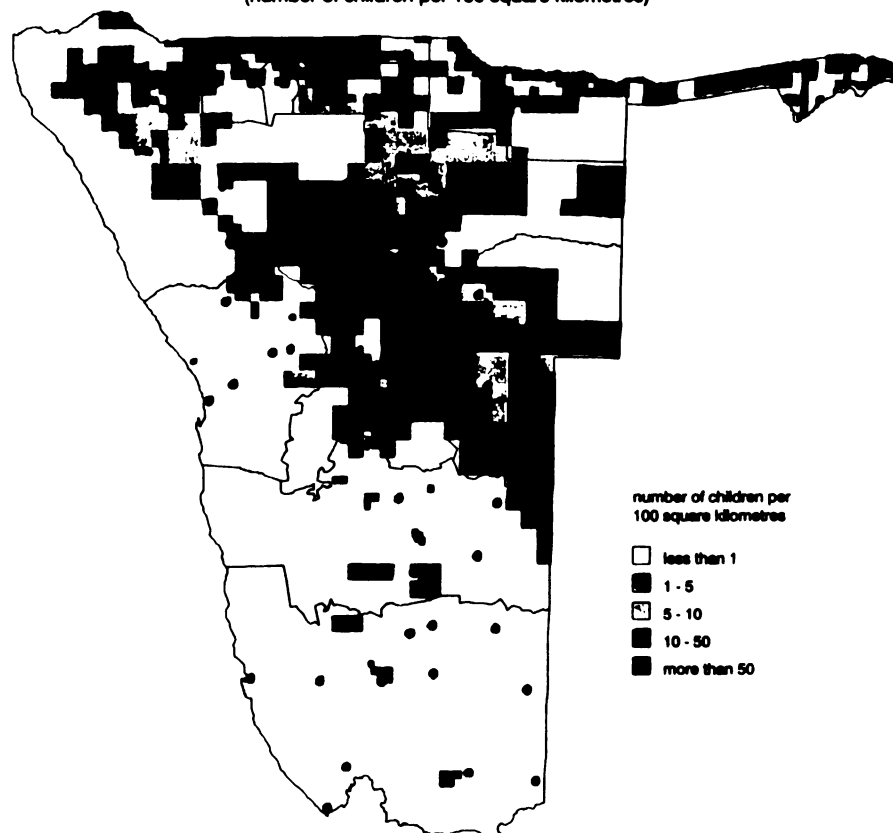
DENSITY OF 7 – 13 YEAR OLDS NOT AT SCHOOL

The map below shows the density of seven- to thirteen-year-olds that had never been to school in 1991. Children of these ages should be at primary school.

In some places concentrations of children not at school are simply due to the high densities of people living in those areas. For example, many towns in the southern regions of Namibia show high concentrations of children not at school, but these are small towns and few children are involved. Social factors prevent most such children from being at school since nearby schools are accessible to them. The same is true in some of the most densely populated areas in northern Namibia.

In other areas, however, there are no schools nearby. Comparing this map to the map of schools on the back cover shows that the main access problems are in Oshana, Oshana, Oshana and northern Kunene. This map should also be read in conjunction with the statistics on children of different language groups not at school (p. 26). A high percentage of children not at school are "Bushman" language speakers. Improving access in some areas may require different systems of providing education.

Density of seven- to thirteen-year-olds not at school, 1991
(number of children per 100 square kilometres)



Year	Enrolment ratios	
	net	gross
1991	87.5	133.4
1992	89.2	144.1
1993	90.1	144.2
1994	92.6	136.6
1995	95.2	136.1

Net and Gross Enrolment Ratios of
seven- to thirteen-year olds, 1991-1995

(Source: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996)

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